



Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood Programs



Student/Family Handbook

PLAY AND LEARN PRESCHOOL AND
EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY EDUCATION

#466

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MISSION

Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood Programs, in partnership with families and the community, provide safe, supportive, and engaging learning experiences for young children.

Through play-based, inclusive opportunities, we support each child's social, cognitive, physical, and motor development. We strive to help children build confidence, curiosity, positive relationships, and a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

VISION

EDUCATE. INNOVATE. SUCCEED.

Welcome to...

Dassel-Cokato

Early Childhood



Hello, my name is Angela Smith, and I am the Early Childhood Coordinator. I have the privilege of supporting families, children, and staff across Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood Programs.

I have worked in early learning and education for more than 20 years as a teacher, coach, parent and family educator, and coordinator. I continue to be inspired by the curiosity, wonder, growth, and learning that young children bring to each day.

Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood Programs are sponsored by the Dassel-Cokato Public Schools Community Education Department and operate under the policies and guidelines of the School Board.

We understand that Preschool and ECFE may be a child's first experience in a more independent learning environment.

Our goal is to provide a warm, engaging, and supportive place where children can grow, explore, build relationships, and develop a lifelong love of learning.

We look forward to partnering with you as we support your child's development together. Please take time to review this handbook to learn more about our programs, procedures, and expectations. If you have any questions, we encourage you to reach out.

angela.smith@dc.k12.mn.us

320-286-4100 ext. 1024

We Are Dassel-Cokato

EDUCATE. INNOVATE. SUCCEED

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

4852 Reardon Ave SW
Suite 1400
Cokato, MN 55321

320-286-4120
[www.isd466.org/
community-ed/early-childhood](http://www.isd466.org/community-ed/early-childhood)

Class times vary
Office Hours:
7:30 am-4:00 pm

COKATO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

200 5th St SW
Cokato, MN 55321

320-286-4130
cokato.isd466.org

Start Time: 8:00 am
End Time: 3:15 pm

DASSEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

131 William Ave E
PO Box 368
Dassel, MN 55325

320-286-4150
dassel.isd466.org

Start Time: 8:00 am
End Time: 3:15 pm

COKATO LITTLE CHARGER CHILD CARE

200 5th St SW
Cokato, MN 55321
Door E

320-286-4100 ext. 1356
LCC@dc.k12.mn.us
www.isd466.org/CKC

Monday- Friday
Start Time: 6:30 am
End Time: 5:30 pm

COKATO CHARGER KIDS CLUB

200 5th St SW
Cokato, MN 55321
Door E

320-286-4100 ext. 1356
CKC@dc.k12.mn.us
www.isd466.org/CKC

Monday- Friday
Start Time: 6:30 am
End Time: 5:30 pm



Phone
320-286-4120



Email
angela.smith@dc.k12.mn.us



Website
www.isd466.org



Facebook
**[/Dassel-Cokato
Community Education](https://www.facebook.com/Dassel-Cokato-Community-Education)**



Instagram
[@dassalcokatoschooldistrict466](https://www.instagram.com/dassalcokatoschooldistrict466)



Mobile App
Dassel-Cokato Schools

Refer to the online
preschool and district
calendars for specific
program dates.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The purpose of this handbook is to provide families with important information about Dassel-Cokato Schools Early Childhood Programs. These guidelines help support a successful school year for children, families, and staff.

Families are encouraged to review the handbook carefully and refer to it throughout the year. Questions may be directed to your child's teacher or the Early Childhood Coordinator.

All school district policies referenced in this handbook are available on the district website.

Early Childhood Family Education

(Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) is a program for all families with children from birth to age five. The mission of ECFE is to strengthen families and support parents and caregivers as they provide nurturing environments that promote the healthy growth and development of their children.

ECFE is based on the belief that learning begins at birth and that parents and caregivers are a child's first and most important teachers. Learning in the home plays an important role in a child's social, emotional, and cognitive development. ECFE recognizes that education is an ongoing process of growth and development that happens both in and outside of formal school settings.

ECFE staff may include licensed Early Childhood Teachers, licensed Parent and Family Educators, and qualified Education Support Professionals.

Play and Learn Preschool

Play and Learn Preschool supports children in developing social-emotional, cognitive, physical, and motor skills through play-based learning experiences. Our classes help children build skills, grow in confidence, and flourish in a supportive environment.

The program focuses on discovery, exploration, and positive attitudes toward learning. We support school-home connections, provide parent education, and offer inclusive learning opportunities for children of all abilities.

Play and Learn Preschool staff include licensed Early Childhood Teachers, licensed Early Childhood Special Education Teachers, and qualified Education Support Professionals.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATION

We have an Early Childhood Program Coordinator that oversees all early childhood programming including, Preschool/School Readiness, ECFE(Early Childhood Family Education and Early Childhood Screening. For questions regarding our policies and procedures please reach out to the coordinator.

DISTRICT POLICIES & INFORMATION

Dassel Cokato Early Childhood is part of Dassel-Cokato Community Education, and all District 466 policies and procedures apply to the program. Parents and guardians may review these policies online at isd466.org. To request a paper copy, please contact Dassel-Cokato Communications at communication@dc.k12.mn.us or call (320) 286-4100, Ext. 1022.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

We will only release information about a child to parents/guardians with legal authority. Records are treated as confidential and are stored in a locked location where they can only be accessed by individuals legally entitled to review it.

DATA PRIVACY

Our program staff complies with the school district policy regarding data privacy and confidentiality. This confidentiality must be observed for all program participants. Staff may not discuss children with individuals not legally entitled to disclosure. The enrollment form includes a section to obtain parental permission to share information with district staff. Written authorization from a legal parent/guardian is required to disclose any information or records. Families must have a consent-to-release form on file for staff to disclose any information. Before a child can participate in any occasion of research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity, parental permission must be signed before each occasion.

CAMPUS PORTAL-UDATING FAMILY INFORMATION

Infinite Campus Portal is Dassel-Cokato Schools online website that allows parents and students to access several types of school information related to their family including, contact preferences for school closings and emergencies and more. It is used to contact you via phone, email and text with announcements and important updates. Please be sure to keep your household information updated. Parents/guardians are responsible for updating their online profile as appropriate and providing updated health and immunization information.

CUSTODY ISSUES

Staff will not be involved in custody disputes between parents. If parents have custody issues, they must provide the **Early Childhood Coordinator** with a copy of any relevant court orders. It is the parents' responsibility to work out the scheduling and payments for preschool. The person identified as the primary account user is responsible for making payments associated with the account.

COMMUNICATING CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS AND FEEDBACK

A parent/guardian's suggestions and concerns are considered valid and will be addressed. Your ideas and feedback help us make continual improvements to our program. We will work with you to resolve any problems that may arise. In order to address concerns and suggestions at the most appropriate and effective level, we suggest the following:

- Direct any concerns by speaking or scheduling a conference/meeting.
- If issues are not resolved (within one week), or you have additional concerns, you are encouraged to contact the Early Childhood Program Coordinator or the Community Services Director for more information or assistance.
- Staff encourages parents to raise concerns so that staff can work collaboratively with them to find mutually satisfying solutions to be incorporated into classroom practice.

If you ever have questions or concerns relating to early childhood programs please contact the Early Childhood Coordinator.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

PETS

Animals can be a source of allergens, asthma triggers, and microorganisms that may cause infectious diseases. For this reason, Dassel-Cokato Schools restricts animals in school buildings. Dogs, cats, rodents, rabbits, reptiles, birds, exotic animals, and other pets are not permitted without prior approval from the building administrator. When approved animals are present for educational purposes, they must be housed in an appropriate enclosure when not in use. Animals should be kept away from carpeted areas to reduce the risk of allergen transfer and prevent carpet damage or soiling.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

Families do not need to live in the Dassel-Cokato school district to participate in Play and Learn Preschool or Early Childhood courses. If out of district students plan to attend D-C schools for grades K-12, parents are encouraged to complete applications shortly after the first of the year prior to enrollment the following fall. Applications are available at the superintendent's office or online at www.education.state.mn.us. The school district reserves the right to close open enrollment at any time to maintain small class sizes.

WITHDRAWALS

If you know that your child will be withdrawing from preschool or an early childhood class, please inform us at the earliest possible date so we can possibly offer their spot to another family on the waiting list. If your family is moving out of the district please update the office so screening records can be forwarded to the correct school district.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

All community education accounts for your family members must be paid in a timely manner in order to continue your enrollment or to begin future enrollment in Early Childhood Programs and Dassel-Cokato Community Education Programs. If a family fails to pay their fees or make arrangements for a payment plan with the Early Childhood Program Coordinator, we retain the right to terminate participation in community education programs/services and to refer the account to the district's authorized collection agency. Parents/guardians will be responsible for all collection and legal fees associated with the account.

PHOTOGRAPHS VIDEOS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Dassel-Cokato Schools follows [District Policy 515](#) regarding student records and directory information. Directory information may include a student's name, photo, **age/grade, participation, and parent/guardian name.**

Photos may be used to highlight classroom activities, school events, newsletters, the district website, social media, or other school-related publications.

Parents/guardians who do not want their child's photo or directory information shared must submit a written request to the Early Childhood Coordinator.

Photographs and videos taken during Early Childhood programs, classes, or events that are shared on personal social media should include only your own child. To protect the privacy of all families, please do not post images or videos that include other children.

HEALTH & SAFETY

DISTRICT SAFETY POLICIES

As part of Dassel-Cokato School District 466, Early Childhood programs follow all district policies. School buildings, grounds, and program activities are tobacco-free, smoke-free, alcohol-free, drug-free, and weapon-free environments. This applies before, during, and after school and includes students, siblings, families, visitors, and staff. Please refer to district policies, including **Policy 419** and **Policy 501**, for complete details. **Guns, weapons of any kind, or toys that promote aggression are not allowed.**

MANDATED REPORTING - CHILD PROTECTION

DC Early Childhood staff are mandated reporters and must comply with the reporting requirements for abuse and neglect specified in Minnesota:

- ISD #466 staff are legally mandated to report abuse or neglect and cannot shift responsibility for reporting to a supervisor or anyone else in the program. If staff know, or have reason to believe, a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, they must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an appropriate agency.
- Staff may make reports to County Child Protection Offices and ask for the Intake Social Worker:
 - **Wright County - 763-682-7449**
 - **Meeker County - 320-693-5300**
- Additional Resources on Child Maltreatment can be found at DCYF- Department of Child Youth and Families
 - <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-5144-ENG>
- DC Early Childhood provides training to all staff on the mandated reporting responsibilities specified in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (MN chapter 260E).

INCAPACITATION, INTOXICATION OR SUSPECTED ABUSE

In the event a person who is incapacitated, intoxicated, or suspected of abuse attempts to pick up a child, the staff are directed to release the child only to those persons who are authorized. If the staff suspects an authorized person of being incapacitated, intoxicated, or a suspected abuser, the child must still be released. The staff are then mandated to report suspected neglect or abuse to the Wright or Meeker County Police Department and/or Wright or Meeker County Human Services Department.

PARKING SAFETY

All parking laws should be followed to ensure the safety of all. Please park in designated parking spots and turn your car off before entering the school during drop-off or pick-up times.

We want to keep the areas close to the site available for emergency vehicles in the event of an emergency. Children should not be left unattended in a vehicle.

HAZARDS

The program maintains a safe environment to protect children and staff from hazards such as electrical shock, burns, scalding, tripping, and falls. Floor coverings are secured to prevent slipping or tripping. Areas that have been recently painted, carpeted, tiled, or otherwise renovated are properly ventilated before children use them. Staff supervise children by both sight and sound at all times, particularly in areas with access to water, including tubs, pails, and water tables. Written procedures are in place to protect children and staff from environmental hazards, including air pollution, lead, and asbestos, in accordance with public health requirements.

HEALTH & SAFETY (EMERGENCY PROCEDURES)

FIRST AID & EMERGENCIES

If a minor injury or accident occurs, a staff member will administer treatment.

- We will notify parents by email or phone call.

In the case of a more severe injury:

- If it is more than a minor injury, we will contact you by calling your home, workplace, or the emergency number listed on your child's registration form
- If immediate action is required, we will call 911 first and then notify the parent.
- Once 911 is called, it is up to the paramedics to determine the appropriate course of action.
- If your child needs emergency treatment, paramedics will transport them to the nearest medical facility.
- Please note that parents will be responsible for all medical treatment cost incurred.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If an accident, injury, medical emergency, or safety concern occurs during early childhood classes/activities, staff will follow district procedures, call 911 when needed, and contact parents/guardians or emergency contacts. Staff will supervise and account for all children, moving or sheltering them as directed, including during severe weather. Families will be notified as soon as it is safe, and children will remain in designated areas until an "all clear" is given.

Evacuation

An evacuation may be used for fire, explosion, bomb threat, hazardous materials, or other crisis situations. Children will leave the building with the staff using designated evacuation routes and will not bring personal belongings. Staff will bring attendance records, emergency contact information, first aid supplies, and emergency materials. If needed, children and staff will relocate to the designated off-site shelter. Children and staff will return to the building only after an "all clear" is given.

Fire

In the event of a fire or fire alarm, staff will guide children out of the building using posted evacuation routes, account for all children, and wait for further instructions from administration or emergency personnel.

Hold

A hold may be used for medical emergencies, disturbances, fights, trespassing concerns, or similar situations. Children and staff will remain in their classroom or designated area until an "all clear" is announced.

Lockdown

A lockdown may be used when there is a serious threat inside the building. Staff will secure the room, keep children quiet and out of sight, account for all children, and wait for instructions from administration or law enforcement.

Families should not come to the building during a lockdown unless directed by school officials or law enforcement.

Secure

A secure response may be used when there is a concern outside the building. Children and staff will return indoors, exterior doors will be locked, and normal activities may continue inside when appropriate.

Family Communication and Reunification

Families will be notified as soon as it is safe and appropriate. In an emergency, children will only be released to parents/guardians or authorized emergency contacts. Identification may be required.

HEALTH & SAFETY

MEDICATIONS

MEDICATIONS—State law sets standards for dispensing medication within the school. Before a medication can be dispensed at school, we must have a written order from a physician including:

- Student's name
- Name of medication
- Diagnosis (the reason the medication is needed, and why it is needed during school hours)
- Time of administration
- Route and dosage of medication to be administered
- Possible side effects
- Termination date for administration

Health office personnel are not allowed to dispense any medication without a Medication Authorization Form. This includes over-the-counter medications. If your child must have medication of any type given during school hours, you may complete the physician's order as outlined above, or you may come to school to give the medication to your child at the appropriate time(s).

All medication must be provided in its original container and will be securely stored by the site lead, unless a special contract allowing the student to carry it is in place.

You can find our medication form on our website. isd466.org

Medications will be administered as prescribed on the label, and all medications must be picked up at the end of each season.

HEALTH CONDITIONS

If your child has a health condition, please inform us so that we can address their health needs effectively.

The school nurse will prepare an emergency care plan or an individualized health plan, as needed, to ensure your child's health and safety while in our care or on field trips.

This applies to students with conditions such as diabetes, seizure disorders, asthma, bee sting allergies, and others.

IMMUNIZATIONS

State law requires students attending Early Childhood classes be up to date on their immunizations based on their current age to attend class. Verification of these immunizations is required previous to enrollment or a valid exemption on file with the school.

PERSONAL HYGIENE/HAND WASHING

Children and staff members will wash their hands with soap and water. This reduces the risk of infectious diseases being transmitted between them.

Hands are washed:

Upon classroom arrival, before and after eating, after toileting, before preparing or serving food, after playing in water shared by two or more people, handling animals, or materials that may be contaminated by contact with animals.

Adults also wash their hands:

Before and after feeding children, before and after administering medication, after assisting with toileting, and after handling garbage or cleaning, disposable gloves are available throughout the program. Wet or soiled clothing will be changed promptly using the items in the child's backpack provided by home. Health guidelines prohibit washing clothing that contains blood or feces. The program maintains a supply of extra clothing to use if there is no change of clothes in the backpack. Borrowed clothing should be laundered and returned the following school day.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS INFORMATION

EXCLUSION OF ILL STUDENTS

Dassel Cokato Early Childhood follows Dassel-Cokato School District health policies to ensure the safety and well-being of all children.

When to Keep Your Child Home

Children should not attend if they have experienced any of the following within the past 24 hours:

- Fever of 100°F or higher (without medication)
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New or undiagnosed rash
- New or worsening cough or severe cold
- Sore throat
- Any communicable disease (e.g., chickenpox, strep throat, pink eye, influenza, impetigo)
- Head lice

Children should also remain home if they are too ill to participate in all daily activities, including outdoor play.

If a Child Becomes Ill at the Program

- The child will be supervised and separated from others.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted and must pick up the child within one hour.

Returning to School

Children may return when they are:

- Fever-free for 24 hours without medication
- Vomit- and diarrhea-free for 24 hours
- On medication for at least 24 hours (if prescribed)
- Cleared by a physician if diagnosed with a contagious illness

Children sent home with fever, vomiting, or diarrhea may not return the next day.

Illness Notification

- Parents/guardians must inform the program of any communicable illness.
- The program will notify families of exposure to reportable contagious diseases (per Minnesota Rules 4605.7040) the same day.
- Notices will be posted for one week and shared via email.

HEAD LICE

If live lice or a significant number of nits are found on your child, they will be sent home immediately. Your child can return the next day if they have been treated and show no live lice and only a minimal number of nits. A daily check for live lice and nits will be conducted by staff upon their return. If your child has been sent home twice and returns with live lice or a large number of nits again, they will be suspended from school for one week.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE REPORTING AND POSTING REQUIREMENTS

We will notify families if there has been an exposure to an infectious and/or contagious reportable disease specified in MN Rules, part 4605.7040, such as scabies, ringworm, or chicken pox. Certain childhood illnesses pose a threat to pregnant women – i.e., Fifth Disease, CMV, and certain strains of measles; a pregnant woman who has been exposed should consult with her physician.

The program will notify parents/guardians of an exposure by posting information about the contagious disease, including the illness, symptoms, treatment, prevention measures, and the number of reported cases. Links to the information will be sent out to families.

WEATHER RELATED NOTIFICATIONS

Throughout the year, there will be days when school is delayed, dismissed early, or closed due to inclement weather. We will use our campus messaging system, Campus Messenger, to announce weather-related changes to the school schedule. After sending a Campus message, the corresponding information will be posted on the district website

SCHOOL CLOSING

If school is closed, **Play and Learn Preschool & ECFE** will be **CLOSED**

LATE START

If school has a two hour late start, No Morning **Play and Learn** NO **ECFE** classes **before 10:00 am.**

EARLY RELEASE

NO afternoon Play and Learn Preschool classes and **NO afternoon/evening ECFE** classes.

- Weather may require early dismissal. Families will be notified through school communication channels.
- Children who ride school transportation will be transported home unless otherwise instructed. Parents who provide transportation should pick up their child promptly.
- Parents may choose to keep their child home if they are concerned about weather conditions.

School cancellations, late starts, early releases, vacations, illness, and weather-related closures do not affect tuition. Tuition is based on the program as a whole, not the number of days attended.

While unforeseen circumstances may affect the number of preschool days, we will make every effort to follow the preschool calendar as closely as possible.

Watch for communication via **Text** and **Email**

From **Dassel-Cokato & Community Ed**

Programming will make every effort to run.

Please make sure your account information is up to date on your **Arux** Account.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

In Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood Programs, we believe positive relationships are the foundation for learning and growth. Our teachers build strong connections with children and use a responsive, developmentally appropriate approach to guide behavior, teach social skills and support each child's success.

Our goals are to:

- Create a positive, safe, and enriching learning environment for all children.
- Establish clear expectations, consistent routines, and predictable experiences.
- Teach and model respectful behavior and personal responsibility.
- Support the development of self-regulation, independence, and self-help skills.
- Help children learn cooperation, sharing, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and empathy.
- Use positive guidance strategies such as modeling, redirection, visual and verbal cues, and collaborative problem-solving.
- Recognize and respond to age-appropriate developmental needs and behaviors.

Our licensed teachers understand that young children are still learning these skills and provide guidance with patience, consistency, and encouragement. When additional support is needed, teachers partner with families to develop strategies that help children be successful at school and beyond.

Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood Programs is part of Dassel-Cokato Schools and follows the district's strategic values. In partnership with families and the community, we support each child's growth, promote lifelong learning, and encourage positive contributions.

Children are expected to:

- Respect themselves, others, and staff
- Accept individual differences
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Communicate their needs to staff
- Respect equipment and property

Expectations are communicated in a positive, consistent, and firm manner. Staff help children understand expectations through clear communication, consistency, and positive reinforcement.

Our goal is to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all children. Staff will make reasonable adjustments to meet individual needs whenever possible.

If a child's behavior negatively impacts themselves or others, staff may adjust the environment, groupings, activities, or supervision. Children are guided to understand the impact of their behavior and learn appropriate alternatives. Positive behavior is modeled and reinforced to support responsibility and self-control.

BEHAVIORS WHICH ARE CONSIDERED INAPPROPRIATE AND HARMFUL INCLUDE:

- Behavior that threatens the safety of children or staff. A child exhibiting these behaviors may be suspended from the program immediately. A parent/guardian conference is required before the child can return to the program.
- Behavior that directly or indirectly threatens others. This includes any form of aggression, such as hitting, kicking, pushing, biting, throwing objects, verbal threats, disrespectful language, inappropriate gestures, inappropriate touching, etc.
- Behavior which prevents a staff person from fulfilling his/her ability to be available for all children, including removing themselves from the group or program area without staff approval, or demonstrating a lack of self-control (anger, blatant disrespect, or absolute refusal to follow directions of the staff person in charge)
- Behavior that intentionally causes destruction of property.
- Behavior that demonstrates the child's lack of readiness for Charger Childcare, including not being toilet trained, not being dressed appropriately for school/weather, any behavior resulting from inadequate or untimely administration of medication, or not being able to interact appropriately in a group setting.

BITING POLICY

Biting is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and three years. While biting is age-appropriate, it is also unacceptable in a child care environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause-and-effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration, and stress. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents/guardians, or teachers. Our staff works with all children to promote socially acceptable responses and behaviors. Biting is addressed in all classrooms. The curriculum includes a variety of age-appropriate books about biting and a range of games that help children learn what teeth are used for and when they should not be used. Group times often include questions such as: "What do we put in our mouth?" and "What can we eat?" as well as having children practice "using their words." "No Biting" pictures are also posted in the room.

Staff completes an annual "When Biting Happens" to review helpful tips on biting prevention as well as circumstances or situations that provoke biting.

Should a biting incident occur:

- Staff address the biter saying, **"No biting, biting hurts!** Teeth are for eating food" in a firm, matter-of-fact voice. Staff remain calm, being careful not to show anger towards the child.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include redirection or meeting the child's needs. As little attention as possible should be given to the biting child to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. Bites will be washed with soap and water, and a cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary.
- Parents/guardians of both the biter and the bitten are notified.

All information is confidential, and the names of the children involved in the incident are not shared. In addition, biting is always documented on a behavior report and provided to parents/guardians. Children who bite more than three times in a day will be sent home. This may be adjusted based on individual circumstances.

It is important to explore the reason for biting when it occurs. Teachers will work with parents/guardians to gather information about the child's behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation, or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can develop prevention strategies and begin teaching replacement skills.

Steps staff will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior include:

- Examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions should be asked:
 - Was the space too crowded?
 - Were there too few toys?
 - Was there too little to do, or too much waiting?
 - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times?
- Change the environment, routines, or activities as necessary.
- Work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways.
- Observe the child to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
- Program administrators will meet to create an action plan.
- Program and family will communicate regularly to measure outcomes.
- If biting continues, the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with parents/guardians to seek out additional outside resources as necessary.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES & SUPPORTS

HELP ME GROW

Help Me Grow Minnesota connects families to resources that help young children develop, learn and grow.

While every child is unique, children develop in certain, predictable ways, called developmental milestones.

Help Me Grow provides resources for families to understand developmental milestones and learn if there are concerns. Families take the lead in seeking additional support or referring their child for a comprehensive, confidential screening or evaluation at no cost. Minnesota's Help Me Grow is an interagency initiative of the State of Minnesota Department of Education, Department of Health and Department of Human Services. We partner with all local service agencies.

Go to helpmegrowmn.org for more information.



PERSONALIZED PARENT EDUCATION

Early Childhood Parent Coaching and Consultation: We offer FREE personalized parenting visits for families with children from birth through age 5. These visits can take place at your home, the Early Childhood Center, over the phone, or even on the playground—whatever works best for you.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- New Baby Visits
- Parenting Support
- Expectant Families
- Community Resources
- Child Growth & Development
- Problem Solving for Parenting Challenges

If you're interested in a visit tailored to your needs contact: **Angela Smith**, Early Childhood Coordinator - Licensed Parent & Family Educator 320-286-4120 • angela.smith@dc.k12.mn.us

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Early Childhood Special Education services are available to support children from birth to kindergarten entrance who meet eligibility criteria. Services may address areas such as communication, social-emotional development, cognitive development, motor skills, adaptive skills, and behavior.

Children may be referred for an evaluation if there are concerns about their development or learning. Parent/guardian permission is required before any special education evaluation can take place. After the evaluation is completed, a meeting will be scheduled with the family to review the results and determine whether the child qualifies for services.

When a child is eligible, services are planned with the family and may be provided in a variety of early childhood settings. The goal is to support each child's development, participation, and success in inclusive learning environments.

Special Education programs include but are not limited to:

- Speech or Language Impairments
- Specific Learning Disability
- Developmental Cognitive Disability
- Emotional or Behavior Disorders
- Developmental Adapted Physical Education
- Occupational & Physical Therapy
- Other Health Disabilities
- Physical Impairments
- Visual and Hearing Impairments

All students referred for special education assessment must have parent permission prior to assessment. Afterward, a conference will be scheduled to discuss assessment results.

SECTION 504

It is the policy of School District 466 to protect students with disabilities from discrimination and to identify and evaluate learners who, within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, need accommodations, special services or programs in order that such learners may receive the required free, appropriate public education. To view the complete policy regarding student disability nondiscrimination, please visit the district's website and refer to policy 521.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood has an active advisory council which is composed of parents and other community members. The council meets eight times a year to provide input and guidance on things such as program needs, outreach, special events, evaluation, class schedules and other issues as they arise. The D-C Early Childhood Advisory Council is an essential link between program staff, parents, and the D-C community. To learn more or if interested in joining, please call the Early Childhood office 320-286-4120

CHARGERS CHILDCARE

Dassel-Cokato Community Education offers childcare options to support the needs of families throughout the school year and summer.

Charger Kids Club provides before- and after-school care for students in grades K–5 at Dassel Elementary and Cokato Elementary. Care is also available on non-school days, including vacation days, in-service days, and during summer programming.

Little Chargers Childcare is available for children attending Play and Learn Preschool at the Early Childhood Center and Cokato Elementary.

Our programs provide a fun, safe, recreational, and enriching environment where children can build relationships, participate in engaging activities, and feel supported.

More information is available at www.isd466.org/community-ed/charger-kids-club.

Questions may be directed to the Childcare Coordinator or the Community Education Office at 320-286-4100.

CALENDARS

The Play and Learn Preschool calendar is available online at www.isd466.org.

CENSUS

It is important to maintain accurate and up-to-date census information to better serve the residents of our Dassel-Cokato community. If you have not already done so, complete the ISD #466 Census form found on the district website, for all children ages birth-age 6 living in your home.

Having current census information on file with the district ensures your family will receive school information in a timely manner, as well as aid in proper planning for the district, such as:

- Early Childhood Screening notifications
- Preschool and kindergarten enrollment information
- Accurate information for planning and projections of growth at D-C Schools
- Proper funding from the state government for early childhood programs, such as Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) and Play and Learn Preschool is allocated

EARLY CHILDHOOD SCREENING

Early Childhood Screening is a free and simple check of how your child is growing, developing and learning. We strongly encourage parents to Screen at age 3 or shortly after.

Early Childhood Screening is required for Play and Learn Preschool students and must be completed within 90 days of the start of preschool according to state statute. Screening is also required before entering kindergarten.

Go to our website to schedule an appointment: <https://www.isd466.org/community-ed/early-childhood/screening>

PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION & BILLING

PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

Preschool registration occurs online early February for the upcoming school year.

A non-refundable registration fee is due upon registration to secure the enrollment. Age eligible students are welcome to join a preschool class throughout the school year, provided space allows. We request a few days notice to register the student before they can officially start.

PAYMENTS / ACCOUNTS

Tuition may be paid in full or divided into nine equal monthly installments from September through May.

The full-year payment or first tuition installment is due before the first day of preschool. Monthly invoices are generated through the Arux registration system and emailed to families.

Families may set up auto-pay in their Arux account. Auto-pay is processed on the 1st of each month. Families may also choose to self-pay online using Discover, MasterCard, or Visa. Cash or check payments may be made in person at the Early Childhood Office.

Monthly payments are due on the 1st of each month. A late fee will be assessed for payments received after the 10th of the month.

A fee will be charged for any check returned due to insufficient funds. If repayment is not made within five business days of notification, services may be suspended. The program reserves the right to require payment by cash or cashier's check for families with a history of returned checks.

Tuition is charged for the program as a whole. While we make every effort to follow the preschool calendar, missed days may occur due to weather, emergencies, or other unforeseen circumstances. Tuition will not be adjusted for late starts, early releases, snow days, family vacations, or illness.

Families experiencing financial challenges are encouraged to contact the Early Childhood Coordinator. We do not want financial hardship to be a barrier to a child attending preschool.

Unpaid tuition installments without parent/guardian communication may result in dismissal from Play and Learn Preschool.

DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood reserves the right to dismiss a child from the program if it is determined that the program cannot meet the child's needs or if the environment is no longer safe or appropriate for the child, staff, or other participants.

Dismissal may occur immediately due to concerns related to attendance, behavior, or program needs, or due to parent/guardian actions. Reasons may include excessive unreported absences, unsafe or inappropriate behavior, failure to complete required forms, nonpayment of fees, lack of cooperation with staff, repeated policy violations (including sign-in/out procedures), or frequent late pickups.

PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE- PRESCHOOL

It is important that preschool children arrive on time and are picked up on time. For children who do not use district-provided transportation, a parent/guardian or authorized adult must remain with the child until the child has been received by preschool staff. Children must be picked up promptly at the posted class dismissal time. If a child is picked up more than five minutes late, a late pick-up fee may be assessed for every five-minute period.

If a child is not picked up and staff are unable to reach a parent/guardian or emergency contact after a reasonable amount of time, staff may contact local law enforcement or county social services for assistance in locating family or ensuring the child's safety. If late pick-up becomes a repeated concern, a meeting may be scheduled to determine next steps. Continued tardiness or late pick-up may result in disenrollment from the program.

Families are expected to have a backup plan to ensure their child is picked up on time. We understand that circumstances beyond a family's control may occur, such as inclement weather. If this happens, families must notify the Early Childhood Office as soon as possible and arrange for an authorized person to pick up the child.

DAILY SIGN-IN/ SIGN-OUT

- Preschool parent drop off -we ask they you personally sign your child in and out each day with the teacher and make contact with a staff member.
- If using district transportation your student will be signed in and out by preschool staff.

AUTHORIZED PICKUP & EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Children will only be released to parents/guardians or individuals listed as authorized pick-ups. If someone not listed will be picking up your child, you must update your account, send a note, or call ahead before pickup time. All individuals picking up a child may be asked to show a valid ID. Please remind anyone picking up to bring identification.

If there is someone who should not pick up your child, please notify us in writing. If this individual is a biological parent, official court documentation must be provided. Without legal documentation, we cannot deny access to a parent listed on the birth certificate. Families are responsible for keeping emergency and authorized pick-up contacts up to date. Please provide at least two emergency contacts in addition to parents/guardians.

ABSENCES

If your child is going to be absent, families should notify the early childhood office.



Early Childhood Center
320-286-4120

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

Children will be released only to their parent/guardian or persons authorized on the child's profile. No one other than the authorized person will be allowed to pick up children. If an unauthorized person attempts to pick up a child, parents will be notified, and if necessary, 911 will be called. Parents/guardians can add authorized individuals to their Arux account online. By law, program staff must release a child to a legal parent unless a court order has been provided. No child will be released to anyone who:

- Has not been named as an alternate pick-up for the day.
- Is not identified as an authorized pick-up person.
- Cannot verify identity with proper photo ID.
- Appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

TRANSPORTATION

Preschool students may ride district transportation to and from school.

Midday transportation is not available for Play and Learn Preschool.

Transportation services are coordinated through Cokato Transportation. For questions about bus schedules, pick-up/drop-off times, or transportation changes, please contact: Cokato Transportation 320-286-5315

Bus Safety Expectations

To help keep all students safe, children are expected to:

- Be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.
- Follow the bus driver's directions at all times.
- Use kind and respectful language.
- Keep hands, feet, and belongings to themselves.
- Wait safely away from the road until the bus stops.
- Sit facing forward and remain seated while the bus is moving. Preschool students sit near the front of the bus.
- Keep all body parts inside the bus.
- Respect others and school property.
- Refrain from fighting, horseplay, harassment, or intimidation.

Items such as weapons, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, pets, and large recreational equipment are not allowed on the bus.

Bus Conduct

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Bus drivers are responsible for the safety of all students and will report concerns to the school principal.

Consequences for inappropriate bus behavior may include:

- 1st Offense: Warning (or suspension depending on the severity of the incident)
- 2nd Offense: 3-day bus suspension
- 3rd Offense: 5-day bus suspension
- 4th Offense: 10-day bus suspension

For preschool and elementary students, consequences may return to a first offense after 60 calendar days without a behavior incident.

Midday bussing is not available for Play and Learn Preschool

OUTDOOR PLAY

Children should be dressed for active indoor and outdoor play. Clothing may become dirty, wet, or soiled during preschool activities. The program is not responsible for lost, damaged, or soiled items.

Outdoor play occurs daily when weather conditions are safe and appropriate. Families should send children with weather-appropriate clothing each day and label all items with the child's first and last name.

Families should provide a complete extra set of clothing in a labeled plastic bag to keep in the child's backpack in case of accidents, spills, or wet clothing.

Winter Clothing: During cold weather, children should have a warm coat, hat, mittens or gloves, boots, and snow pants. Students will not go outside when the temperature or **wind chill is below 0°F**, or when conditions are unsafe due to heavy snow, ice, or unsafe playground conditions.

Summer Clothing: During warm weather, children should wear lightweight clothing and safe footwear for active play. Students will not go outside when the **heat index is 100°F** or higher, or when conditions are unsafe due to high humidity, poor air quality, storms, lightning, or unsafe playground conditions.

Understand the Weather

Wind-Chill



- 30° is *chilly* and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is *cold*
- 0° to 15° is *very cold*
- -20° to 0° is *bitter cold* with significant risk of *frostbite*
- -20° to -60° is *extreme cold* and *frostbite* is likely
- -60° is *frigid* and exposed skin will freeze in 1 minute

Heat Index



- 80° or below is considered *comfortable*
- 90° beginning to feel *uncomfortable*
- 100° *uncomfortable* and may be *hazardous*
- 110° considered *dangerous*

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)										
Air Temperature	Wind Speed in mph									
	Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	
	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1
	10	10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15
	0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29
	-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43



Comfortable for out door play



Caution



Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)													
Air Temperature (F)	Relative Humidity (Percent)												
	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	87
	84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127
	94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135		
	100	109	114	118	124	129	130						
	104	119	124	131	137								

PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

BIRTHDAYS

Store-bought treats from home are welcome in celebration of preschoolers' birthdays, but are not part of classroom recognition at preschool. **Any treats will be sent home in backpacks.**

Birthday invitations are very special to receive. We ask your cooperation in not sending birthday invitations to school to be handed out. There is the potential for disappointed children when invitations are handed out and some are not included. Please make arrangements to mail them or deliver the invitations in an alternative way.

Please note: School office and teaching staff will not disclose the addresses of our students due to data privacy laws.

CELEBRATIONS / HOLIDAYS

Holidays, such as Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day, will be recognized with a color specific dress opportunity and a special, educationally intentional classroom activity.

For example, children will be invited to wear orange and/or black a day during the week of Halloween and there will be a special snack and activity planned.

Watch for information in your teacher's newsletter for more information.

SNACKS

A light snack is provided each day with milk or water. Preschool families pay a nominal one-time snack fee at the start of school.

Please inform your teacher if your child has any food allergies or intolerances.

Toys

Please leave toys at home. Occasionally, we will have a special toy day where toys are allowed. Parents/guardians will be informed when these days are to occur. Toys with weapons are not allowed.

HOME / SCHOOL CONNECTION

Orientation sessions, conferences, and newsletters provide valuable information about your child's preschool experience, but everyday conversations are just as important. Set aside time each day to talk with your child about what they learned, the friends they spent time with, the activities they enjoyed, and how they felt throughout the day. These conversations help strengthen the connection between home and school while giving you insight into your child's growth and experiences.

Your feedback is important to us. Whether you have concerns, questions, or would like to celebrate your child's achievements and progress, we encourage you to connect with us.

Student Expectations

School is your child's job at this stage of their life. Please help to prepare them each day for success with:

- A good breakfast
- Adequate sleep
- Backpacks packed and ready to go
- Proper clothing for the day

PRESCHOOL TEACHING AND LEARNING

4 Star Parent Aware

DC Play and Learn Preschool has earned a 4 Star Parent Aware rating from the State of Minnesota.

This rating is the highest possible rating. Parent Aware helps families find quality care and education.

Programs that earn the 4 Star Rating are going above and beyond health and safety requirements and have:

- Volunteered for extra, in-depth training
- Devoted themselves to strong, caring relationships with each child
- Adopted the latest approaches to keeping children's learning on track
- Committed to daily activities and routines that help children learn

More information about the Parent Aware program can be found online at www.parentaware.org



PRESCHOOL ASSESSMENT

The early childhood years are an important time of rapid growth and learning. Children's brains are developing more quickly at this time than at any other. They are exploring what they can do with their bodies, creating relationships, and investigating how the world works. Because of this complex and rapid development in young children, a shared understanding of how their development and learning progress is necessary to help them be successful in the early years and entering kindergarten.

Minnesota's early learning standards are called the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs) and are aligned with the kindergarten academic standards. The ECIPs are a tool for early education programs to plan curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development activities. The ECIPs are the basis of the DC Play and Learn Assessment Tool and Progress Report.

Formal assessments are completed two times in the preschool year during the fall and spring. Authentic, intentional observation and progressive monitoring is ongoing throughout the year. Results of formal and informal assessment will be shared with parents during the November & March conference as well as through parent/teacher conversations as needed.

Students are assessed in the areas of:

- Social Skills and Emotional Development
- Approaches to Learning: Reasoning, Persistence, Curiosity
- Motor Development
- Communication and Language
- Cognitive Development
 - Early math skills: Shapes, Numbers, Patterns
 - Early literacy skills: Print Awareness, Vocabulary, Letter Recognition

CONFERENCES

Preschool conferences are held twice a year in November and March. Conference time sign-ups are scheduled online approximately one month prior to conferences. Daytime and evening conferences are offered.

When a concern arises, please deal with it as soon as possible. You do not need to wait until conference time to address it. It is best to direct your concern to the specific school personnel most directly related to your question or concern. Your child's teacher can be reached by either email or phone, see the staff directory. In most instances, the teacher will be available for calls before and after school. Calls made during the school day will go to voicemail and will be returned as soon as possible.

For a meaningful parent/teacher conference, make a list of areas you wish to discuss, bring both parents, if possible, and please do not have younger brothers and sisters attend conferences. Childcare is available at our school during this time.

PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

CURRICULUM

The **MN Early Childhood Indicators of Progress** serve as a foundation for DC Play and Learn Preschool and DC Early Childhood Family Education Classes curriculum.

Our lesson plans are designed to nurture development in the following areas:

- Approaches to Learning
- Creativity & the Arts
- Language, Literacy and Communication Development
- Mathematics
- Physical & Movement Development
- Scientific Thinking and Exploring
- Social & Emotional Development
- Social Systems



While our lesson plans provide consistency and predictability, we also recognize and value the uniqueness of each child. Children bring their own individual temperaments, personalities, interests, and learning styles, which are thoughtfully supported within our program.

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

Preschool has a play-based philosophy and a focus on creating rather than the end result of what was created. Instruction is facilitated through the use of multiple curriculums that enhance daily classroom schedules.

The Creative Curriculum focuses on children's interests, daily experiences, and developmental needs in a purposeful environment. Intentionally designed learning centers in the preschool classrooms include science/discovery area, dramatic play, sensory (play dough, water and sand), blocks, writing center, library, manipulatives-puzzles, blocks and peg boards, "loose parts," and games.

Everyday Mathematics offers a hands-on approach to early numeracy concepts including counting, measurement, patterning, and graphing, and it is the math curriculum used in Dassel-Cokato Elementary Schools (grades K-4).

Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Early Pre-K Curriculum is an early literacy/phonemic awareness curriculum that works with early literacy skills such as alphabet knowledge and language awareness. It teaches phonological awareness skills such as rhyming, blending and segmenting words.

S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K is a multisensory approach that involves brain stimulation activities to help prepare your child to learn. It develops visual, auditory, balance, fine and gross motor skills, and it enhances coordination and ability to pay attention.

Second Step is a social skills development curriculum that helps children build confidence, independence, communication, decision-making, self-regulation, empathy, and conflict-resolution skills. Through engaging, research-based lessons, children learn to manage emotions, focus attention, and develop positive behaviors that support kindergarten readiness and lifelong success.

PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

PLAY BASED LEARNING

At Play and Learn Preschool, play is an essential part of how children learn and grow. Play-based learning is much more than free play—it is a purposeful, teacher-guided approach that provides children with hands-on experiences that build the skills needed for school and life. Our teachers thoughtfully design learning environments, ask questions, model skills, and create opportunities for exploration, problem-solving, and social interaction. Through play, children develop confidence, independence, creativity, and the foundational skills that support kindergarten readiness and lifelong learning.

Through play-based learning, children:

- Develop communication, social-emotional, and self-regulation skills.
- Build problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision-making abilities.
- Practice cooperation, sharing, and conflict-resolution with peers.
- Explore academic concepts through hands-on, meaningful experiences.
- Gain confidence, independence, and a positive attitude toward learning.

PRESCHOOL NEWSLETTERS

Preschool teachers send out a weekly newsletter via email. We ask that families look for this and read it each week. Teachers share what the week ahead will look like. Use this information to prepare your child for what is to come and exciting things to look forward to. It can also be used as a communication tool at the end of the day to connect and ask questions about specific classroom items, such as what book was read or what was in the sensory table. Important information is also included about non-school days, conferences, and special events.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

It is a priority of school readiness to involve parents in their child's learning and education. Research has shown that early childhood programs that involve parents and children working together are more effective than programs that only focus on the child.

Some ways to become involved include:

- Volunteer to help prep classroom materials
- Enroll in an Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) class
- Attend Early Childhood Special Events
- Join the Early Childhood Advisory Council
- Volunteer for a shift supporting the craft fair



FUNDRAISING

The Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood Craft Fair is a fundraiser sponsored by the Dassel-Cokato Early Childhood Advisory Council, a group of volunteer parents!

Scheduled for the first Saturday in November each year.

All proceeds from vendor fees and food sales go directly to our programs to support community early literacy enhancements, DC Preschool and Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) scholarships, playground upkeep, community outreach, and a variety of other programming needs as they arise.

- Preschool and ECFE Families are asked to sign up and support the Craft Fair. Help is needed for shifts the Thursday and Friday evenings before and many shifts are available that Saturday

EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY EDUCATION INFORMATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY EDUCATION CLASSES REGISTRATION & FEES

Early Childhood Family Education courses are offered throughout the school year during fall, winter and spring sessions. Daytime and evening opportunities are offered as well as one-time special events. Registration is done online at isd466.arux.app.

Most class fees are based on a sliding fee scale based on a household family income. If the class fee is cost-prohibitive for your family please call the Early Childhood office, 320-286-4120 to enroll at a reduced class fee or to discuss scholarship opportunities.

No family will be turned away from participation in ECFE due to a financial challenge.

Types of Early Childhood Family Education Classes

- Non-Separating Classes

Parents/caregivers and children remain the Early Childhood classroom the entire class time. Parent discussion takes place in the room while the children play.

- Separating Classes

During Parent Discussion parents move to a nearby room with the parent educator while the children remain with the early childhood teacher and paraprofessional in the Early Childhood classroom.

- Parent Discussion Only Classes

Parents/caregivers will engage in parenting discussions facilitated by a parenting educator while the children remain with a paraprofessional in the classroom.

ECFE Classes Include:

Parent & Child Time:

During approximately the first 30 minutes of class parents/caregivers and children explore and play with activities that are intentionally designed to foster your child's social, emotional, cognitive, physical, and language development.

Circle Time: Everyone joins together to enjoy music, movement activities, and stories.

Parent Discussion Time: Our parenting educator leads discussions on the many joys and challenges of parenting. Discussions are centered around child development and parent selected topics.

Child Time: While the parents/caregivers are in discussion time, children enjoy snack and activities with their peers and licensed early childhood teacher and/or paraprofessional.

Sibling Care: Childcare for class participant's sibling is provided by our sibling care provider for an additional fee. Register for sibling care with your ECFE class registration. (Note: only available during classes where indicated)

ECFE INFORMATION

ECFE CLASS COMPONENTS

PARENT & CHILD INTERACTION

This time is designed for you and your child together. We encourage families to follow your child's cues and participate in activities that interest him/her.

The licensed early childhood teacher will have various learning opportunities available throughout the early childhood space. The learning environment and hands-on activities are intentionally prepared in accordance with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress.

Classroom preparation focuses on:

- Approaches to Learning
- Creativity & the Arts
- Language, Literacy and Communication Development
- Mathematics
- Physical & Movement Development
- Scientific Thinking and Exploring
- Social & Emotional Development
- Social Systems



PARENT DISCUSSION

During the second half of a separating class parents meet together without their children to discuss topics of interest with the licensed parenting educator.

Topics vary depending on the class and the needs/interests of the group.

Parent time provides a welcoming and supportive environment where parents can connect, learn, and grow together.

The parent educator serves as a facilitator who shares information and resources, while recognizing that every parent brings valuable experiences and insights to contribute.

Goals of Parent Discussion:

- Leave each session with worthwhile information, resources, and connections.
- Build supportive, trusting friendships with other parents.
- Discuss parenting topics in a respectful, nonjudgmental environment.
- Gain confidence in their parenting role by recognizing and building on their strengths.
- Learn about child development and effective parenting strategies.
- Explore new ideas, set goals, and develop skills to support their family.
- Share both the joys and challenges of parenting in a safe and supportive space.

Ways to effectively participate in Parent Discussion:

- Remember that parent discussions are CONFIDENTIAL. It is important that parents feel comfortable sharing experiences without worrying that it will be discussed outside the group.
- Share your perspectives of childhood and your own parenting experiences.
- Respect others' comments and refrain from judging other parents' attitudes or actions.
- Actively listen and avoid side conversations.
- Do your part to see that discussions begin and end on time.
- Cell Phones on silent

ECFE INFORMATION

DIAPERING

Parents are responsible for the diaper changing needs of their children. Diapers are to be changed in the diaper changing area in the adult restrooms. Please place soiled diaper in a plastic bag prior to placing in the wastebasket.

SNACKS

Snack is provided for preschool and early childhood classes. Preschool families pay a nominal one-time snack fee at the start of school. Please inform staff of any food allergies.

ECFE ASSESSMENT

As early childhood professionals, ECFE staff are obligated to be aware of the growth and development of the children they serve. We use authentic observation within the classroom as well as a parent-reported Ages and Stages questionnaire.

If a cause for concern is observed staff are responsible to inform you the parent. Any further observation or formal assessments could be available to you and your child at your request.

SEPARATION

Building trust takes time. We encourage parents to say goodbye to their child, let them know where they will be, and then leave confidently. Children often take cues from their parents, so a calm and consistent goodbye can help them feel more secure and adjust more quickly to the separation.

Please know that it is completely normal for some children to have difficulty separating. Every child is unique and develops at their own pace. ECFE staff will provide comfort, support, and reassurance to help your child feel safe and settled. If a child continues to have significant difficulty after staff intervention, we may ask you to assist your child in the early childhood classroom to support a successful transition.

-Children under 1 will stay with parents during separation time (In the classroom or in the Parent Education Room). Children need to be able to independently sit up in a chair and feed themselves snack to separate.

CELL PHONE USE

Parent and child ECFE classes are a special opportunity to connect, learn, and play together. To help make the most of this time, please keep cell phones on silent and put away during class. Your presence and engagement help your child feel valued, supported, and ready to learn

