Osseo Area Schools
Community Ed
Early Childhood & Family Education



Preschool & PreK

FOR THREE TO FIVE YEAR OLDS

FAMILY HANDBOOK

If you'd like this provided in another format or language call:
English: 763-391-7000, **Lus Hmoob:** 844-577-9549, **русский**: 855-891-5321,
Soomaali: 855-891-5322, **Español:** 855-891-8364, or **Tiếng Việt**: 855-891-8365.

Welcome



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Osseo Area Schools Preschool and PreK programs!

We are dedicated to providing a supportive and enriching environment for all students, staff, and visitors. Our team works hard to create a program that offers your child a meaningful and educational experience.

This handbook is a valuable resource for families participating in our program. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our program office at 763-391-8777 or by email at ecfe@district279.org.

We're eager to begin this year of learning and discovery with your child and greatly appreciate the trust you've placed in us.

Kari Sawyer
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Free language services offered

Our school is dedicated to ensuring that every family has timely and meaningful access to information and services. With more than 125 languages spoken throughout the district, we're committed to providing multilingual communication that promotes the inclusive participation of all families and community members. If you're a parent/caregiver of a student in a public school and your preferred language is not English, you have the following rights established by law:

- School districts must have a process for identifying your language needs.
- Schools must provide information in a language you understand.
- School districts must provide effective language assistance to you, such as by offering translated materials or a language interpreter.
- Schools must provide you with language assistance even if your child is proficient in English or you have some English proficiency.
- Schools must provide translation or interpretation from appropriate and competent individuals and may not rely on or ask students, siblings, friend or untrained school staff to translate or interpret for you.
- Language assistance must be free to you.

For more information on language services here at Osseo Area Schools, please visit OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices.



Program information

Absences

Attendance is recorded daily. If your child will be absent, please report the absence by messaging your child's teacher or by calling our main office, 763.391.8777.

During regular school hours, office staff will check messages and inform teachers of any student absences.

Extended Absences

If your child will miss more than two weeks and you wish to keep their spot in the class:

- Your account must be current.
- You must prepay the tuition for the time they will be absent.

If we don't hear from you within two weeks of the expected return date, your child may be removed from the program.

Bathroom use

Children attending Preschool for Threes should be mostly self-sufficient in the bathroom, know when they need to use the bathroom and have few accidents.

Children attending our PreK for Fours must be completely toilet trained and self-sufficient in the bathroom. If needed, staff will help your child in the bathroom by coaching them through the process, including changing clothes.

Pull-up diapers are not a substitute for being toilet trained. If your child has a toileting accident at school and needs additional assistance, you may be called to come back to school and assist with changing your child. Our staff do not assist children with wiping. We suggest you keep an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack. When choosing clothing, consider your child's ability to take off and put on their clothes when using the bathroom.

Behavior guidance

We believe that all behavior is a form of communication. Hitting, biting, pushing and taking a toy from another child are sometimes seen when groups of young children come together. When a child engages in these kinds of behaviors, they are typically communicating a need to avoid something or a desire to gain something. Some behaviors that are age-appropriate for a young child are not long-term solutions that we want them to use in a group setting. While these behaviors are concerning, we also acknowledge that young children are just beginning to learn how to interact in a group and are still developing impulse control and decision-making skills.

We take several steps to promote positive classroom behavior and are responsive as behaviors arise. We use teaching practices based on the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children.

The Pyramid Model focuses on strategies to reduce challenging behaviors while teaching social and emotional skills.

We use the following techniques to reduce challenging behaviors:

- Visual schedules and classroom routines
- Activities that are engaging and child directed
- Plans for transitions
- Giving clear directions focused on what we want children to do

We teach the following social and emotional skills:

- Behavior expectations in all areas of our day
- Problem solving and playing together
- Emotions and calm down strategies

We reinforce classroom expectations by:

- Using positive descriptive feedback. For example "I noticed you gave a car to your firend. That is being kind"
- Giving a high-five, thumbs up or smile
- Sharing photos or stories with families

If additional support is needed, we have a team of professionals that can work with the child's parent and teacher to develop a support plan. This support plan is private student information and will not be shared with other families.



Program information

Birthdays and holidays

If you do not want your child's birthday recognized during class, please let your child's teacher know. If you would like to bring something for your child to share, birthday "treats" should follow the same guideline in the Snack section of this document.

While we don't celebrate holidays in our program, we deeply value and respect the diverse traditions and cultures of our students. When your child shares their stories with us we encourage them by listening and asking questions. This is how we get to know and value all scholars. Sharing also allows us to discover even more about your child and your families' culture.

Class withdrawal

To withdraw your child's enrollment, please call the office at 763-391-8777. If you have paid tuition, you will receive a prorated refund based on the number of days remaining.



Check-in process

To ensure the safety and security of our students and staff, we use the following check-in process at our sites. With this system, everyone in the building will be expected to wear a visitor pass.

Arbor View & Willow Lane Early Childhood Centers

- Pick up/drop off will be outside of the building, however if you will be entering the building regularly, stop at the front desk to scan your Drivers License and get your semester visitor pass. This pass will be placed in a holder attached to a lanyard.
- You will need to scan your visitor pass each time you enter AND exit the building.
- It is also an expectation that the visitor pass will be worn throughout your time in the building.
- If someone else brings or picks up your child, they will need to scan their photo ID to get a temporary pass for the day.

Elementary schools

- Follow the school's process for entering and exiting the building. Be sure to bring a photo ID if you need a visitor pass.



Clothing

Dress your child appropriately for the weather in comfortable, washable clothing. When choosing clothing, consider your child's ability to take off and put on their clothes when using the bathroom.

We recommend tennis shoes for safety and comfort during indoor and outdoor play. On cold, or snowy days, be sure to send your child with weather appropriate clothing for possible outdoor play.

During winter, please pack indoor shoes along with boots. It's also helpful to keep an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack. On warm days, you may apply sunscreen before school, staff cannot apply sunscreen.

Curriculum and assessment

Early childhood curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIP's). The ECIP's have been developed by the Minnesota Department of Education and include all areas of child development.

Preschool and PreK assessment

- Preschool - District-created progress report
- PreK - Teaching Strategies Gold

E-learning

If Osseo Area Schools announces e-Learning days, you'll receive information from the EC&FE program via email or text.

Teachers will send activities and instructions via email or Talking Points. Teachers will also be available to respond to questions.

Photo agreement

According to Osseo Area Schools photo agreement:
"I agree that by my/my child's participation in Osseo Area Schools Early Childhood & Family Education (EC&FE) programs, I/my child may have their photo/image taken and used by Osseo Area Schools Community Education in various media formats, including print, computer or electronic media, video or audio recording, and film. If I wish to deny this for myself/my child, I will indicate this in my/my child's Community Education program registration."

Please also notify your child's teacher if you choose to opt out of photos.

Early Childhood Parent Teacher Organization (ECPTO)

We encourage you to think about joining the Early Childhood Parent Teacher Organization (ECPTO). It's a great way to connect with other families, work together on events, and help make EC&FE (Preschool, PreK and ECFE) even better for our young learners. The group meets monthly during the school year. Your involvement can really make a difference!

To learn more about the ECPTO, visit their website **bit.ly/Osseo_ECPTO**, follow them on Facebook **bit.ly/ECPTO_Facebook**, or email them at infoECPTO@gmail.com.



Program information

Pick-up and drop-off

Teachers often have important information to share with you at these times. Please avoid using your cell phone in order to be present during pick-up and drop-off.

Your child will only be released to adults authorized on your emergency contact/health history form. If an unfamiliar adult picks up your child, they must show a photo ID to match the information you provided.

Please notify your child's teacher by note or email of any changes to your drop-off or pick-up routine. It is your responsibility to keep the emergency and health/history form updated.

Court orders restricting pick-up must be:

- Filed with the School's main office.
- Documented on the Emergency and Health/History form (bit.ly/ECFE-Health-History).

Delayed or late pick-up

Students must be picked up on time by a parent, guardian, designated adult or sibling. While we understand delays happen, late pick-ups affect your child and the schedule of the teaching team.

If you're running late, please contact the main office at the school your child is attending.

If your child is picked up late, the following will apply:

- First time: A notice will be sent home.
- Two or more times: A $10 fee will be charged to your Arux account per late pick-up, with a written notice sent for each charge.

Snack guidelines

Due to food allergies, our early childhood sites are "nut safe" and all children's snacks should be checked for ingredients to ensure this. This means no products with nuts or processed with nuts.

Classroom snacks need to be commercially prepared/store bought and unopened. Nutritious snacks and fresh fruit are encouraged.

View the full snack guidelines sheet online - **bit.ly/3AYZ5v2.**

School closings

When weather limits the ability to provide student transportation to and from school, Osseo Area Schools may close. Every effort will be made to share learning schedule changes as soon as possible. Winter weather alerts can be received in a number of ways:

facebook.com/OsseoEC; facebook.com/Osseo Schools

instagram.com/OsseoEC; instagram.com/279communityed

WCCO, KSTP, FOX 9, KARE 11

*Families with enrolled students in kindergarten through grade 12 may also receive an email, text, and phone call audio recording via 763-391-7000

Preschool/PreK classes are not made up nor is a credit issued for cancellations due to emergency or weather-related closings.

Delayed (late) start or early dismissal

If Osseo Area Schools announces a two hour delay/late start, all morning Preschool and PreK classes will be canceled.

Parents/guardians will receive notice from the EC&FE program if your child is enrolled in a class on that day. It may come in the form of email, text or TalkingPoints message.

If Osseo Area Schools closes early, you'll receive a notification from the EC&FE program via email or text if your child is in class that day. Please make arrangements to pick up your child if the school district announces an early dismissal.

Health and safety



Accident notification

If an accident or injury occurs, our staff will promptly provide the necessary care for your child, which may include:

- Administering first aid as needed.
- Notifying the parent/guardian about the accident and the first aid provided. In some cases, we may ask the parent or caregiver to pick up the child.
- If immediate emergency treatment is required, we will call 911 right away. We will contact the parent/guardian directly following the 911 call.

Illness at school

If your child becomes ill at school or shows symptoms of illness, a parent or authorized contact will be called to pick them up.

Mandatory reporting

Under Minnesota Statute 260E.06, persons who work with families and children are mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

Medical needs

- If your child has an Asthma, Seizure, or Severe Allergy Action Plan, your clinic can fax a copy directly to the Program Nurse at 763-391-8762.
- If your child has other health needs requiring medication or special attention at school, please complete the Health History Form: bit.ly/ECFE-Health-History and contact the Program Nurse.

Please note: Any medications kept at school need to be accompanied by signed orders from your child's health care provider, this needs to be shared with the Program Nurse and then given to the classroom teacher for safekeeping.

Resources to support families

If you or your family need information on community resources for essentials like food or diapers, talk to your child's teacher. We will work with you to help find resources to support your family's health, safety, and well-being.

Safety drills

We prioritize the safety of our students, staff, and visitors. Throughout the school year, we routinely practice five types of safety drills: Hold, Secure, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter. These drills may occasionally affect adults arriving or leaving the parking lot during their scheduled times.

For everyone's safety, we kindly ask all adults to adhere to temporary signage and follow staff instructions during these drills. This may involve vehicles entering or exiting the parking lot being temporarily paused. Your cooperation ensures a safe environment for everyone involved.

When should my child stay home?

- A temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher in the last 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- An undiagnosed rash; check with your child's physician before coming to school.
- Diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours prior to school.
- Harsh or new continuous cough.
- Chills, sore throat, nausea, muscle pain, excessive fatigue, or severe headache.
- If a student has contracted a contagious disease and a doctor has confirmed it, please inform the student's teacher.

Early Childhood Programs



Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)

Osseo Area Schools' Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program provides learning, play, and social opportunities for families with children from birth to age 5. ECFE supports parents and caregivers, helping to strengthen and empower families.

Learn more about ECFE or register for a class online go to **bit.ly/4fyKV4k** or by scanning the QR code to the right.

bit.ly/Osseo-ECFE

ECFE and New Baby Visits by phone, virtual or in-person

Osseo Area Schools offers free ECFE visits with a licensed parent educator for families with children from birth to eight years old. A visit involves meeting with a parent educator who is there to support you on your parenting journey.

New Baby Visits: Receive information on brain based learning, parenting and community resources.

For more information or if you have a question about ECFE visits, call 763-391-8777 or scan the QR code to submit an online form.

bit.ly/ECFE_Interest

Early Childhood Screening

Early Childhood Screening is a free service to check your child's growth, development, and learning.

Screening is recommended at 3½ years old but can be done anytime between ages 3 and 5, before starting kindergarten.

Learn more or schedule your child's screening online at **bit.ly/EC_Screening** or by scanning the QR code to the right. If you would like assistance, call 763-371-8777.

bit.ly/EC_Screening

Connect with us

We communicate important messages via SMA texting, email and e-newsletters from Smore.com. Be sure to include your current phone number and email address in your Arux account and check the box to receive SMS messages. Set your email setting to allow emails from Smore.com.

Social media

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for information about Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) and Preschool and to see what exciting things are happening in our classrooms!

facebook.com/OsseoEC **instagram.com/OsseoEC**

Scan the code to log in to your Arux account

Osseo Area Schools Mission Statement:

To inspire and prepare each and every scholar with the confidence, courage, and competence to achieve their dreams; contribute to community; and engage in a lifetime of learning.