



# Early Childhood Parent / Student Learning Center Handbook

Cherokee Community School District  
206 E. Indian Street  
Cherokee IA 51012  
(712) 225-6760

This handbook is designed to acquaint all parents with The Early Childhood Learning Center's current policies and procedures. The ECLC reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to revise these policies and procedures as needed. Parents receive a handbook during enrollment and are given an updated handbook at the start of each school year.

## **DISTRICT POLICY STATEMENTS**

It is the policy of the Cherokee Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact:

**Thomas Ryherd, Superintendent & Equity Coordinator**

**Cherokee Community School District, 600 West Bluff, Cherokee, Iowa 51012**

**712-225-6767**

## **MULTICULTURAL/GENDER FAIR EDUCATION**

Students will have an equal opportunity for a quality education without discrimination, regardless of their race, religion, socioeconomic status, color, sex, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. The education program is free of discrimination and provides equal opportunity for the students. The education program will foster knowledge of and respect and appreciation for the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, as well as men and women, to society. Special emphasis is placed on Asian-Americans, African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and persons with disabilities. It will also reflect the wide variety of roles open to both men and women and provide equal opportunity to both sexes.

## **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

Pursuant to Policy 102, the board will not discriminate in its educational activities on the basis of, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status. The board requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity.

Coordinator: Thomas Ryherd    [tryherd@ccsd.k12.ia.us](mailto:tryherd@ccsd.k12.ia.us)

## **BULLYING/HARASSMENT**

Harassment and bullying of students and employees is against federal, state, and local policy, and is not tolerated by the board. The board is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. To that end, the board has in place policies, procedures, and practices that are designed to reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment as well as processes and procedures to deal with incidents of bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment of students by students, school employees, and volunteers who have direct contact with students will not be tolerated in the school or school district.

The board prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization, of students, based on any of the following actual or perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status. Harassment against employees based upon, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status is also prohibited.

This policy is in effect while students or employees are on property within the jurisdiction of the board; while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles; while attending or engaged in school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the school or school district.

If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. If, after an investigation, a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, termination. If, after an investigation, a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds. "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

Harassment and bullying mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;

- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

"Electronic" means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic" includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, electronic text messaging or similar technologies.

## **ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY**

Harassment and bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors and circumstances:

- Verbal, nonverbal, physical or written harassment, bullying, hazing, or other victimization that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, property, etc. that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim; and/or
- Unreasonable interference with a student's performance or creation of an intimidating, offensive, or hostile learning environment.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of the student's education or benefits;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by a school employee is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment.

In situations between students and school officials, faculty, staff, or volunteers who have direct contact with students, bullying and harassment may also include the following behaviors:

- Requiring that a student submit to bullying or harassment by another student, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of the targeted student's education or participation in school programs or activities; and/or
- Requiring submission to or rejection of such conduct as a basis for decisions affecting the student.

Any person who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment under this policy to a school official, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to the person's participation in any administrative, judicial, or other proceeding relating to the report. Individuals who knowingly file a false complaint may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Retaliation against any person, because the person has filed a bullying or harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. Individuals who knowingly file false harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation shall be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.

The school or school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment. The superintendent or designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging bullying or harassment. The superintendent or designee

will be responsible for handling all complaints by employees alleging bullying or harassment.

It also is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the investigator and principals, to develop procedures regarding this policy. The superintendent also is responsible for organizing training programs for students, school officials, faculty, staff, and volunteers who have direct contact with students. The training will include how to recognize harassment and what to do in case a student is harassed. It will also include proven effective harassment prevention strategies. The superintendent will also develop a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the policy in reducing bullying and harassment. The superintendent shall report to the board on the progress of reducing bullying and harassment.

Bullying/Harassment is described as the following:

- Behaviors/overt acts and or circumstance, verbal, nonverbal, physical or written harassment.
- Bullying, hazing, or other victimization that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim.
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear or suffering to the victim.
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievement, property, etc. that have the purpose of causing injury, discomfort, fear or suffering.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the students that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear or suffering to the victim.

## **LEVEL I INVESTIGATORS**

The Cherokee Community School's Level I Investigators responsible for investigating the abuse of students by employees are Mr. Brian Christiansen, Cherokee Elementary School Principal, and Mr. Thomas Ryherd, Superintendent.

## **LEVEL II INVESTIGATORS**

The Cherokee Community School's Level II Investigator responsible for investigating the abuse of students by employees is Sgt. Brett Gannon bgannon@ccsd.k12.ia.us

## **HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

The board will make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children and youth within the district, encourage their enrollment and eliminate existing barriers to their receiving an education which may exist in district policies or practices. The designated coordinator for identification of homeless children and for tracking and monitoring programs and activities for these children is Mrs. Krista Miller, Cherokee Middle School Principal.

## **AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASING STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

The Cherokee Community School District has adopted a policy designed to assure parents and students the full implementation, protection, and enjoyment of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). A copy of the school district's policy is available for review in the office of the principal of all of our schools. This law requires the school district to designate as "directory information" any personally identifiable information taken from a student's educational records prior to making such information available to the public. The school district has designated the following information as directory information: Student's name, address, and telephone number; date and place of birth; email address, grade level, enrollment status, major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; dates of attendance; degrees and awards received; and the most recent previous educational institution attended by the student; photographs and other likeness and other similar information. You have the right to refuse the designation of any or all of the categories of personally identifiable information as directory information with respect to your student provided that you notify the school district in writing no later than September 1<sup>st</sup> of this school year. If you desire to make such a refusal, please complete and return a refusal form, which you may pick up at your child's school. If you have no objection to the use of student information, you do not need to take any action.

## **CHEROKEE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT:**

With community involvement, we will empower learners to become contributing members in our changing world.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTER PHILOSOPHY (QPPS 2.1, 10.1)**

The Cherokee Early Childhood Learning Center is dedicated to the developmental approach to early education and to meeting the individual needs of children. Our program emphasizes the whole child in a supportive environment, which encourages choices. We recognize that young children learn best through active involvement with their environment. Our program provides an environment for early learners that is spacious and allows free movement. Both inside and outside play areas are available for exploring. Music is

used extensively to enhance language development. Many concrete learning materials are available and arranged on low, open shelves so that children can easily reach them. The children are allowed to exercise choice as a building block to decision-making and problem-solving strategies.

## **ECLC GOALS**

Our Program Provides Children More Time and Opportunity:

- To feel good about themselves as capable, unique individuals.
- To engage in playful work.
- To grow in decision-making, problem-solving, and creative thinking.
- To express themselves through language, writing, movement, and use of materials and resources.
- To develop self-motivation, self-discipline, and self-direction toward purposeful activities.
- To explore their environment using their five senses.
- To foster a curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.
- To enjoy age-appropriate activities for their own sake, not only as a preparation for the future.
- To receive directed instruction to enhance knowledge of math and language literacy.

## **TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN (QPPS 7.7)**

The ECLC classrooms are located in the Cherokee Elementary School. ECLC students often have the opportunity to walk through the elementary school for an activity break when they cannot go outside for play time due to weather. These are opportunities to familiarize them with the layout of the school and let them “see” how the older students work and learn. In the spring of the year, Kindergarten teachers visit the preschool classrooms and the preschool students visit our Kindergarten classrooms.

ECLC, Headstart, and other local preschools work with the Kindergarten teachers to plan for transition. Each preschool teacher completes a checklist of information on each student including social, cognitive, and physical development areas. The preschool teachers meet together in the spring to collectively make recommendations for placement in TK or K classrooms.

## **CURRICULUM (QPPS 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4)**

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. It is a process by which learners obtain knowledge and understanding, while developing life skills. It is continually revised and evaluated to make learning engaging and meaningful.

It is the policy of this district that curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, and physical disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society.

We use the Creative Curriculum at the center. It is research and evidenced based comprehensive curriculum designed for 3–5-year-old learners. It addresses all areas of early learning: language and literacy, math, science, physical skills, and social skills. It provides children an opportunity to learn in a variety of ways- through play, problem solving, movement, art, music, drawing and writing, listening, and storytelling. Suggestions for modifications and adaptations are an integral part of the curriculum.

The Creative Curriculum has several essential components:

- **ACTIVE LEARNING:** The personal, hands-on experiences children have with people and things is the cornerstone of HIGH SCOPE'S early childhood curriculum.
- **KEY EXPERIENCES:** The content of the HIGHSCOPE Curriculum comes from a series of key experiences for active learning that we incorporate into the classroom. The key experience categories include language/literacy, representation, math/logic, motor skills, initiative, and social skills.

- **ROOM ARRANGEMENT:** A HIGHSCOPE learning environment is designed to encourage children's active learning. The room is therefore divided into different work areas and interest centers such as the block, art, house, toy/manipulative, books, and workbench, so that children can find and use materials of particular interest to them.
- **DAILY ROUTINE:** The daily routine provides for a variety of interactions between children and their peers and between children and adults. Since the routine is consistent, children feel secure and in control as they plan, carry out, and review activities, thereby challenging their existing abilities.
- **CHILD OBSERVATION:** By observing individual children within the learning environment, the teachers are able to develop and implement teaching strategies geared to the needs of each child. This process is documented by recording anecdotal notes of selected child behavior related to the key experiences and social-emotional development.
- **PARENT INVOLVEMENT:** Involving parents in their children's learning through group meetings, workshops, and individual conferences plays an important role in making the HIGHSCOPE Curriculum a quality program.

## **ASSESSMENTS of STUDENTS (QPPS 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.8, 7.3)**

The ECLC program believes assessment of each child's development in an early education program is essential to planning learning experiences that are developmentally, culturally, socially, and individually appropriate. It is the program's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. The results should be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment should never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. All results will be kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and stored in a locked filing cabinet.

The GOLD Assessment is used to assess children's developing abilities. The Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment piece is modified to align with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. Teaching staff record and submit student progress data in all developmental areas throughout the year and meet the state checkpoints three times a year (October, February, and May). Progress reports are given to families at conferences (October and February) and the end of the year. Information gained through assessment will provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences.

If through observation, information on GOLD, or the developmental screening done by parents, the teacher feels that there is a possible issue related to a developmental delay or other special need, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following;

- the teacher arranging for developmental screening and diagnostic assessments to further explore the area of concern.
- The teacher requests assistance from the Student Assistance Team (made up of other building teachers and specialists from AEA) as an early intervention process. This team engages in problem identification, plans interventions, provides supports, and makes outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance. The team is available and functional for all students and teachers in the building.
- With parent knowledge and consent, the classroom teacher may request for Northwest AEA staff to provide support, additional ideas, or more formalized testing.

In each ECLC classroom:

1. All staff members are continually involved in assessment of children.
2. Observations and anecdotal writings are the primary method of gathering information for assessment of the child's participation in daily learning activities.
3. Ongoing assessment is used to develop narrative summaries and establish goals for each child in the GOLD's Objectives for Development and Learning.
4. The summaries and goals guide daily planning for the individual child, small group, and
5. the large group.
6. The summaries facilitate the sharing of information during home visits.
7. Work samples and summaries are not released to persons outside the ECLC without the parent's written authorization.

## **DAILY SCHEDULES**

ECLC teachers implement daily activities planned to meet our program goals and objectives. Each classroom follows a developmentally appropriate daily schedule adjusted to meet the unique needs of the children served. The Daily Schedules for each classroom are posted in each classroom.

## **ART PROJECTS**

Usually, children will bring home their creative activity the day it is made or it may hang on the classroom wall for a while. At this age, the DOING is more important than the end product. We want the children to enjoy and gain satisfaction from the PROCESS, rather than have a perfect reproduction. During the year, your child will be exposed to many forms of art. Display his work on a bulletin board, on the refrigerator, or write a note to Grandma about it!

### **CHILDREN'S RECORDS (QPPS 4.1, 4.3, 10.8)**

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest are allowed to access a student's records without a parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedures for filing a complaint, please see the Board policies on the school website or contact the building secretary.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form would they or the school request information be shared with another agency. The release will state to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

### **MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT**

The ECLC is an institution that welcomes and encourages diversity in its population and programs. All families are welcome regardless of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or differing ability. Appreciation of diversity is immersed in anti-bias curriculum in daily planning, issues addressed, tolerance of others, class meetings, and involvement with families to share their culture. Dolls, books, posters, and food also provide the children with a multicultural, anti-bias perspective, but it is the daily discussions, activities, and experiences that make a program diverse. Multicultural materials are incorporated when appropriate within the curriculum so it fits in naturally with what we are doing rather than standing out as "different." Diversity issues related to culture, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, ability, and gender are addressed during curriculum planning and implementation. The natural and timely inclusion of multicultural materials and activities provide children with a meaningful and realistic experience. Providing a multicultural and diverse environment is best met by enrolling children from many different countries, different ethnic backgrounds, different socio-economic levels, a variety of ages, and children with special needs.

### **ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment is open to children in the community with the goal of having a well-rounded, diverse group of children that is representative of the population of Cherokee. Selection of children is based on a random lottery. However, the ECLC reserves the right to enroll children based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, special needs, and member of a low-income family for the purposes of high-quality preschool experiences. Siblings of children currently enrolled in the ECLC will receive special consideration, but no guarantee is made that siblings will be enrolled.

### **HOME AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP (QPPS 1.1, 4.3, 7.2, 8.1)**

A close family-school relationship is essential for the school to be fully responsive to the child and if the child is to reap maximum benefits from the early educational experience. To assist in this, all children in the ECLC are assigned a primary teacher. This is the teacher who has primary responsibility for the assessing of and planning for your child and also, the one responsible for primary communication with you, as a parent. All family information shared with the ECLC, either written or verbal, is kept confidential and only shared with necessary ECLC personnel, which includes the teaching staff working with your child and administration. Additionally, any information concerning your child, including observations, assessments, and work samplings, will not be shared with anyone outside of the ECLC, such as an AEA consultant, without your written permission. If you need any information, whether verbal or written, translated, please contact the Program Administrator. **(QRS)**

Teachers use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication; and information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they may wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. ECLC values the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. As the teacher learns from the families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning, developmental needs, and goals for growth they can plan to incorporate them into classroom planning.

- **Parent and Child Orientations** are held each fall **(QRS)**. This is an opportunity for parents to learn more about the ECLC and, in particular, about their child's classroom and teachers. The teaching staff will explain their classroom, activities,

schedules, etc. at this meeting. This is also a wonderful opportunity for parents to ask general questions about the ECLC.

- **In-Take Conferences/Home Visits:** are important opportunities for the parents and teachers to gain insights about the child, the classroom, and the home setting. In-Take conferences provide a forum to share information and to plan future exchanges and to determine educational goals for the child. In-Take conferences occur in late summer before ECLC classes begin. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the teacher understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you would like addressed. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator. If you need translation services for any written or verbal communication in order to fully understand information shared during conferences, please inform the staff prior to the meeting and we will make arrangements.
- **Parent Teacher Conferences** will be held twice a year during the district's scheduled conferences. Conferences provide an opportunity for the preschool teacher to share assessment results, observational notes, and samples of children's work. Together you can make a plan to continue to encourage your child's growth and development. You are welcome to arrange additional conferences by contacting your child's teacher.
- **Parent Participation** is eagerly welcomed in the program and enriches the experience for your child as well as his or her classmates while providing learning opportunities for teachers, students, and other parents. Grandparents are also welcome to visit, observe, and participate in classroom activities. Your participation can take many forms. We hope that all parents will find meaningful ways to participate in their child's preschool experience. Some possible ways one could participate include:
  - keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
  - return all forms, questionnaires, and so on promptly
  - check your child's backpack daily and read all material sent home with your child
  - field trip supervision
  - leading or assisting special projects (carpentry, sewing, music, cooking, science experiments, cultural experiences, etc.)
  - construction or collection of materials for school use such as paint aprons, raw materials for art projects, dress-up clothes, dramatic play props, carpentry materials, etc.
  - attending, planning, or leading parent workshops
  - serving on the Parent Advisory Committee, representing your child's classroom
- **Volunteering/Classroom Visits:** When volunteering in the classroom, please plan to stay only 1 hour. *Volunteers will not be allowed to be alone with children. A teacher or teacher associate must be present at all times.* Families may visit any area of the ECLC facility at any time during the program's regular hours of operations. Upon entering the building, please sign-in on the form in the school office entitled "Volunteer Sign-In Sheet". After signing in, please enter your child's classroom and inform your child's teacher of your presence.
- **Newsletters:** Each week you will receive a copy of the ECLC newsletter. This newsletter provides you with ECLC general information, educational resources you can use with your children, and also information that is specific to your child's classroom.
- **Communication:** Although in-person daily contact cannot be replaced, preschool staff also rely on written notes, emails, phone calls, newsletters, and bulletin boards as alternative means to establish and maintain open, two-way communication
- **Written or Verbal Communication Assistance:** The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of families with children with limited English proficiency and/or families with children with disabilities including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format in languages the family will understand. If you need translation services for any written or verbal communication in order to fully understand information, please inform the staff and we will make arrangements. We will contact our school district and our Northwest AEA consultant for resources. We will also arrange for an interpreter if one is needed.
- **Parent Nights:** Parents will have the opportunity to attend Parent Education Programs and/or Family Nights at various times throughout the school year. Baby-sitting will be offered free of charge.
- **Parent Questions/Concerns:** The ECLC staff is committed to a team approach in working with parents to resolve questions and/or concerns. Do not hesitate to bring any question or concern to the attention of the teacher most directly involved. If the concern is not resolved, the administrator, Brian Christiansen can be contacted at 225-6760 or by email at [bchristiansen@ccsd.k12.ia.us](mailto:bchristiansen@ccsd.k12.ia.us). The administrator is available to assist parents and staff in resolving concerns.
- **Parent Program Evaluations:** The ECLC asks parents to complete annual program evaluations. The information shared in these evaluations is used by the staff to develop program goals. Obtaining feedback from parents is very important to the process of continually striving to improve the quality of our program.
- **Advisory Committee:** Parents from each classroom are needed to volunteer to serve with representatives from various early childhood collaborative groups on the Advisory Committee. The group meets each month to share ideas and provide feedback about the ECLC. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please talk to your child's teachers.
- **Community Resources Available:** The school district believes that families should be supported in making decisions about



services that their children may need. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections. (e.g., health, mental health, oral health, nutrition, child welfare, parenting programs, early intervention/special education screening and assessment services, and basic needs such as housing and child care subsidies).

### **ASSESSMENT of the ECLC PROGRAM (10.15)**

ECLC implements the Iowa Department of Education's Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS) and is a participant in the Iowa Department of Human Services' Quality Rating System (QRS) to receive our ratings and certifications. Each year a self-program assessment is completed by the classroom teachers and parents are asked to participate in providing feedback on the program's positives and areas for growth.

### **HEALTH, SAFETY, & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (QPPS 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.19, 9.11, 9.12, 9.15, 10.5, 10.10)**

ECLC is committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in the program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow guidelines required by Quality Preschool Program Standards from the Iowa Department of Education, Quality Rating Scales criteria from the Iowa Department of Human Services, and regulatory agencies.

- **Health and Dental Requirements:** Our center requires that each child have a physical by his or her family doctor, as well as a dental check from the family dentist. Parents are required to provide the ECLC with the name and contact information of the child's doctor and dentist. Additionally, parents need to provide the ECLC with a physician's report of their child's physical examination done within the twelve months before attending the ECLC and annually thereafter. If you find this to be a hardship, please let a staff member know as soon as possible so arrangements can be made.
- **Immunizations:** The immunization record for all children is required on the form issued by the Iowa Department of Health and signed by a health official. A copy of the most current immunization record must be on file at the ECLC and must be updated each time a child receives a new vaccine. This record shall include documentation of immunization with the Hib vaccine given on or after the 15-month birthday. Effective July 2003, children over 18 months of age enrolled in licensed child care centers are required to have received the Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine. However, if your child has had the chickenpox disease in the past, it is not necessary to receive the vaccine. Simply note on the certificate of immunization that your child has had a diagnosed case of the disease.

**Both the Health forms for physical and dental checks and the immunization card must be on file at the school in order for your child to be enrolled.**

- **Injury Response:** In the event that your child receives a minor, non-life-threatening injury during their time at school, our teacher will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. The district nurse will be notified for further evaluation if the situation warrants.
- **Health Emergencies:** All staff will have immediate access to a device that allows them to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers for the Fire Department, Police Department, Hospital, and Poison Control will be posted by each phone in the preschool rooms. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member will be kept readily available. The list of emergency telephone numbers, and copies of emergency contact information will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.
- **Protection from Hazards and Environmental Health:** Program staff protect children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping. The preschool classrooms will be tested for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, and other hazards that could impact children's health with documentation on file. Custodial staff maintain the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children. The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children.
- **Illness:** Please call the ECLC at 225-6760 and the bus barn (if your child rides the bus) 225-6766 whenever your child is ill. Families are requested not to bring a child to school when signs of illness or infections are present. If the child is not well enough to play outdoors or not well enough to comfortably participate in activities, the child should stay at home.

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other

children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during the school day, parents/guardians or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. In the meantime, we will provide the child a place to rest until the parent/guardian/authorized person arrives under supervision of the school nurse or office staff. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then he or she will be kept in a location where new individuals will not be exposed until they can be picked up.

Sending a child back to school too soon after illness could risk a relapse or infect others. If your child has had any of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours, please do not send your child to school:

- Temperature over 100 degrees
- One or more incidents of vomiting or diarrhea
- Persistent abdominal pain or intermittent pain with fever
- Severe coughing
- Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Inexplicable irritability or persistent crying
- Unexplained rash and any rash with fever or open, weeping wounds
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pink eye
- Chicken pox that are not scabbed
- Head lice, including nits being visible
- Visible impetigo

The following is an example of when a child may return to school: A child is sent home with diarrhea. The diarrhea stops at 9:00 p.m. The child should remain home the following day even though the child does not have any further problems with the diarrhea. This prevents the child from getting more seriously ill the following day and also helps from passing the illness to others. This example would include vomiting, temperature or other signs or symptoms of an illness.

NOTE: As a safeguard for all the children in the program, any exceptions to our health policies require a written statement from the child's physician noting that he or she is not contagious and is able to fully participate in a child care program.

However, the final decision of participation in the program resides with the administrative personnel.

- **Communicable Diseases:** Families will receive notification when children have been exposed to a communicable disease. Additionally, notices of exposure will be posted by your child's classroom door. Families should immediately notify the child's teacher if their child becomes ill with a communicable disease. Students with a communicable disease will be allowed to attend school provided their presence does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees.
- **Reporting Communicable Diseases:** Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and at least annually made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.
- **Medical and Dental Emergencies:** If a child is injured or becomes ill after arriving at school, a parent will be called immediately. It is the parent's responsibility to update the family's emergency contact numbers as needed. If we cannot reach a parent, the emergency contact will be phoned. Parents will be notified of all known minor and major injuries by a written incident report.

If a child needs **immediate** medical attention, the teacher will call **911**. Then the parent or the child's physician will be called. If we cannot reach the parent, the emergency contact will be phoned. A staff member, who witnessed the emergency situation, will accompany the child in the ambulance to the hospital and will bring records and parent permission forms. Similarly, if a child experiences a dental injury, the child's dentist will be called, as well as, the parent or emergency contact person.

- **Administration of Medication:** Staff administers both prescription and over-the-counter medications to a child only if the child's record documents that the parent or legal guardian has given the program written permission. The child's record includes instructions from the licensed health provider who has prescribed or recommended medication for that child; alternatively, the licensed health provider's office may give instructions by telephone to the staff. Any staff who administer medication has a) specified training and b) a written performance evaluation updated annually by a health professional on the

practice of the five rights practices of medication administration: 1) verifying that the **right child** receives the 2) **right medication** 3) the **right dose** 4) at the **right time** and 5) by the **right method** with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. When administering medications, the staff will sign documentation that items 1-5 were followed. Any staff administering medications to students will complete the online training for medication management and have a printed, current certificate of completion on file.

Medications are labeled with the child's first and last names, the date that either the prescriptions was filled or the recommendation was obtained from the child's licensed health care provider, the name of the licensed health care provider, the expiration date of the medication, or the period of use of the medication, the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication, and the instructions on how to administer and store it. All medications are kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication and in a sturdy, locked container to prevent spills.

For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name; the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; and the administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on the log.

- **Allergies:** Please notify your child's teacher of any possible allergies. An allergy action plan form with your child's picture should be completed and posted in the classroom and kitchen.
- **Biting Policy:** We want to make sure every child in our care is safe. Our program provides an environment that encourages and promotes respect for others and non-aggressive problem solving between children. For safety and health reasons we take biting seriously. Some reasons children may bite are frustration, inability to communicate how they are feeling, curiosity, copying another child, and seeking attention.

Our policy for handling a biting incident is the following:

\*The biter is removed from the group and talked to about his/her behavior.

\*A written incident report is given to the parents of all children involved when they are picked up that day. The name of a biting child will not be released because it serves no useful purpose and can make an already difficult situation more difficult.

- We look intensively at the context of each biting incident for pattern, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.
- We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- We try to adapt the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress.
- We make special efforts to protect potential victims.

We try to make every effort to extinguish the behavior quickly and to balance our commitment to the family of the biting child to that of other families.

- **Diapering and Toileting Procedures:** For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the Center makes sure that:
  - Staff use only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use (the health provider documents the medical reason).
  - For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer coverings are changed as a unit.
  - Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
  - Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces a) at least every 2 hours when children are awake and b) when children awaken.
  - Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
  - Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
  - Each changing area is separated by a partial wall or is located at least three feet from other areas children use and is used exclusively for one designated group of children.
  - At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child when the child is being changed on the elevated surface.
  - In the changing area, staff post and following changing procedures.
  - Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purpose, including temporary

placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.

- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly by using a hand-free device.
- Containers are kept closed and not accessible to children.
- Staff members whose primary function is preparing food to not change diapers until their food preparation duties are completed for the day.

- **Cleaning and Sanitization:** One of the most important steps in reducing the spread of infectious diseases among children and Center staff is cleaning and sanitizing surfaces that could possibly pose a risk to children or staff. The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately. All toys and surfaces that may have been in contact with a child's mouth or otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected after they are cleaned with soap and water. Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques to ensure appropriate cleaning and sanitation protocols are followed.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table provided by APPS. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning product will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Nontoxic substances will be used whenever possible.

- **Hand washing Policies and Procedures:** The Center follows these practices regarding hand washing:
  - All adults and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
  - Hand washing is required by all adults and children when hand washing would reduce the transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and others.
  - Staff assists children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.Children wash either independently or with assistance.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- On arrival for the day.
- After diapering or using the toilet.
- After handling body fluids.
- Before meals and snacks, before preparing or serving food, or after handling any raw food that requires cooking.
- After playing in water that is shared by two or more people.
- After handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals.

Adults also wash their hands:

- Before and after feeding a child.
- Before and after administering medication.
- After assisting a child with toileting.
- After handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include:

- Using liquid soap and running water.
- Rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, a single-use towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands.

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any required hand-washing situation listed above.

- Staff wears gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- Staff does not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material.
- In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

- **Water Play:** During water play children are involved in active learning experiences with science and math concepts. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. All children will wash their hands following the handwashing guidelines before entering the water table area and after they are finished playing. No child drinks the water. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. Fresh

potable water is used, and the water is changed before a new group of children comes to participate in the water play activity. When the activity period is completed with each group of children, the water is drained. Alternatively, fresh potable water flows freely through the water play table and out through a drain in the table. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

- **Fire, Tornado, Bomb Threat, or Other Emergency Procedures:** Fire regulations and tornado warning procedures are posted in each classroom and in the Multipurpose Room. In case of a tornado, the children and teachers will go to the hallways outside their classrooms until the emergency is over. In case of a fire, bomb threat, or other evacuation emergencies, the children and teachers will primarily go out classroom doors to the far ends of the playground. Listen to KCHE radio (AM 1440) for additional information. The ECLC students and staff will follow the CCSD Crisis Manual policies for emergency procedures.
- **Shelter-in-Place Procedures:** In the event of a chemical or biological emergency, the ECLC would follow a security plan known as “Shelter in Place” developed by the National Institute on Chemical Studies and recommended by the U.S. Department of Education. It is based on the notion that in a chemical or biological crisis, people are often safest if they remain inside. Similar plans have been put in place by some school districts and local governments near nuclear plants, armories, and chemical factories. The plan is designed to keep students safe for several hours until hazardous substances are carried away by the wind. In the event of such an emergency, children outdoors would be brought inside the building without delay. Windows would be shut and entry doors to the school would be locked to get a better seal. Head teachers would immediately take attendance to be certain all children are present.

For the safety of everyone, the school would be kept in “lock-down” status. This condition would mean that staff and children would **not** be permitted to leave the facility until public safety officials relay the “all-clear” message. While being separated from a child in an emergency can be extremely unsettling, having parents come to the school to pick up their child could expose themselves, their child, and others in the ECLC to hazardous conditions. Cooperation from everyone using these guidelines will offer the best protection for the children, families, and staff.

- **Reporting Child Abuse:** Every ECLC staff member is a mandatory reporter of child abuse to the Iowa Department of Human Services. If a staff member suspects any kind of child abuse, it must be reported to authorities. Strict confidentiality will be maintained.
- **Custody:** A copy of any document issued by the court, such as a “no contact order” or “joint custody order” must be on file with the school administrator in order for the ECLC to fully abide by the orders.
- **Smoking:** Smoking shall not be allowed in any program area, child-occupied room, or in a facility-operated vehicle. In addition, the ECLC school building and grounds are posted as smoke-free.
- **Universal Precautions:** All staff are to follow protocols for hand washing, using disinfectants, sanitation, and universal precautions to prevent infections. All ECLC staff complete annual Bloodborne Pathogens training.
- **First Aid/CPR:** At least one staff member who has a certificate showing satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training and satisfactory completion of pediatric CPR is always present with each class of children. First Aid Kits are present in each preschool classroom and are taken with classes when on the playground or field trips. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from Healthy Child Care Iowa. Following each use and month the First Aid Kit will be inspected and missing or used items will be replaced immediately. Additional First Aid supplies are available in the school nurse’s office.

## OUTDOOR PLAY (QPPS 5.4)

We believe that children learn best through play and hands-on experiences. We also believe that the outdoors is an extension of the indoor learning environment. We typically go outside twice each day if your child attends all day or once a day if they attend a half day program. Toys, materials, and activities are also available outdoors to enhance the children’s play experience.

It is important for parents to provide the appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). Please **label** all articles of clothing with the child’s name. The ECLC has a few extra hats and mittens but not enough for everyone. Since the buildings and shade trees often shelter our playground from the cold wind and hot sun, staff members use the following general guidelines (taken from the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Health Child Care Iowa to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index) when determining if it safe to go outside:

- **Winter: As temperatures/wind-chill approach 20 degrees Fahrenheit,** staff will check local weather stations to monitor the latest temperature and weather conditions. Children spend a shorter amount of time outside in cold temperatures and are monitored closely. When the wind chill reaches 0 degrees Fahrenheit, children will remain indoors. In order to make sure that your child can play comfortably outside, it is important to dress them according to the weather. When it is cold outside, please send a warm coat, hat, and mittens/gloves. Often snow pants are worn for an extra layer of warmth even when snow is not present. When snow is present, snow boots are required.
- **Summer: As temperatures/heat index approach 90 degrees Fahrenheit,** staff will check local weather stations to monitor the latest temperature and weather conditions. For warmer days, please dress your child as lightly as possible.

Children often participate in water play activities outside in shady areas of the playground. Children are also encouraged to get plenty of liquid to replenish body fluids. Parents are encouraged to provide sunscreen and insect repellent. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun. Typically, the length of time spent outside is reduced or the children remain indoors when the heat index reaches 90 degrees Fahrenheit. At times, we will have the children only go outside early morning or late in the day when the sun is less intense. With parent's written permission only, staff may apply sunscreen or sunblock with a UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher to exposed skin. Also with written parental permission, we will use insect repellent containing DEET no more than once a day to protect your child from insect bites when the public health authorities recommend its use.

Program staff will complete the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance Checklist on a monthly basis.

**\*\*Reminder---** if your child is not well enough to participate in outdoor play, he or she is not well enough to attend the ECLC.

### **CLASSROOM GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES (QPPS 1.3, QRS)**

Positive guidance strategies are used in the ECLC to keep children constructively involved with satisfying and challenging learning activities. Adults provide children with clear and positive expectations. Guidance directives are stated positively instead of negatively, for example, Walk indoors; Use your words to tell him or her you're angry; Chairs are for sitting. Most children have constructive experiences when they are physically healthy and when teachers prepare and manage the daily schedule, classroom space, and environment based on knowledge of each child. Adults provide support, focused attention, physical proximity, and encouragement to the children throughout the classroom day. Teachers help each child develop self-control by helping them to recognize, talk, and express their emotions appropriately. The natural, expected sounds of the early childhood classroom are giggling, whispering, animated voices, relaxed talking, and busy sounds as well as occasional crying, shouting, and frustrated voices. Teachers sometimes need to enforce guidance limits either by planned ignoring, redirection, removing materials, or removing children from the situation. It is understood that adults teach age- and individually-appropriate behaviors until the behaviors are within the child's repertoire. High/Scope Curriculum's "problem solving approach" is used to help children develop social and emotional skills, resolve conflicts, and manage anger.

**PROBLEM SOLVING APPROACH TO CONFLICT:** In the course of children's play, conflicts arise. We regard these situations as opportunities for children to develop skills in social problem solving. The following strategies are what we use to help children resolve conflicts and become more aware of themselves as capable problem-solvers:

1. Approach social conflict calmly and acknowledge children's feelings.
2. Gather information and restate the problem.
3. Ask for ideas to try, choose one together, and be prepared to give follow-up support.

One goal of the ECLC is to help children develop a positive self-image. Children are encouraged to be self-directed and to exhibit self-control. In order to do this, children need the opportunity to build self-esteem. Therefore, such practices that humiliate or shame a child will not be used. Young children, due to their developmental age, are not capable of understanding the ramifications of many of their behaviors; therefore, they need to be encouraged to make good choices and to be prevented from harming themselves and/or others. This goal can best be accomplished through close supervision, gentle guidance, and, most importantly, redirection. Children need to learn to identify and express their feelings. However, adults must often assist a child by verbalizing the child's feelings in a given situation. For example, if a child is about to hit another child for taking a toy away, an adult would prevent that child from hitting the other saying, "That really made you angry when Billy took your toy. You wanted to hit him. Instead, tell Billy 'It's mine. I'm playing with it.'" This way, we hope to prevent one child from hurting another while at the same time helping that child to learn to identify feelings and verbalize expectations.

Another important guidance understanding is to remember that small children are very egocentric and is not yet capable of understanding the concept of sharing and taking turns. Therefore, it is the adult's responsibility to lend guidance through assisting children in solving their problems when conflict situations occur. Caring for young children requires a lot of patience, as they often need to be reminded about safety rules and sharing over and over again.

Play involving guns, weapons, or war play is prohibited in ECLC. Guns or weapons brought to the ECLC will be removed immediately until the item can be returned to the parent. The child will be involved with this process. When children engage in play with violent overtones (war, pretend shooting, etc.), teachers will redirect the children to more constructive types of social activity. Bullying behavior is considered violent play and is unacceptable; it will be handled quickly and is taken seriously. Parents are asked to help us enforce this "no guns/weapons, violent play, and non-bullying" policy.

**Specific Guidance Techniques Used by ECLC Staff:**

- Maintaining realistic expectations for young children
- Providing clear, simple, and consistent limits
- Planning an environment that facilitates a caring atmosphere
- Keeping children productively involved
- Modeling appropriate behaviors
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors toward desired outcomes
- Giving children choices between two appropriate alternatives
- Encouraging children to work together to solve problems and make cooperative decisions
- Encouraging children to use their words to solve problems or to elicit peer cooperation
- Providing logical and natural consequences for children's actions
- Removing children from the situation until they are calm and able to discuss the problem

**Prohibited practices:** The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

1. harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children
2. threats or derogatory remarks
3. physical punishment including spanking, hitting, shaking or grabbing
4. any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect
5. withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of punishment.

**Challenging Behaviors:** The teaching staff in the preschool are highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors, teachers promote prosocial behavior by:

- interacting in a respectful manner with all children
- modeling turn taking, sharing, and caring behaviors
- helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and shared materials
- encouraging children in the classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group
- encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed

Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately if a child would become physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

**Permissible Methods of Discipline:** For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) separate the children involved; (2) immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

**Removal of Child:** In unusual circumstances it may be necessary to remove a child from a program for a day while plans can be made by the teacher, parents, and administrator for the child's return to the classroom. In such circumstances, parents will be expected to remove the child immediately. The administrator will contact the parents to schedule a conference to discuss the situation and to make plans for the child; the administrator, teacher, and parents shall be present at this conference. Children and teachers need to feel physically and emotionally safe in all classrooms. Every effort will be made to ensure a healthy environment in each classroom. Classroom teachers are responsible for keeping the Administrator informed about children experiencing challenging behaviors and events, the guidance strategies they are using with these children, and the ways they have informed and involved the respective parents in these situations. Physical and emotional safety for all children and adults is a fundamental assumption in our classrooms. The best interests of all involved will be considered. In rare instances, it may be necessary to remove a child permanently. Please view the following Cherokee Community School Board policies regarding suspension and expulsions procedures:

- [503.1.r.1, STUDENT SUSPENSION](#)
- [503.2, EXPULSION](#)

**ECLC RATIO/SUPERVISION POLICY (QPPS 10.13, QRS)**

The teacher to staff ratio in the four-year-old room is 1:10. The four-year-old room can have twenty students in the morning and twenty in the afternoon. The 3-year-old/Special Education ratio is 1:8. Teaching staff supervise the children primarily by sight. Teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (e.g., those who can use the toilet independently, who are in the book corner, or who are napping) using supervision by sound for short intervals.

## **REST TIME**

A daily rest period is required for all young children who attend school all day. Children are not required to sleep, but must lay down to rest on the cot provided for each child. A small blanket may be brought from home for use by the preschool child.

## **FOOD/SNACKS AND MEALTIME (QPPS 5.10)**

At the ECLC, children are served a nutritious morning snack, and afternoon snack, provided by the school in conjunction with our local Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the US Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP guidelines). Your child will be encouraged to sample all foods served, but will never be forced to eat. If for any reason your child cannot eat a certain food or has different dietary needs (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant), please inform the ECLC. For allergies and food restrictions, a form must be completed by a medical professional indicating the allergy and the appropriate substitution. An action plan may also be written for allergies.

Morning snack, and afternoon snacks are all offered at the center. A snack is served within one hour of the class starting.

As an important part of our curriculum, meals are learning experiences for children. Small groups come together to socially interact, which fosters self-help skills and good nutritional habits. Conversations are encouraged during snacks. Parents/guardians are encouraged to join their children for snacks whenever possible.

For families that would like to provide snacks for their student's class, please follow the following guidelines. All foods brought from home must meet the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. Snacks must have two of four components: 1) milk/fluid (½ cup); meat or meat alternative (½ oz); juice/fruit/vegetable (½ cup); or whole grain bread/cereal (½ slice or ½ cup). Snack suggestions include: oranges, apples, bananas, raisins, fruit cups, bread or crackers with cheese, raw vegetables, whole grain cereal, cheese sticks, yogurt, etc. Only 100% juice can be served. In following the regulations, we cannot serve candy, cookies or cakes as a snack. Birthday treats are an exception and are distributed outside of snack time.

Your child may celebrate a birthday with a special treat. The treat will be served in addition to the snack for the day. Please discuss this with your child's teacher and follow the guidelines below:

- Food should be pre-packaged, unopened, nut-free, and preferably nutritious.
- Any treats, cakes or cookies purchased at a store are acceptable but should remain in the original package to list ingredients to allow monitoring of food allergies.
- Be sure to include enough servings for all children.

When planning your child's home birthday party, please consider inviting all of the children or none. If this is not possible, please mail invitations directly to children's homes to avoid sad or hurt feelings.

## **FOOD/NUT ALLERGY FREE ENVIRONMENT**

A number of children in the Cherokee Community School District and throughout schools across the United States are affected by food and/or nut allergies.

The Early Childhood Learning Center has implemented a "Food/Nut Allergy Free Environment" in the best interest of all of our students. CCSD will not be serving any peanut butter or peanut/tree nut products through our food service program.

All staff members will be notified of the students with food/nut allergies by the school nurse and instructed of the policies/procedures that will be followed in the event of an allergic reaction. Parents will supply written instructions regarding treatment of their child in the event of an allergic reaction and staff will be informed of those procedures.

In the event of a food allergy reaction at school, parents will be informed immediately.

## **ANIMAL AND PET POLICY**

All interactions between children and animals must be respectful and staff must instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. The staff makes sure that classroom pets and visiting animals appear to be in good health. These animals have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. The teaching staff supervises all children and know who is allergic



to which type of animals and is not exposed to the animals. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk of salmonella infection.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING PRIVILEGES (QPPS 10.9)**

Students who are enrolled in the ECLC program are eligible to ride the school provided special ECLC route for town locations. It is provided by a small bus outfitted with safety belts. In addition to the bus driver, a staff member rides the bus to assist students as needed including on and off the bus, buckling, or crossing a street if necessary. The CCSO also allows 4-year-old students to ride regular route buses. Parents/guardians may request transportation at enrollment, indicating the pickup and drop off address, the name of the responsible person at that address, and emergency contact information for all parties involved. Parents/guardians are asked to keep their information current by reporting changes of address or phone numbers to the elementary school secretary or the classroom teacher. All information will be required to be reviewed/updated at least quarterly.

For children who have special needs for transportation, the facility will use a plan based on the assessment of the child's needs related to transportation as documented within that student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This plan may address special equipment, staffing and care while in the vehicle during transport. Any accommodations indicated in the child's IEP will be implemented as described.

For those families that choose to use the ECLC's bus service, there are a few policies:

- The bus will only go to one location. If for some reason you or your child care provider will not be at that location you are responsible to pick your child up from school that day.
- Please be ready for the bus to pick up/drop off your child each day. The bus will only wait **2 minutes** outside your home before going to the next location. If you are not ready when the bus arrives before school, the bus will leave after 2 minutes and you will be responsible for getting your child to school. After school, if the bus driver does not see anyone at your home within 2 minutes of arrival, the bus will bring your child to Cherokee Elementary School and you will be responsible for picking up your child.
- You will be given 3 chances. If you fail to inform the bus barn that your child is not riding or your child misses the bus a strike will be notated. Once you have 3 strikes your child will no longer be able to ride the bus for the following 2 weeks. Once your bus privileges have been reinstated you will only be given one more chance before your child will no longer be allowed to ride the bus for the remainder of the current semester.
- The time in which the bus arrives at your home may vary from day to day, depending on the weather and the number of children who are riding the bus.
- If your child is sick or is not riding the bus on a particular day, it is your responsibility to call the bus barn to inform them of this. The bus barn telephone number is: **225-6766 or 712-229-0098**

## **TRAFFIC SAFETY GUIDELINES**

- PLEASE teach your children to stay with you when leaving and entering the building.
- Children running ahead in the parking lot and inside the building can be in danger of serious injury.

**DRIVERS MUST EXERCISE THE UTMOST PATIENCE AND CAUTION WHEN ENTERING AND LEAVING THE PARKING LOT. Do not leave any children unattended in a vehicle.**

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Each classroom plans their own field trips and parents are informed of each trip. Parents give permission for their child to attend field trips. If you do not wish for your child to attend an outing, please make alternative child care arrangements. Parents are always welcome to join the class on field trips. By Iowa law, booster seats are now required for each child under the age of six when traveling in a car or passenger van (school and city buses are exempt from this law). The ECLC uses school buses for transportation on field trips.

## **CLOTHING AND PLAY ITEMS FROM HOME**

**Play Clothes:** Send your child to the ECLC in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an integral part of our planned curriculum. We expect that you will send your child to school dressed for both indoor and outdoor activities.

Please send your child in clothes that are easily manageable when toileting. All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child's clothes into an "extra" set of clothing provided by the family.

Your child's teacher will request that you bring a complete change of clothing, including underwear and socks, to be kept at school and replenished as needed. Please be sure that you clearly label all items of clothing.

**Play Items and Other "Things"** from home may help your child be more comfortable at school from time to time throughout the year. However, it is often difficult for young children to share their special "treasures" with classmates. Since some items may be more appropriate than others in the group setting, please encourage your child to not bring toys from home, otherwise the child may be asked to leave such items in their backpacks. If you have concerns about this, please contact your child's teacher before bringing toys, pets, and other things from home. Please note that some animals are not permitted in licensed child care programs by the Department of Human Service (DHS).

**Weapon Play and Competition:** There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play in the ECLC. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Viewing aggressive acts in movies or television is NOT recommended for children. Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Furthermore, competition can work against the positive characteristics we are trying to instill in children, such as, cooperation, positive self-concept, acceptance of others, and friendship. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others. Your help in this area is especially appreciated.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE (QPPS 10.9)**

Since teachers need time to prepare the environment and for safety reasons, under no circumstances can children be admitted into the classrooms before being invited to enter. Our classroom sessions run from 8:05 to 11:10 and 12:15 to 3:20.

When you arrive you, or a responsible adult, must accompany your child into the building and must also wait with other parents when you pick him up after preschool, unless he/she rides the bus. **Children cannot arrive before 7:50 A.M. for the A.M. sessions as there are no adults available to supervise the children.** When preschool students arrive in the morning, they will be in the music room with school staff to supervise them until their classroom teachers arrive to escort them to their classrooms. **Children in the P.M. session may not arrive before 12:15 P.M.** Parents must wait in the hallway next to the classroom with their child until the teachers open the doors. At the end of the session, classroom staff will walk your child out to the designated waiting area to meet their parents/guardian or to the bus. **If your child rides the bus to school, you are responsible to call the bus barn if he/she will not be riding on a particular day. The bus will only go to one location. If for some reason you or your child care provider will not be at that location you are responsible to pick your child up from school that day. THE BUS BARN TELEPHONE NUMBER: 225-6766 or 712-229-0098**

If someone we do not know is to pick up your child, it is essential that you inform the teacher in advance of the pick-up. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the enrollment paperwork.

Since the ECLC teachers have additional responsibilities at the end of each day, it is very important that your child be picked up on time. The time immediately following the dismissal is used to put away materials and equipment, assess the day's events, and to modify the curriculum plans for the next school day. Being prompt is expected and greatly appreciated.

Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, the ECLC is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside of the building.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the program, staff members will first try to contact the parents. If parents are unable to be reached, staff members will try to contact your emergency contact persons. If staff members are unable to contact emergency contact persons, the Administrator will be notified and he/she will then notify the Department of Human Services and/or the Cherokee Police Department.

### **ATTENDANCE**

It is very important to your child's education that he/she attends school in a consistent manner. Consistency of daily routine is very important to young children, so we encourage parents to make every effort to send their child to school on scheduled school days. Students who are enrolled in the ECLC program are expected to be in school for full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are expected to not be absent any more than necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child. If your child misses many days, unrelated to illness, or if we have not been informed as to why they are missing days we will make a decision on whether or not your child will stay in our program. Another child on the waiting list may fill your child's spot. **Please call the elementary office with the reason for an absence no later than 9:00 AM.** For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the

child's absence from school.

## PROGRAM CANCELLATION

We follow the Cherokee Community Schools yearly calendar. If K-12 is not having school, we WILL NOT be in session, either. Please listen to KCHE for any weather-related dismissals. If they announce Cherokee Public Schools this WILL include the ECLC.

- **1 Hour late start**----- Preschool will begin One Hour Late.

- **2 Hour late start**-----NO A.M. CLASS

- **1 Hour Early Dismissal**----We will have P.M. Preschool ending one hour early.

- **2 Hour Early Dismissal**---NO P.M. CLASS

## SPECIAL REMINDERS

- If your child will be absent or late for any reason, call the ECLC at 225-6760 by 8:30 A.M.
- If your child rides the bus, you must call the bus barn to inform them that your child will not be riding at 225-6766
- Bring your child to school dressed in clothing and shoes appropriate for active indoor and outdoor play.
- Label all of your child's clothing with his or her name.
- Check with your child's teacher before your child brings personal items or pets to school.
- On a daily basis, accompany your child into the building, make contact with a teacher, sign in the child on the attendance sheet, and assist in having the child get items in their cubby. At the end of each day, notify the teacher that you are taking your child and sign-out your child. Leave in a timely manner. Follow safety rules in parking your vehicle and bringing your child into the building. Teach your child to follow the safety rules. **PLEASE teach your children to stay with you when leaving and entering the building.**
- Do not bring your child before designated arrival times; pick-up your child on time.

## 3-YEAR-OLD TUITION INFORMATION

The tuition rate is \$170/month and additional costs if the child will ride school provided transportation. There are limited scholarships available for families who complete the application and show financial need. Tuition will be due at the beginning of each month.

Tuition cannot accrue more than two months. If accrued, it will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Enrollment may be terminated if tuition is repeatedly unpaid.

## STAFF:

ECLC Special Education/3-year-old 4-year-old Teacher: Tricia Langholdt-Vannatta

- *EMAIL: tvannatta@ccsd.k12.ia.us*
- *PHONE: 712-225-6760*

ECLC Special Education/4-year-old Teacher: Madison Probst

- *EMAIL: mprobst@ccsd.k12.ia.us*
- *PHONE: 712-225-6760*

ECLC PRINCIPAL: Brian Christiansen

- *EMAIL: bchristiansen@ccsd.k12.ia.us*
- *PHONE: 712-225-6760*

## THINGS YOU WILL NEED FOR SCHOOL

Below is a list of recommended, not required, school supplies for our ECLC students. Financial assistance is available for students/families who qualify.

- 1 Regular Size Backpack without wheels--**PLEASE SEND THIS WITH YOUR CHILD EVERY DAY!**
- 1 Plastic Folder
- 2 Box of Kleenex
- 1 Box of 24 Regular Crayola Crayons
- 1 Box of 10 Crayola Markers
- 4 Glue sticks
- 2 Containers of Clorox Wipes

- 1 Four pack of play-box
- 2 Expo dry erase markers
- 1 Complete **change of clothes** (underwear and socks, too) to be left at school.  
**PLEASE LABEL CLOTHES WITH FIRST AND LAST NAMES!**

We are looking forward to a great school year with your child!  
If there are any questions or concerns, please contact us.  
Thank You,  
The Early Childhood Learning Center Staff

## **Appendix A: DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS REGULATION**

**Code No. 903.5R1**

### **I. Guidelines.**

**Individuals, including students, may have the right to distribute on school premises, at reasonable times and places, unofficial written material, petitions, buttons, badges or other insignia, except expression which:**

1. is obscene to minors;
2. is libelous;
3. contains indecent, vulgar, profane or lewd language;
4. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law;
5. constitutes insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses other people (e.g., threats of violence, defamation of character or of a person's race, religion, gender, disability, age or ethnic origin);
6. presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or the manner of distribution, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, will cause the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school regulations.

**Distribution on school premises of material in categories (1) through (4) to any student is prohibited. Distribution on school premises of material in categories (5) and (6) to a substantial number of students is prohibited.**

### **II. Procedures.**

**Anyone wishing to distribute unofficial written material must first submit for approval a copy of the material to the building principal at least twenty-four hours in advance of desired distribution time, together with the following information:**

1. Name and phone number of the person submitting request and, if a student, the homeroom number;
2. Date(s) and time(s) of day of intended display or distribution;
3. Location where material will be displayed or distributed;
4. The grade(s) of students to whom the display or distribution is intended.

**Within twenty-four hours of submission, the principal will render a decision whether the material violates the guidelines in subsection I or the time, place and manner restrictions in subsection III of this policy. In the event that permission to distribute the material is denied, the person submitting the request should be informed in writing of the reasons for the denial.**

Permission to distribute material does not imply approval of its contents by either, the school, the administration, the board or the individual reviewing the material submitted.

If the person submitting the request does not receive a response within twenty-four hours of submission, the person will contact the building principal's office to verify that the lack of response was not due to an inability to locate the person. If the person has made this verification and there is no response to the request, the material may be distributed in accordance with the time, place and manner provisions in subsection III.

If the person is dissatisfied with the decision of the principal, the person may submit a written request for appeal to the superintendent. If the person does not receive a response within three school days of submitting the appeal, the person will contact the superintendent to verify that the lack of response is not due to an inability to locate the person. If the person has made this verification and there is no response to the appeal, the material may be distributed in accordance with the time, place and manner provisions in subsection III.

At every level of the process the person submitting the request will have the right to appear and present the reasons, supported by relevant witnesses and material, as to why distribution of the written material is appropriate.

Permission to distribute material does not imply approval of its contents by either, the school district, the board, the administration or the individual reviewing the material submitted.

### **III. Time, place and manner of distribution.**

The distribution of written material is prohibited when it blocks the safe flow of traffic within corridors and entrance ways of the school or otherwise disrupts school activities. The distribution of unofficial material is limited to a reasonable time, place and manner as follows:

1. The material will be distributed from a table set up for the purpose in a location designated by the principal, which location will not block the safe flow of traffic or block the corridors or entrance ways, but which will give reasonable access to students.
2. The material will be distributed either before and/or after the regular instructional day.
3. No written material may be distributed during and at the place of a normal school activity if it is reasonably likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of that activity.

### **IV. Definitions.**

The following definitions apply to the following terms used in this policy:

1. 1. "Obscene to minors" is defined as:
  - a. The average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the written material, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest of minors of the age to whom distribution is requested;
  - b. The material depicts or describes, in a manner that is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community concerning how such conduct should be presented to minors of the age to whom distribution is requested, sexual conduct such as intimate sexual acts (normal or perverted), masturbation, excretory functions, and lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
  - c. The material, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value for minors.
2. "Minor" means any person under the age of eighteen.
3. "Material and substantial disruption" of a normal school activity is defined as follows:
  - a. Where the normal school activity is an educational program of the district for which student attendance is compulsory, "material and substantial disruption" is defined as any disruption which interferes with or impedes the implementation of that program.

- b. Where the normal school activity is voluntary in nature (including, without limitation, school athletic events, school plays and concerts, and lunch periods), "material and substantial disruption" is defined as student rioting, unlawful seizures of property, widespread shouting or boisterous demonstration, sit-in, stand-in, walk-out, or other related forms of activity.
  - c. In order for expression to be considered disruptive, there must exist specific facts upon which the likelihood of disruption can be forecasted including past experience in the school, current events influencing student activities and behavior, and instances of actual or threatened disruption relating to the written material in question.
- 4. "School activities" means any activity of students sponsored by the school and includes, by way of example but not limited to, classroom work, library activities, physical education classes, official assemblies and other similar gatherings, school athletic contests, band concerts, school plays and in school lunch periods.
  - 5. "Unofficial" written material includes all written material except school newspapers, literary magazines, yearbooks, and other publications funded and/or sponsored or authorized by the school. Examples include leaflets, brochures, flyers, petitions, placards and underground newspapers, whether written by students or others.
  - 6. "Libelous" is a false and unprivileged statement about a specific individual that tends to harm the individual's reputation or to lower him/her in the esteem of the community.
  - 7. "Distribution" means circulation or dissemination of written material by means of handing out free copies, selling or offering copies for sale and accepting donations for copies. It includes displaying written material in areas of the school which are generally frequented by students.

#### **V. Disciplinary action.**

Distribution by any student of unofficial written material prohibited in subsection I or in violation of subsection III may be halted, and students may be subject to discipline including suspension and expulsion. Any other party violating this policy may be requested to leave the school property immediately and, if necessary, local law enforcement officials will be called.

#### **VI. Notice of policy to students.**

A copy of this policy will be published in student handbooks and posted conspicuously in school buildings