

**EAST LIVERPOOL
INTEGRATED
PRESCHOOL
PARENT HANDBOOK**



East Liverpool City Schools
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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Board of Education recognizes the significant impact that early childhood has on the growth and development of children and the extent to which it can prepare for a lifetime of learning.

The East Liverpool Integrated Preschool Program is available for four-year old children. There are limited spots available in the all day and half day programs for our four-year old students. There may also be some space available for students who are three to five years of age in which it has been determined and documented who may be delayed in their overall development as a child and student. Research and best practice has shown that all students benefit academically, socially and emotionally when participating in an environment that includes both disabled and non-disabled students. Students in our program must be East Liverpool residents.

The activities presented in the preschool program provide children with developmentally-appropriate learning experiences intended to facilitate the goals of the preschool for each individual child. The preschool environment is designed to enhance the development of self-confidence, self-expression, curiosity, enthusiasm, and the ability to interact effectively with other children and with adults. The setting is also intended to further the development of problem-solving skills, the achievement of independence, and the development of cooperative and linguistic abilities.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the East Liverpool City Schools is to ensure that all students of the community reach their fullest potential by using the best physical and human resources in partnership with family and community.

PURPOSE & GOALS

The purpose of the East Liverpool Preschool Program is to provide developmentally-appropriate, hands-on, concrete, and child-centered learning experiences to meet the physical, social, aesthetic, cognitive, and linguistic needs of each child, through the use of research-based instructional practices. We recognize that parents are the primary teachers of their own children; therefore, we strive to form a partnership with parents in order to enrich the learning experience.

Our program is designed to meet the developmental needs of the children. Highly-qualified, certified educational personnel provide a developmentally appropriate, comprehensive early childhood curriculum that is aligned to Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards. Each child is allowed the opportunity to express his/her own ideas and feelings through this well-rounded curriculum, which includes activities in the areas of art, fine and gross motor development, language literature, science, social studies, math, dramatic play, social/emotional growth, music and creative movement. We strive to provide a safe, comfortable environment for our children to learn and grow.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The East Liverpool Board of Education is committed to providing a program of education which is consistent with the following tenets:

1. Education contributes to the continuous improvement of our democratic society and the cultures it encompasses through the development of concerned, contributing and patriotic citizens.
2. The dignity and work of the individual are respected. Each individual is given the opportunity to participate in our society to the best of his/her ability.
3. The educational program is conducive to the optimum intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of all youth.
4. Basic knowledge, skills, understandings and appreciations are necessary for full-life functioning.
5. All youth are introduced to the humanities and the arts and provided the opportunity to pursue further studies in these areas.
6. The immediate and projected personal and societal needs of our youth receive continuous appraisal.
7. The development of self-appraisal skills, decision-making techniques and self-discipline by our youth helps them in assuming the responsibility for setting realistic, immediate and long-range personal, academic and career goals.
8. The development of moral and ethical values by our youth is an important aspect of personal maturity for which the parents assume the primary responsibility. However, the schools strive to reinforce their efforts.
9. Continuous physical, mental and emotional growth and development is promoted through the maintenance of appropriate educational programs for youth.
10. Self-realization and self-expression are encouraged.
11. The educational program meets or exceeds the State Board of Education standards.
12. The development and implementation of a program of continuous evaluation based upon stated goals and objectives are necessary for effective program revision and improvement.

LOCATION

The East Liverpool Preschool Program is located in the Administration wing of Westgate School in rooms 204, 205 and 207, 209 of wings #12 and #13. This facility is a safe and convenient location and space accommodates the enrollment, supports child growth and development according to the program's objectives and meets all requirements of section 3301.55 of the Revised Code. This space is for the exclusive use of the children enrolled in the preschool program when the program is in session.

CALENDAR

The program will follow the regular East Liverpool City School District calendar.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The preschool program will be closed on days when the East Liverpool City School District is not in session due to inclement weather. If the district calls a two-hour delay, the morning preschool classes will not meet on that day.

CURRICULUM

The Ohio Department of Education requires that a written curriculum be adopted which describes developmentally appropriate activities, learning environment, and approaches which meet the individual needs of the children and is aligned to the early learning content standards adopted by ODE. The Office of Early Learning and School Readiness recommends that the curriculum be evidence-based, address all areas of child development, provide guidance to teachers, and support diversity.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Board of Education's policy of nondiscrimination extends of students, staff, job applicants, the general public and individuals with whom it does business and applies to race, color, national origin, citizenship status, religion, sex, economic status, age or disability.

The Board does not permit discriminatory practices and views harassment as a form of discrimination. Harassment is defined as intimidation by threats of or actual physical violence; the creation, by whatever means including the use of electronic communications devices, of a climate of hostility or intimidation; or the use of language, conduct or symbols in such a manner as to be commonly understood to convey hatred, contempt or prejudice or to have the effect of insulting or stigmatizing an individual.

Employees or students who engage in discrimination of another employee or student shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to discrimination does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

No one shall retaliate against an employee or student because he/she files a grievance; assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding the charge of discrimination of an individual; or because he/she has opposed language or conduct that violates that policy.

LICENSING

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is responsible for licensing and monitoring all early childhood programs operated through the state's public schools. The East Liverpool Preschool Program is a licensed early childhood program that meets Ohio's rules for licensed preschool programs in accordance with Chapter 3301-37 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

Licensed sites that are in compliance with the applicable state rules ensure that:

- Programs are located in safe, convenient facilities;
- Curriculum experiences are developmentally appropriate;
- Programs are staffed by persons qualified to teach and nurture young children;
- Children are immunized; and
- Programs involve parents in their children's education.

As part of the licensing and monitoring process, the Department conducts at least one site visit annually to each preschool program. Following these visits, ODE reports any noncompliance issues to superintendents and chief executive officers and submits aggregated data regarding these and other related administrative matters in a report to the Governor and legislators. The most recent written compliance reports and the program's corrective action plan shall remain posted in a conspicuous place near the posted program license until the next compliance report is received by the Department. Upon request, copies of the preschool licensing inspection report by the Ohio Department of Education shall be made available. All information regarding licensing is available online at education.ohio.gov, keyword search: *preschool licensing*.

PRESCHOOL STAFF

The Ohio Department of Education requires that the director and staff shall be recruited, employed, assigned, evaluated, and provided in-service education in accordance with adopted Board of Education policies and without discrimination on the basis of age, color, national origin, race, sex, or disability. ODE requires that the preschool program have a designated director who meets the qualifications and is on-site at least 50 percent of the time the program is in operation. The preschool director is the person responsible for supervision of the preschool program.

The preschool intervention specialists meet the current certification standards established by the Ohio Department of Education for the Early Education of the Handicapped. Each teacher assistant holds a valid teacher's aide permit from the state department of education. Substitutes for preschool staff members shall meet the minimum requirements for programs operated by public schools.

ODE requires that the preschool staff member/child ratio be maintained at all times. No child shall be left alone or unsupervised at any time. Preschool special education programs, such as ours, shall meet the child/staff ratio requirements of one teacher for 8 children and a second adult when 9 or more children are enrolled. Maximum group size shall not exceed 16 children. As mandated by state standards, only six to eight preschool children with disabilities will be served in each preschool class, depending on the severity of needs.

ODE requires that documentation of each staff member's education/certification, training, background check, medical statement, job description and assigned hours be available on-site.

HOURS OF OPERATION

We offer all day and half-day programming Monday through Friday, with both morning and afternoon placement options. Our morning classes begin at 8:15 am and dismiss at 11:15 am. Our afternoon classes begin at 11:45 pm and dismiss at 2:45 pm. Our all day class begins at 8:15 am and dismisses at 2:45 pm. If you are picking up your child, we ask that you arrive at the appropriate time.

All-Day program will have a rest period (approximately 1 hour) provided for the children. Policy and procedures about All-Day Program will be provided by the classroom teacher(s).

DAILY SCHEDULE

In all classes, a routine is followed as this helps young children adhere to classroom rules and expectations. As recommended by the Ohio Department of Education Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, the preschool program uses both quiet and active play to provide students with developmentally appropriate learning experiences.

The following provides a sample of a typical day in our preschool:

- **Arrival** – The teacher greets and welcomes children and parents. Children independently remove outerwear, ready supplies and move to appropriate areas.
- **Table Work** – While waiting on all children to arrive, children work on fine-motor and socialization activities. These activities may include blocks, puzzles, beads, writing and drawing, and cutting.
- **Breakfast/Lunch** – When all students arrive, the classes will move to the eating area where they are served breakfast (am) or lunch (pm). All day will received both breakfast and lunch.
- **Circle Time** – The class will engage in group language through a discussion of the day's activities. The teacher will introduce math, literacy, social studies and science principles using the calendar and stories.
- **Learning Centers/Free Choice** – The teacher offers the children opportunities to engage in self-selected activities arranged in the classroom (for example: expressive art, language, dramatic play, sand and water table, music, science, etc.). The children are encouraged to explore a variety of activities.
- **Gross Motor Play** – Students will participate in gross motor activities in the gymnasium/classroom or playground.
- **Teacher Time/Small Group Work** – The staff works with children on their goals/objectives and/or pre-academic skills.
- **Closing Circle** – Discuss how the day went and wrap up with a story and/or song.

Children who are eligible for preschool special education related services (occupational therapy, physical therapy, and/or speech therapy) may receive some or all of these services in a small-group or individual basis in a location that is separate from their preschool classroom. The time, location and provider will be agreed upon by the parent and district, as part of each child's IEP process.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Preschool students will be picked up and dropped off at the Westgate Complex playground doors. On those occasions when your child will be picked up, he or she will only be released to their parents/guardians or other persons for whom your written authorization is on file.

Students enrolled in the all day program will arrive at 8:15 am, and will be dismissed at 2:45 pm. AM preschool students are to be at school by 8:15 am, and will be dismissed at 11:15 am. PM students are to arrive at 11:45 pm, and will be dismissed at 2:45 pm.

Parents or authorized persons that are picking up a child from the preschool need to report to the Westgate Complex playground doors at the appropriate dismissal time.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Family participation in our program is highly encouraged. The Board of Education provides that parents of children enrolled in the program shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation to contact their children, evaluate the care provided by the program, the premises, or for other purposes approved by the director. When you come to observe, please sign in at the front office and wear a visitor's badge so that you are recognized as a visitor.

We strive to facilitate family involvement by providing opportunities to visit your child's classroom. Your involvement in these activities will allow you to observe what your child has been doing at school, meet other children and families and provide you with the opportunity to become acquainted with the classroom staff.

There are several factors of family involvement that benefit your child.

- More positive attitudes and behavior
- Higher expectations of students by teachers
- More positive attitudes toward the school
- More confidence about helping their children learn at home
- More support from families

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the school year (one in the fall Oct. 4th 2018, and one in the spring Feb. 14th 2018). Teachers are also available for phone conferences, upon request. Face-to-face conferences may be scheduled, if requested by the parent or teacher. Progress reports will be given out quarterly in accordance with the district's report card schedule.

Preschool special education students must have an IEP meeting at least once annually. This cannot be written without parent input, and therefore, you will be required to attend meetings regarding this plan. We recognize that parents are the first, and most important, teachers in their children's lives. The staff works in partnership with families to encourage participation in their child's educational programming.

PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Board is committed to the provision of a free, appropriate, public education for children with disabilities identified in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations.

In keeping with the requirements of the Ohio Department of Education for compliance with the Operating Standards for Ohio Schools Serving Children with Disabilities, the Board has selected the narrative version of the Model Procedures for the Education of Children with Disabilities, which is incorporated by reference into this policy. Copies of these Model Procedures are available at the office of the Board.

In accordance with requirements of ODE, all children referred for an evaluation who are determined to have a suspected disability are evaluated, with parent

permission and participation, to determine if they qualify for preschool special education services.

Parents receive a booklet- A Guide To Parent Rights in Special Education (Special Education Procedural Safeguards Notice) that describe resources, educational process information, in addition to parent and school rights and responsibilities in children's education.

The evaluation of preschool children typically occurs in a play-based format and involves the child, parent, teacher and/or any specialist that may be appropriate. The evaluation not only provides eligibility information but forms the basis for the Individual Education Plan (IEP). Children learn best through play, and they reveal what they know through play. Assessment may include one or more of the following: observation of your child at play, interview with you or his/her teacher, checklists or questionnaires for parent or teacher to complete, testing by the school psychologist, a review of records or other activities that would help us plan for your child's education. All areas of development will be reviewed.

An IEP will be developed for each child who qualifies for services. Parents, teachers and specialists work together to develop individual learning goals and objectives for each child. Parents are a vital part of the IEP team and are encouraged to be actively involved in the process.

TRANSITIONS

As required by ODE, our program works with Help Me Grow throughout the transition process from early intervention services to our preschool program.

The transition from preschool to school age for children with special needs will begin approximately in January of the year that the child will be entering Kindergarten. This transition process will include parental written consent for reevaluation of the child. The reevaluation generally consists of teacher input, speech/language testing, intelligence testing, and any other relevant information deemed necessary by the multi-factored team.

ENROLLMENT

Due to the integration of our preschool system, student role models will follow the same rules and guidelines as students who have disabilities. These students must be East Liverpool residents, unless their parents work for the district. Because we are limited to the number of typically-developing role models we can place into each unit, these students are accepted through scheduled screening sessions which includes a play-based assessment and a norm-referenced screening tool. Once all role model positions are filled, we will develop a waiting list, so we can continually add to our program if we have openings available.

For children being admitted to the East Liverpool Integrated Preschool Program, the parent or guardian must provide or complete a variety of required paperwork, which will become a part of your child's school record.

This includes (but is not limited to) the following information, which must be on file by the first day of attendance, unless otherwise noted:

HEALTH & DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS

The Office of Early Learning and School Readiness requires that health and developmental screenings of all children occur within 60 business days of their entrance into the program. All health screenings are conducted by the appropriate personnel, such as the family pediatrician. The developmental screening is age-appropriate with normed scores relevant to the population.

The developmental screening must include:

- Speech/language;
- Cognitive;
- Gross and fine motor skills; and
- Social, emotional, behavioral development.

All developmental screenings are conducted by individuals trained to administer, score and use the instrument appropriately. The results of the screenings are documented, shared with families, and used in planning appropriate educational experiences and support services.

If a child shows to have deficits in one or more areas based on the screening results, the district will initiate a multi-factored evaluation to determine eligibility for preschool special education services. All referrals are completed within 90 days of identification of need.

Additionally, educators administer state-required child assessment Early Learning Assessment (ELA) to all enrolled children, as prescribed by ODE. Program leaders report assessment results to the state within ODE-specified timelines.

CUMULATIVE RECORDS/DOCUMENTATION

As required by the Ohio Department of Education, the program must maintain the necessary written documentation that shall remain at the preschool site.

The following documentation must be posted in a conspicuous place at the location:

- ODE license
- Most recent compliance report (and corrective action plan, if applicable) posted next to the license
- Procedures for fire drills, tornado and emergency evacuation
- Medical and dental emergency procedures posted in classrooms and by telephones
- Emergency phone numbers posted by telephones
- Menu for lunch and snacks

Staff records, attendance records; child information and health records; injury reports; records of emergency drills; and documentation of the program's policies and procedures are also readily accessible at the preschool location.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation will be provided to disabled students both to and from school as required by state law. At this time we will offer transportation for typically developing preschool students. All day students will be bussed to and from school, AM students will be bussed to school, and PM students will be bussed home from school.

The bus used to transport preschoolers is equipped with car seats for those children who are less than forty pounds or four years of age. Preschool staff will meet the children when the bus arrives at school.

Parent/Guardians must be present at the bus stop 10 minutes before the arrival of the bus to meet their children as they enter and leave the bus. A bus schedule will be provided by the bus garage to the parent prior to each child's first day of school.

CLASS ROSTER

In accordance with ODE, class rosters which include the names and telephone numbers of parents or guardians of children enrolled in the program will be created at least once annually. Permission for inclusion on the roster will be obtained from each family. Upon request, the program must make this roster available to parents.

FOOD SERVICES

Free and reduced meals are available for all students. The all day class will receive both breakfast and lunch. The AM class will receive breakfast, and the PM class will receive lunch. All meals follow USDA guidelines. Monthly menus are posted in the classrooms and sent home to parents.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is important for many aspects of a child's development. Attending every day that is in session allows the child to build relationships with peers and staff. It also provides opportunities for the child to learn the school's routine and general layout of the building. Regular attendance also promotes the greatest possibility of academic development.

The following reasons are valid excuses of absences from school:

1. Illness of the student
2. Illness in the family
3. Quarantine of the home
4. Death in the family
5. Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
6. Absence during the school day for professional appointments
7. Exclusion by the direction of the school nurse or family physician

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is the parent's responsibility to call the preschool classroom and bus garage, if applicable, prior to the start of preschool. If you reach the teacher's voicemail, please leave your child's name and the

reason for the absence. We also ask that you send a written excuse with your child when he/she returns to school.

If your child is excessively absent, a parent conference may be requested by the teacher. Because we have a limited number of available spots for typically-developing students, a waiting list may exist. Under these circumstances, if your child is a typically-developing student and is “habitually absent,” the director may contact you about withdrawal from the program. “Habitually absent” under state law is when he/she has accumulated ten (10) consecutive school days or fifteen (15) total school days of absence during a semester without legitimate excuses.

DIAPERING/TOILETING

The ODE does not require that preschool children be potty-trained to be enrolled in our preschool program. For non-toilet-trained students, parents shall provide diapers/pull-ups and baby wipes on a monthly basis. Storage of clean diapers will be stored in a specifically designated area made available at all times. Soiled clothing shall be sent home daily. Soiled disposable diapers will be discarded daily.

Disposable gloves will be provided for diapering. Regardless of use of gloves and/or hand sanitizer, hand-washing is still required immediately following every diaper change. The changing of diapers will occur in a space that contains a hand-washing facility. The diaper changing station will be disinfected after each diaper change. Any topical ointments and creams provided by parents shall include written instructions and authorization of administration.

Each preschool classroom has its own bathroom available for students use throughout the school day.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT/DISCIPLINE

East Liverpool Integrated Preschool teachers provide developmentally appropriate environments in which children are actively and meaningfully involved. This approach in itself is a powerful tool in prevention of behavioral problems. Social problem-solving and developing relationships is a priority in our program. Within that, self-discipline is critical. With positive techniques, teachers will encourage children to learn self-discipline and practice a variety of social problem solving strategies. Techniques could include modeling, redirection, verbal prompts, self-talk, planned ignoring, shared responsibility for developing simple classroom or play rules, frequent review of established rules, quiet discussion, reminding children to “use your words”, facilitating peer mediation, time away from the group so the child can “pull himself together”, holding the child calmly without anger in an effort to help him/her regain control, consultation with parents for insight and suggestions, consultation with the school psychologist and other staff to map out a course of action to help the child practice appropriate problem solving strategies.

In accordance with ODE and the Board of Education, the actual methods of discipline will apply to all persons on the premises and will be restricted as follows:

- There will be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- No discipline will be delegated to any other child.
- No physical restraints will be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- No child will be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.
- No child will be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline will not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- Discipline will not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.
- Techniques of discipline will not humiliate, shame or frighten a child.
- Separation, when used as discipline, will be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child will be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.
- The center will not abuse or neglect children and will protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

FIELD TRIPS

All field trips require signed permission from parents. These will be issued for each field trip, along with a description of the trip.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

If a child is observed with any of the following symptoms, the child will be isolated; the parent will be notified and must take the child home:

- diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four hour period);
- severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;
- difficult or rapid breathing;
- yellowish skin or eyes;
- conjunctivitis;
- temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness; or elevated temperature
- untreated infected skin patch(es);
- unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool;
- stiff neck;
- unusual spots or rash;
- sore throat or difficulty swallowing;
- vomiting;

- evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasites/infections.

If your child is experiencing any of the above symptoms, please keep him or her home from school. If your child is determined to have a contagious disease, please contact the teacher immediately. Under these circumstances, the parent must bring a note from the child's physician informing school that child is free of communicable disease or illness before returning to school.

Upon arrival and throughout the day, adults in the classroom will monitor the students' physical and emotional wellbeing. Any signs of distress will be reported to parents. Information about early and periodic screening, diagnostic, and treatment will be provided to parents by the classroom teacher.

SAFETY & MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If your child has an accident, you will be notified as to the nature of the incident and any treatment undertaken. A log of injury reports must be maintained. Additionally, first-aid facilities and materials will be made available in the classroom. At least one preschool staff member who has completed a course in first-aid; the prevention, recognition and management of communicable diseases; and child abuse recognition and prevention course will be readily available at all times.

In the case of medical emergencies, you will be contacted immediately. If you are not available, the person(s) designated to be called in an emergency will be contacted.

Fire and tornado drills, as well as emergency evacuations, are routinely conducted. Procedures for emergency situations, including fire drills, rapid dismissals and tornado drills must be posted in a conspicuous place in accordance with Section 3737.73 of the Revised Code. Records of such drills and dismissals must be kept on file.

Procedures for medical and dental emergencies must be posted in each preschool classroom and by each telephone and made available to school personnel, children and parents. Emergency telephone numbers must also be provided by each telephone.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Any prescription medication, food supplement, modified diet or fluoride supplement will only be administered per written instruction from a licensed physician (see *Request for Administration of Medication or Supplement* form in Appendix A). All prescription medication must be kept in its original container and have a legible label containing the child's name. Student medication forms are available and must be completed before medication will be given to any child. Medication logs, including date, time, and dosage, will be maintained for one year.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Complaints may be filed by families by completing the Notice of Nondiscrimination and Grievance Procedures form. This form is located in the front office and may be obtained through your child's preschool teacher or supervisor.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Child abuse/neglect can be in the form of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and/or maltreatment. Any East Liverpool City School District employee, as mandated by the Ohio Revised Code, Section 2151.421, who believes that a child less than eighteen (18) years of age has suffered any type of injury that suggests abuse or neglect, must and will immediately report such information to the director. The County Department of Job and Family Services Child Abuse Emergency Reporting Service will then be contacted. It is therefore important to communicate with your preschool teacher about any serious injury that may have occurred at home.