Early Childhood

ROCORI Public Schools

Community Education

Preschool Handbook

District Education Facility (DEF)

527 Main Street

Cold Spring, MN 56320

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Philosophy

ROCORI Early Childhood program promotes an environment where children become independent, confident, lifelong learners with a strong sense of self. We are proud to offer a positive, child-centered preschool experience that fosters a love of learning in a nurturing community.

Our Curriculum

We offer a child-centered and developmentally appropriate program for three- through five-year-old children. ROCORI Early Childhood program has chosen to adapt Open the World of Learning (OWL) curriculum for Preschool. It is a comprehensive curriculum that covers all domains of early learning. Each unit is built around a daily routine with an activity-centered day. Themes, skills and concepts are developed through quality children's books.

In addition to OWL, ROCORI Early Childhood uses Second Step Social-Emotional curriculum. This program helps our Preschoolers with skills such as listening, paying attention, controlling their behavior, and getting along with others. Our goal is that students enter Kindergarten with self-regulation and social-emotional skills, so they are set up for success.

Play allows children to learn about the world and themselves. As children play, they learn new skills, develop coping mechanisms, test new ideas and master their bodies. OWL curriculum provides play opportunities throughout our day. As children make choices about where to play in the classroom, they are learning a variety of skills and experiencing positive interactions with other children and adults.

Community Education's Equity Philosophy

ROCORI Community Education recognizes the community is made up of a diverse group of people (racially, culturally, and socio-economically) with varying abilities, talents, needs, and goals. We are committed to meeting the needs of the diverse interests of our community, allowing them to achieve their full potential as valued and productive members of society.

(ROCORI Community Education includes anything outside of the K-12 school day across the lifespan).

"In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

(1) **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

(2) **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

(3) **email:** program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider."

The Little Spartan Way

	bus	hallway	classroom	restroom	cafeteria	playground
we are **kind**	• control my body • friendly words • say hello! 	• control my body • greet others with a smile or wave 	• friendly words • include others • help others 	• control my body • speak kindly 	• control my body • friendly words • include others 	• control my body • friendly words • take turns 
we are **respectful**	• quiet voices • walking feet 	• eyes forward • control my body 	• respect materials • keep body to self • follow directions 	• respect privacy • throw out garbage • stay in my stall 	• appropriate voice • stay in my space • use manners 	• follow directions • share equipment 
we are **responsible**	• sit at all times • follow directions 	• follow directions • walk in an orderly fashion 	• active listening • follow directions 	• take turns • wait patiently 	• walking feet • ask adult for help when needed • clean my space 	• ask adult for help when needed • pick up toys 

ROCORI Early Childhood Program is proud to be a 4-Star Parent Aware program!



Class offerings

Discovery Time- This preschool class is offered for children turning *three by September 1* of the current school year.

Kinder Connection- This preschool class is offered for children turning *four by September 1* of the current school year.

Staff Qualifications

All ROCORI Early Childhood teachers are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). All of our lead teachers hold a four-year college degree. Every year, the teachers and paraprofessionals complete a number of continued training hours.

The State of Minnesota (state statue 121.A) requires that ALL children participate in an Early Childhood Screening, prior to entering a public-school Kindergarten program.

Children are ready for screening as early as age 3.5.

This is a FREE, and required, opportunity for you to check your child's developmental domains. The ROCORI School District provides trained screeners to administer the DIAL screening tool, designed to check your child's progress in language, cognitive skills, and motor skills. In addition, our screeners will check your child's vision and hearing, as well as gather information on your child's height and weight and immunization records.

We have screening days throughout the school year. Please register on our Eleyo Registration System at https://rocori.ce.eleyo.com/ OR by calling **320-685-8631.**

Absences/Late Arrivals

If your child is going to be out of school for any reason or arrives at school late, please let the office know. For illnesses, this is especially important so we can inform families of any communicable disease symptoms while maintaining confidentiality.

Age requirements

- Children must be age 3 by September 1st to enter our Discovery Time program.
- Children must be age 4 by September 1st to enter our Kinder Connection program.

Birthday/Celebration/Holidays

Occasionally, when students celebrate their birthdays or other special occasions, they may want to bring a special treat to school. If you feel the need to provide something for a celebration, please be mindful of the District's Wellness Policy. The ROCORI Wellness policy models healthy behavior and is conscious of allergies. If you would still like to send a treat, we are asking that they be non-food items, such as:

Crazy straws	Pens/Pencils	Bracelets
Sunglasses	Stickers	Glow Sticks

Childcare

Kid Care: Childcare is available at the DEF year-round, Monday through Friday from 6:30am-5:30pm in our Kid Care Program. Kid Care is available to Little Spartans preschoolers, on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information about Kid Care, contact Libby Bell program manager at 320-685-8631.

Early Birds: A limited number of spots are available for before school childcare for those students enrolled in our morning preschool classes. Preschoolers can be dropped off beginning at 6:30am and will be in the care of Kid Care staff until school begins at 8:15am.

Communication

Communication between home and school is vital to a successful preschool program. If you need to contact your child's teacher (non-emergency), the following ways are best:

- Write a note in your child's communication folder*
- Send your child's teacher an email
- Call the Community Ed office 320-685-8631

*At the beginning of the year, your child will receive a communication folder. The communication folder should be looked at each day after your child attends preschool, this is where classroom information is kept and where communication from your child's teacher is found. It is important that the folder is always put back into your child's backpack, so it comes to school each day.

Classroom Information

Each week, a newsletter is sent home detailing your child's week in preschool. This note will include curriculum skills children are working on, books read in class, upcoming important dates, and more. Please be sure to check the contents of your child's backpack each night so that you can find important notes, art projects, and so forth.

Daily Schedule

Each classroom has their own daily schedule; however, a typical schedule would look like the following:

- Arrival
- Table activities
- Bathroom Break
- Circle Time
- Station Time
- Free Play
- Snack Time
- Gym/Outside Play
- End-of-day circle

Discipline Guidelines

ROCORI Preschool programs promote a positive approach to managing the behavior of all children. All Behavior Guidance methods used at ROCORI Early Childhood Programs are tailored to the developmental level of the children that the program is licensed to serve. These policies and procedures are in place to protect the safety of all children and staff. Use of the following techniques are implemented by the ROCORI Preschool and are a positive model of acceptable behavior.

Prevention: A well-designed environment prevents frustration, interruption, and hazards. We strive to maintain stimulation classrooms so that the children can be engaged in productive and positive activities.

Positive Redirection: This technique involves redirecting unacceptable behavior to an acceptable alternative. We will recognize children for their appropriate behavior and successful interactions.

Modeling: Teacher and peer-modeling appropriate behavior is provided to help the children pattern positive responses. When needed, the staff will demonstrate such things as "gentle touches" to make an impression on children.

Boundaries: ROCORI Early Childhood has clear and simple rules in each classroom. Such guidelines as "walking feet, inside voices, listening ears, and gentle touches" help the children to achieve acceptable standards.

Problem-Solving: We appeal to the child's growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences. Asking questions often helps a child to develop correct responses. We regularly remind the children to "use their words" to resolve issues.

Children are in the process of learning appropriate behavior. They are constantly experimenting with many different types of actions and are looking for direction and limits. Our methods include recognition and encouragement of appropriate behavior as often as possible.

Drills—Fire Drills/Tornado Drills/Lockdowns

It is important to train students in school safety procedures. Throughout the year we have several drills: Fire Drills, Tornado/Severe Weather Drills, and Lockdown Drills. Students are provided specific instructions for each type of drill and the drills provide important opportunities to practice the instructions. Each classroom has the procedures posted in the event that a substitute teacher is in the classroom at the time of a drill or live situation.

Immunizations

The State of Minnesota requires all students be appropriately immunized or make a statement of conscientious religious or medical exemption to participate in early childhood programming. A student may not attend early childhood classes if their immunization records are not on file within two weeks of the start of class. Immunization records can be dropped off in the front office of the DEF.

Inclement Weather Policy

The decision to have school during inclement weather has to do with the school's ability to safely transport students, however if a parent feels that it is unsafe for their child to come to school, the parent should keep their child home. **The final decision to send a child to school during inclement weather rests with the parent.**

In the event of inclement winter weather, you can turn to multiple sources to be notified of school closings or late starts (listen for ROCORI area schools).

Twitter: @rocoridistrict

Facebook: ROCORI School District & ROCORI Community Education

Text Message: Text the code @rocoriwthr to 81010

This will sign you up to receive texts for weather related closings/delays/cancellations

School Messenger: Our school messenger system will broadcast a phone message alerting resident

Due to the nature of our preschool program running a different schedule than the K-12 students, please always watch for preschool-specific announcements.

Illness Guidelines

The following is the illness guideline from the ROCORI District.

Antibiotic Treatment: Students must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school. However, antibiotics should be continued for the entirety of the prescription to ensure infection has been properly treated.

Chickenpox: Students must stay home until all of the pox marks have scabbed over, generally 7 days.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) or Eye Drainage: Students must be treated for 24 hours before returning to school.

Covid-19 (Coronavirus): Please refer to the ROCORI Website for latest COVID Protocols

Diarrhea: Students must be free of a diarrheal episode for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Fever (Temperature of 100° F or more): Students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Fifth Disease: Students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease: Students can return to school once symptoms subside.

Impetigo: Students must be in treatment for 24 hours before returning to school.

Measles: Students must stay home for 5 days after rash appears.

Mumps: Students must stay home for 9 days after swelling begins and must be fever-free before returning to school.

Ringworm: Students must be in treatment for 24 hours before returning to school.

Scabies: Students must be in treatment for 24 hours before returning to school.

Strep Throat: Students must be fever-free and on treatment for 24 hours before returning to school.

Vomiting: Students must be free of a vomiting episode for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Lunch/Breakfast/Snack

The students will be offered breakfast, lunch or snacks while in Little Spartans Preschool through the Child and Adult Care Food Program. This requires enrollment paperwork and is free of charge to families.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an important part of the early childhood curriculum, and we consider outdoors an extension of the indoor classroom. Toys, materials, and activities are also available outdoors to enhance the children's play experience. Typically, children go outside each day. Students will remain indoors if the temperature or wind chill is below 10°. It is important for caregivers to provide the appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.) and to make sure these items are sent with your child each day. If your child does not bring the appropriate outerwear, caregivers may be contacted to bring items into school, or they will be given outerwear from the classroom supply to use during outdoor time. If your child is not well enough to play outdoors, he or she is not well enough to attend preschool.

Parent Involvement

Parents have multiple opportunities to join their child in Preschool. These opportunities may include, but are not limited to:

Open House: Parents and preschoolers are invited to an open house in their child's classroom with their child's teacher before the school year begins. This meeting is an opportunity for families to see the classroom, learn about the preschool year, and ask questions.

Kinder-Connection & Discovery Time Conferences: Preschool classes have parent-teacher conferences two times per school year (Fall and Spring). During your child's conferences, your child's teacher will share observations and documented development of your preschooler.

Preschool Concert: Each Spring, we invite parents and special guests to join us at school for a Preschool Concert. This is an opportunity to see your child and their classmates perform many of the songs they sing throughout the year.

Program News

Monthly, a Smore Newsletter will be sent to parents/guardians via email. The newsletter will contain program-wide information. In the event you do not have access to an email account, please let the office know and we can arrange for you to receive a paper copy. peartb@rocori.k12.mn.us or ruegemers@rocori.k12.mn.us

Rest/Nap

ROCORI Early Childhood requires a nap or rest to be provided for children in our all-day Preschool/Kid Care longer than four hours. Children who choose not to sleep, or awaken early, will be offered quiet activities (e.g., books, puzzles, manipulatives) after they rest on their cot for a minimum of 30 minutes.

The school provides cots for rest time. Children may also bring a special blanket, soft toy or small pillow for napping. Please bring nap items home once a week for laundering. Nap/Rest time takes place in the classroom and teachers position themselves so they can hear and see children sleeping at all times.

Separation

Children sometimes have difficulty separating upon arrival at preschool. This is typical behavior which, over time, should decrease as children become more secure in their new environment. Here are some guidelines to make separation easier for your child:

- Allow adequate time in the morning for arrival
- Talk to your child about going to school, who will be there, etc. This prepares your child for what will occur.
- Try not to make your child feel rushed at arrival, this makes your child feel hurried and anxious.
- Parents should say “good-bye” to their child and tell him/her when they will return. Parents should not “sneak out” to prevent the child from crying at that moment. Leaving without saying good-bye may be easier for the parents than leaving while a child is crying, but it truly isn’t easier for the child. Leaving without saying goodbye can also make separations more difficult because a child will fear the unexpected departure and try to keep an eye on his/her parent, which prevents him/her from engaging with the teacher or other children.
- Give hugs and kisses and reassure you’ll be back
- If you are still having difficulty, teachers are close by to help your child when you leave. Usually, children calm down and begin playing soon after you leave.
- Remember, even those children who are comfortable in play and their environment need your attention, affection, and reassurance.

Supply Fee

ROCORI Little Spartans Preschool asks for a supply donation from each family instead of each student’s family purchasing individual supplies. We believe this plan is beneficial to families, saving them both time and money. With your donation, our teachers will be able to purchase the exact type of supplies they need in the amounts needed and will eliminate teachers’ requests mid-year.

Toilet Trained

When your child begins enrollment, our goal is that they are toilet trained. However, we understand that each child progresses at a different pace and therefore, we ask that if your child is not potty trained that they are actively potty training upon entering our program.

Toilet Training Requirement

A. When your child begins enrollment, our goal is that they are toilet trained. However, we understand that each child progresses at a different pace and therefore, we ask that if your child is not potty trained that they are actively potty training upon entering our program.
B. By the time they join our program we ask that your student is:
    a. Able to notify staff that they need to use the restroom. Our staff will assist with prompting and reminders as well.
    b. Pull pants/underwear/pull-ups, up and down.
    c. Climb on and off the toilet independently or with a stool.
    d. Wipe independently with verbal cues from staff
C. If your child is on an IEP, and in need of accommodations with toileting, our staff will work with parents to develop a plan to best serve your child's needs.
D. It is developmentally appropriate for children of preschool age to have occasional potty accidents. Please always have a spare change of clothing in your child's backpack.
E. If a child has an accident, our staff will supervise and give any verbal instructions required for the child to clean up himself/herself. In the case of an accidental bowel movement, a parent/guardian may be contacted to help assist your child in getting cleaned up.
F. If you have potty training concerns, please talk with your child's teacher about additional support, including meeting with our parent educator.

Transportation

Parents can choose from several transportation options, including dropping off and picking their child up to/from preschool. When dropping your child off for preschool, it is important that your child is not alone. A parent/guardian needs to bring the preschooler to their classroom. When picking up, parents can wait inside the building (by the school office) or by the flagpole outside.

Bus Buddy

Kinder Connection students have the option of using a Bus Buddy to support them in riding the district bus to and/or from school. The Bus Buddy must use the same bus stop as the preschooler, be in grade 3 or older, and attend Cold Spring Elementary, ROCORI Middle or High School, or St. Boniface school. The Bus Buddy is responsible for helping the preschooler on/off the bus, sitting up front with their preschool buddy, and be a

good role model for their preschool buddy. If you have questions about your child using a Bus Buddy, please contact the school office.

Tri-Cap

Tri-cap bus company is another busing option. We do not have a contract with Tri-cap and therefore, families who would like to consider this as a transportation option will need to contact Tri-cap privately and set up their schedule.

CHANGE IN PICKUP PERSON Please notify your child's teacher or call the Community Education office if someone other than you is picking up your child. Make sure that a list of people who can pick up your child (in addition to legal parents and guardians) is in the Eleyo Registration system. If someone who is not on the list will be picking up your child, they will only be allowed to do so if you have notified the teacher and/or the school office in advance, preferably in writing. Anyone picking up students must provide photo identification.

Tuition

Tuition Payment Information

Tuition payments are due on the 15th of each month, from September through May. Monthly invoices will be sent as a reminder of your upcoming payment. Families are encouraged to set up automatic payments through our **Eleyo Registration System** for convenience. Payments can also be made at the **Community Education Office** using check, cash, or credit card. If you are unable to make a tuition payment on time, it is essential that you communicate with the **Community Education Administrator** as soon as possible. If tuition payments are not paid and exceed $600.00 services will be suspended until payments have been paid in full.

What to Bring

Make sure to label each item that your child brings to school (backpack, coat, sweater, hat, boots, etc.).

Dress:

- Your child should be dressed for active and participatory play
- Your child should wear sturdy, protective shoes, which allow him/her to run, climb and ride bikes and scooters

- Children go outside most days, so please dress your child appropriately for the weather
- In the winter, a warm jacket, hat, and mittens are needed every day. Snow pants and warm boots are important whenever there is snow on the ground.

Extra clothes—please make sure that your child has one set of seasonal clothes in their backpack.

Backpack

At ROCORI Early Childhood, we encourage children to be independent. Therefore, we strongly recommend a “good sized” backpack that zips and is easy for your child to manage when putting away his/her own things. Please be sure to check the contents of the bag each night, look at your child’s communication folder, and send your child’s backpack to school each day.