Cincinnati Public Schools
Early Childhood Education Program

2019-2020

Handbook for Parents, Visitors and Friends
(513) 363-0240
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Mission
The mission of Cincinnati Public Schools, Early Childhood Education is to provide high quality, comprehensive programs and collaborative services to support young children and families for lifelong learning.

Program Philosophy
The Cincinnati Public Schools, Early Childhood Education recognizes that all children can learn and acquire knowledge, primarily through playful interactions with materials and people in their environment. The learning environment encourages creative exploration with a balance of child and adult initiated age appropriate activities. The program recognizes home and community as valuable resources. Staff and parents work together in the development of culturally sensitive curriculum.

Program Goals
Goals for the program are established annually by the ECE Policy Council and serve as a component for continuous improvement.

Program Goals include:
- Kindergarten Readiness
- Access to high quality preschool programs
- Focus on whole child health and wellness

Curriculum
Cincinnati Public Schools, Early Childhood Education programs provide a broad and enriching learning experience appropriate for each child. Our curriculum includes activities and opportunities to support social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical development, builds upon the knowledge, strength and life experiences. Parents are equal partners in the learning process. The ECE Curriculum incorporates the Ohio Early Learning Development Standards.

Communication
Communication between home and school is very important. Parents will receive newsletters that include important dates, education and nutrition information. Check your child’s cubby or backpack daily for information.

Preschool Enrollment and Registration
CPS welcomes all 3 and 4 year old preschool students. School Community Coordinators (SCC) and Assistant School Community Coordinators (ASCC) are available to answer questions regarding eligibility. Feel free to call Monday through Friday during business hours 513-363-0240 for additional information.

Option 1= RS Vine located at 2120 Vine Street 513-363-6580
Option 2= RS LEAP located at 2001 Baltimore Ave 513-363-1273
Option 3= RS Carthage located at 125 W. North Bend Rd 513-363-1168
Registrations for Early Childhood Education programs may be completed at a hub that is convenient. Registrations are taken year-round, with intensive child find for students with disabilities. Applications for Magnet schools are completed through CPS online lottery system. Every effort is made to find a program for every child wanting a preschool experience.

**The CPS preschool registration process includes a parent interview. The following documents are needed at registration:**

- Child's birth certificate (custody papers if applicable)
- Shot records
- Proof of income (within the last thirty days)
- District approved proof of residency (lease/mortgage statement, gas/electric/water bill, federal/state document etc.)
- Parent/Guardian ID
- Well Child Check (within the last twelve months)
- Insurance card (if available)
- Dental exam (within the last six months)

All student records are kept according to CPS Policies and in compliance with federal and state law. Cincinnati Public Schools offers program options for students with disabilities.

**Fees**

Cincinnati Public Schools preschool programs offer multiple funding options. A child that is not eligible for a subsidized program or tuition assistance, will be required to pay tuition. Tuition families are required to pay a deposit within 2 weeks from the time of registration to secure the child’s seat. Monthly payments, as outlined in the tuition contract, are due on the 1st of each month from September through April.

All payments should be made in the form of cash, money order or certified check made payable to the CPS Treasurer or through the use of the on-line payment system, [www.payforit.net](http://www.payforit.net), (service fees apply).

A child may be withdrawn for delinquent fees. If fees are not paid in full, your child may lose their magnet seat and must reapply during the next lottery cycle.

**Hours of Operation**

Majority of CPS programs operate a full day schedule, some sites offer half-day (3 hours daily), and both align with the district school year calendar. In case of inclement weather, please listen to CPS school closing information on radio or television. You may also check the Cincinnati Public Schools website.
**Attendance**
It is important that children come to school every day, unless they are sick. Please contact your child’s teacher to report illness. Classroom staff will contact you if your child is not in attendance within the first hour of class or if they have not heard from you regarding your child’s late arrival/absence. Staff will contact you if your child misses school for 2 or more consecutive days. Only scheduled medical and dental appointments are considered excused absences.

**It is important that your child arrive and is picked up on time each day.**

**Drop off and Sign in Policy**
Your child must be signed in and out daily. Children are released to individuals you authorized for pick up. No child will be released to anyone without your permission and we may ask to see identification before we release a child. Be sure to notify the staff if you send someone who is NOT listed on the consent form, them immediately update consent form if needed.

**Daily Schedule**
Each teacher is required to post a daily schedule in the classroom. Children attending full day programs have scheduled daily naptime.

**Naptime**
Children in full day programs are expected to rest daily. Children are not required to sleep but must stay quietly on their cots so that other children can rest.

**Licensing Information**
Each program is licensed to operate by the Ohio Department of Education. This license and the most recent licensing inspection report are posted in your child’s classroom.

The program’s complete licensing record, including compliance reports, are on file and available upon request both at the school and in the ECE Office, 363-0240.

In the event that you have complaints or concerns that have not addressed to your satisfaction, you may call Cincinnati Public Schools Early Childhood Department at 513-363-0240, or the ODE Department Ombudsman (1- 877-644-6338).

**Nutrition**
Our Early Childhood programs provide breakfast, lunch and/or snack for children enrolled at no cost to the family. Full-day children will receive three meals, whereas half-day children will receive two meals daily.

All meals served during the school day must, by federal law, meet the nutrition guidelines based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. For additional information refer to CPS Food Services [https://sites.google.com/a/cpsboe.k12.oh.us/food-service-department/](https://sites.google.com/a/cpsboe.k12.oh.us/food-service-department/)
Breakfast, lunch and snack menus are posted monthly in your child’s classroom. If your child is on a special diet, due to allergies or a medical condition, a written statement from a physician must be on file to pack outside food. If a diagnosed food allergy/medical condition exists, the replacement foods must meet the federal and state nutritional guidelines. All meals must be well-balanced, with a combination of foods and/or drinks from a variety of different food groups. All foods must have limited amounts of fats and sugars. USDA guidelines are enforced and checked daily for compliance with Early Childhood’s Outside Food Policy.

The staff and children eat together in a “family style” fashion. Children are encouraged, but not forced to try unfamiliar foods or foods they have previously refused. Snack and meal times must be structured and used as learning opportunities that foster communication and conversations that contribute to a child’s learning, development, and socialization. Family Style meal service includes having children responsible for setting the table, helping to get snacks and meals ready, serving themselves at the table, and cleaning up when they are finished eating.

“In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write the USDA Director, and Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D. C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (voice and TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer”

Health
All children must have a current medical exam on file no later than 30 days after enrollment. All children must have a current dental exam on file (except when a dentist is unable to complete an exam). We will ask about follow up treatments for medical and dental needs. Proper dental hygiene is promoted through healthy meals, healthy snacks, and daily tooth brushing.

Required Screenings
Every child receives a variety of screenings after entering the program. Screenings may include developmental screenings, social emotional, hearing, communication, heights and weights, lead and hemoglobin, and BMI. The results of your child’s developmental screenings will be shared with you by the program staff. Please feel free to ask questions. We provide follow up as needed, to meet your child’s individual needs. Each program has a support team beyond the teacher, paraprofessional and Assistant School Community Coordinator.

Health Checks
For the protection of children and staff, a health check will be conducted upon arrival daily. We follow the Ohio Department of Health “Child Day Care Communicable Disease
Chart”, which is posted in the classroom. Children who exhibit symptoms of communicable disease are isolated immediately and made comfortable on a cot. A staff person will remain with the child until the parent arrives. Children with the following conditions should remain at home (or will be sent home):

- A fever of 100 °F or above
- Unusual spots or rashes that have not been identified by a physician
- Diarrhea or vomiting 2 or more times in a day
- Rapid or difficulty breathing
- Evidence of head lice or other parasites
- Conjunctivitis
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Unusually dark urine or grey or white stool
- Untreated infected skin patches
- Stiff neck
- Excessive fatigue
- Pain that interferes with normal activity
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

Children are readmitted if they have no symptoms of communicable disease for at least 24 hours or with a physician’s statement saying that the child poses no risk to others. If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, you will be notified by the school staff.

The Early Childhood Staff members are trained in the signs and symptoms of communicable disease, hand washing, and disinfecting procedures. Please notify staff IMMEDIATELY if your child is taking any medication. District procedures for the administration of medication MUST be followed at all times.

**Immunizations**

Parents are expected to provide proof of immunizations at registration. Our goal is for all children to be fully immunized or at least in process of becoming fully immunized by the start of the school year. Children must have at least 1 of each of the following immunizations for Preschool Enrollment:

- 1 DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus)
- 1 OPV (Polio)
- 1 MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- 1 HIB (Haemophilus influenza type b)
- 1 HEP B (Hepatitis B)

Recommended:
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- Hepatitis A
If your child is not immunized (for religious reasons or good cause) you must sign an immunization waiver with the understanding your child will be excluded from school in the event an outbreak occurs.

**Medication will not be administered without the required documents.**
District Procedures require:

- Written Doctor’s orders / Emergency Plans
- Medication in the original container dated and labeled
- Parent signature giving permission to administer the medication

**Safety**
Children are never left alone or unsupervised. Immediate telephone access is available to program staff with emergency numbers posted. First aid kits are stocked and on hand both in the classroom, playground and on educational trips.

If an accident or injury occurs, an incident report is completed and the parent is notified in writing and by phone.

Emergency drills are conducted in compliance with CPS policies and procedures. Records are on file in the classroom.

Smoking is not permitted on school premises.

The use of spray aerosols are prohibited while children are present.

During all hours of operation, there is at least one staff member available who is trained in first aid, CPR, communicable disease and child abuse recognition and prevention.

The programs do not participate in swimming activities.

**Emergency Information**
The Early Childhood Programs, as with any CPS program, obtain written emergency transportation authorization for each child enrolled in the program. If a child is injured and needs immediate attention, staff will call 911.

A staff member will accompany the child to emergency treatment and will take the child’s records with him/her. Parents will be called immediately and the staff person will remain with the child until a parent/guardian arrives.

**Notify your child’s teacher if your address or telephone number changes.**
**Parent Participation**
Communication between home and school is a program priority. We encourage parental involvement.
Suggested parent involvement:

1. Visit the classroom to help by reading and working with the children.
2. Welcoming staff into your home, for home visits or at an alternate location to discuss School to Home learning.
3. Become involved in ECE Program Governance by representing your program and families at monthly policy meeting.
4. Volunteer on a program committee or helping with the annual program review.
5. Attend parent conferences and progress report meetings.
6. Attend monthly curriculum planning with your child’s teacher and give suggestions for lesson planning

**Volunteer Guidelines**
1. Regular classroom volunteers (more than an occasional visit) must adhere to district policies for the safety of all children.
   - Obtain a local background check then take documentation to Education Center, Security office to obtain a badge.
   - Sign and agree to the program *Standards of Conduct*.
   - **Provide documentation of a current Tuberculosis (TB) test**
     - Notify the staff of your volunteer days (no other children can come with you)
     - Agree to follow building procedures; no smoking, snacking, leave discipline to the staff, and document my activities on the volunteer time sheet.
     - Be flexible... 2 volunteers per day only...

We encourage all parents to participate in school wide activities. Find out more: Ohio Parent Information and Resource Center (Ohio PIRC) 1-800-872-5327.

**Parent Roster**
Rosters of names, telephone numbers, and addresses of families in the program are available upon request. The roster will NOT include the name and phone number of any parent requesting information not to be shared. Rosters may be updated upon request.

**Classroom Parent Meetings**
Bi-monthly parent meetings are scheduled to address training information requested from the Parent Surveys which are completed at registration. In addition to your requests, required meeting topics include: program introduction, literacy/child development, mental health, health/nutrition education and transition to kindergarten. Meetings are held at your child’s school and lead by the Assistant School Community Coordinator.

A portion of the meeting may involve your child’s teacher who will provide curriculum information and classroom updates.
Program Governance/Policy Committee Representative/Alternate
The parents from each classroom will elect a representative and alternate to represent them at monthly Policy Committee meetings. Representatives and alternates will receive a list of duties, responsibilities and orientation training. During monthly meetings, representatives will provide updates for their school and vote on program issues. Policy Committee representatives work together along with community members to form a cohesive group to promote program goals and initiatives.

For more information contact your preschool ASCC or review the Parent Notebook located in your child’s classroom.

Progress Report/Parent Conferences
Progress Reports/Parent Conferences will be held based on your school community’s district calendar. Always feel free to discuss your child’s academic and social progress with their teacher.

Home Visits (Head Start and Expansion programs only)
Two home visits are required yearly. If you are unable to keep your scheduled visit, please contact the teacher to reschedule. This time is to build positive relationships to serve our child’s educational growth.

Clothing
What to wear is an important decision. We strongly encourage parents to follow the school’s uniform policy. We offer the following suggestions:

a. Label all clothing. Provide outer garments that are easy to put on and take off.
b. Clothing should allow for active play.
c. Clothing should be appropriate for the weather.
d. Please send one complete set of seasonal clothing to be kept on hand in the classroom.

Records
Your child’s educational records are confidential information and will not be released to anyone without your written permission. You may request a record review through your child’s teacher.
Behavior Management/Discipline Policy
Early Childhood classrooms remain in compliance with CPS policies and procedures. Daily activities and engagement teach and encourage positive interactions and conflict resolution to all children. Ample supplies of materials and equipment are available in each classroom. Children are encouraged to be independent and manage their own behaviors. This allows children to develop initiative and practice problem-solving techniques. We believe all young children are capable of learning self-control as a sign of respect for self and others.

Behavioral Expectations for all children include:

1. Be Safe
2. Be Respectful
3. Be Responsible

The actual methods of discipline apply to all persons on the premises and are restricted as follows:

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

The program and staff shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in our care.

You may request a conference with our staff at any time.
**Kindergarten Options and Transitions**

**What Parents can do:**

1. Contact the school to schedule a visit before your child enters kindergarten.
2. Summer Activities:
   - Read to your child and talk about what you are reading
   - Ask open ended questions about the books you are reading
   - Have your child “read” a favorite book to you
   - Provide paper and pencils/crayons to encourage writing and drawing
   - Practice ABC’s and letter sounds
   - Count items around the house (windows, steps, vegetables on a child's plate, cars that drive by, etc.)
   - Work on number, letter and color recognition
   - Do cooking activities together (measuring and pouring)
   - Attend library story times
   - Play card games with your child (Fish, Crazy Eights, Old Maid)
   - Provide coloring books/crayons, have your child color within the lines of pictures
   - Talk with your child and wait for your child to respond to your questions

1. ASCCs will meet with parents in spring to complete the Transition to Kindergarten packet.
2. Additional information regarding CPS kindergarten program options are available at [https://www.cps-k12.org/enroll](https://www.cps-k12.org/enroll)
   - Magnet Schools (Montessori, Foreign Language, Paideia) apply online for lottery starting in October or November
   - Neighborhood/Vision 2020 Schools begin registration in spring: Schools located within neighborhoods of Cincinnati Public School District (See CPS website for school list and phone numbers).

Revised 7/17/19