



SHERRY AND KEN GOLDBERG FAMILY  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER**

# Parent's Guidebook

**Revised 2022 – 2023 School Year**

Goldberg Early Childhood Center  
7900 Northaven Road  
Dallas, Texas 75230

214-739-2737 Main JCC Number  
214-239-7117 Preschool Direct Line  
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At the Sherry & Ken Goldberg Early Childhood Center, our *brit* (commitment) with all our school families is to form a partnership that allows families and faculty to work together in order to help each child realize their *Tzelem Elohim* (dignity and potential).

Our educational philosophy is child-centered and structured with *k'dushah* (intentionality and presence) to meet each child where they are with developmentally appropriate instruction. On each child's *masa* (journey) we focus on the development of the whole child and are continually facilitating growth in the domains of language and literacy, cognitive development, scientific thinking, gross motor, fine motor, social skills, emotional regulation and self-help skills.

Through this individualized experience, our goal is to help each child establish confidence and a positive self-identity and leave our walls ready to embrace the responsibility of being citizens of the world who engage in *tikkun olam* (repairing the world).

The Sherry & Ken Goldberg Early Childhood Center is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (IDFPS) and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The Sherry & Ken Goldberg Early Childhood Center welcomes families of all racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds as an equal opportunity institution. Students and children are admitted without regard to race, nationality, color, creed, religion, sex or disability.

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Goldberg Early Childhood Center – where we learn through discovery!

We are so excited that you have joined our family and are looking forward to a year of growing and learning!

This manual outlines our program, curriculum and policies.

Should you have any questions, you are always welcome to contact us at 214-239-7117.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year!



Tara Ohayon,  
Director of Early Childhood

At the Sherry & Ken Goldberg Early Childhood Center  
Our Graduates Are:

- ✓ Citizens of the world
- ✓ Kindergarten Ready
- ✓ Lifelong Learners
- ✓ Independent Thinkers with Flexible Mindsets
- ✓ Advocates for Themselves and Others
- ✓ Engineers, Poets, Athletes and Designers

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY & CURRICULUM STATEMENT**

The Sherry & Ken Goldberg Early Childhood Center (GECC) is designed to meet the needs of the whole child, including the areas of social, emotional, creative, physical, cognitive, and language development. The curriculum emphasizes developmentally appropriate play-based learning experiences. The environment is carefully planned to provide quality care and education for young children. This approach recognizes the uniqueness of each child and their family.

Adults involved in the child's life are viewed as partners in the educational process and are encouraged to actively participate in decisions affecting the care and education of the child. To help children reach their maximum potential, our program solicits parental input and uses authentic assessment in the planning of individualized experiences based on early learning standards for content areas like literacy, math, science and social studies. Also, birth-to-three standards and benchmarks for early learning include the areas of communication, cognitive, social-emotional, creative expression and motor development. The daily schedule is organized to meet the children's needs for a balance of active and quiet play, large and small group interactions, and indoor and outdoor activities.

The role of the teaching staff is to:

- Stimulate children's learning by listening, questioning, giving choices, making suggestions, and allowing for a balance between child-centered and teacher-initiated activities.
- Provide a variety of activities, learning materials, and projects to engage young children.
- Adapt and modify curriculum to ensure access to all children.
- Promote language and literacy development through interactions, direct teaching methods, and print-rich environments.
- Serve as a role model with Jewish values as a foundation.
- Respect and respond to family culture; while creating a culturally sensitive environment.
- Support continuity of care both inside the center and from home to center.
- Communicate and develop positive relationships and partnerships with parents and families.
- Observe and record developmental data, while assessing individual plans as needed.
- Foster creativity while reinforcing and enhancing curiosity.
- Provide an inclusive and anti-bias environment in the classroom.
- Use multiple teaching methods based on early learning standards.

The GECC curriculum is child-centered and based on children's interests and developmental needs. The toddler curriculum contains components that support early brain development and provides sensory experiences, as well as stimulating, language-rich interactions with adults and other children throughout the day. Early literacy is a major focus through reading, songs and finger plays. The interests and needs of non-verbal children are included in planning through feedback from parents, as well as observational assessment of children's experiences.

In our program, all children are given opportunities to:

- Practice decision making by selecting activities from a variety of learning centers, i.e., language, discovery, blocks, computers, and manipulatives.
- Express themselves creatively through art, music, dramatic play, movement, and the use of unstructured materials.
- Develop appropriate concepts and thinking skills through the exploration of a wide variety of concrete materials and activities.
- Experience warm, positive interactions with children and adults.
- Verbalize feelings in a supportive, accepting environment that encourages independence and self-control.
- Enjoy and participate in language experiences, i.e., conversations, stories, puppets, books, songs, and creative dramatics.
- Participate in many physical activities to develop fine and gross motor skills, i.e., puzzles, beads, play dough, climbers, tricycles and balls.
- Contribute ideas to written curriculum plans through small and large group discussions.
- Explore technology, including computers with age-appropriate software, tape recorders, and microscopes, for preschool.

## **GECC FACULTY**

Our staff is made up of caring and concerned professionals eager to build relationships with you and your child. In order to help develop these relationships, the GECC endeavors to keep the same teaching team with a class of children from when the school year begins in August through the conclusion in May (conclusion in August for infant program). This is true in our infant through Pre-K programs. As much staff continuity as possible will also be carried out in both summer and break programming. Each GECC staff member is knowledgeable about child development and experienced in working with young children. We have a strong commitment to continued learning and training for all of our staff. Consultants, workshops, conferences and staff meetings provide the teachers with on-going opportunities for professional growth. Reflective supervision and ongoing modeling and instruction with our Pedagogical team of Michele Hunt (Pre-K), Heather Rindfuss (3s), Lisa Yanofsky (2s) Emmaline Rosenthal (toddlers), Tawanada Moore (infants), and our Associate Director, Dave Stanton, provide a unique system of support for continuous improvement and growth. The job titles of employees who teach in children's classrooms include Early Childhood Educators and Pedagogistas.



## **OPERATIONAL POLICIES**

### **HOURS & DAYS OF OPERATION**

We welcome parents into our school and the classrooms when our facility is open. Feel free to come and visit. In order to maintain consistency for the children, it is best to talk with the teacher about the best times to visit.

The center opens at 7:45 A.M. and closes promptly at 5:45 P.M. Please note, teaching staff is not available to care for children before the center opens, thus no one is admitted to the classroom area until 7:45 A.M. All children must be picked up before the center closes. Remember that your child needs the security of knowing that you will be on time every day. Please call us at 214-239-7117, if an emergency arises. Late fees of \$1.00 per minute are strictly enforced.

### **SECURITY AND FACILITY ACCESS**

Access to the GECC is limited to staff, families and authorized pickup individuals who have access badges. Please also wear your GECC lanyard when in the school. It provides an easy visual for staff to let them know you're authorized to be in the school. If you need to add somebody to your account as an authorized pickup individual and get them an access badge, please e-mail our Membership Director, Ela Bilgin, at [ebilgin@jccdallas.org](mailto:ebilgin@jccdallas.org). If you are having someone not already approved pick up your child, please e-mail [eccadmin@jccdallas.org](mailto:eccadmin@jccdallas.org) with their name, what day(s) they'll be picking up and a copy of their driver's license. If there is an emergency and you cannot get here in time to pick up a child, please have one your authorized pickup individuals pick your child up or call our office at (214) 239-7117 to let us know who will be picking your child up. If you have forgotten your badge, you'll need to enter through the front office and be buzzed in by our Office Manager or Administrative Assistant. Individuals without a badge will need to scan their ID through our Raptor machine at the front of the school to get a visitor pass.

### **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL/CARPOOL**

Early Morning Care 7:45-8:45 a.m. Our Early Childhood Plus (ECP) program begins at 7:45 a.m. at which time all of our full-day classrooms are open. We are happy to provide cereal as an early morning snack to the children until 8:15 a.m. From 7:45 – 8:00 a.m. we will have an early morning carpool where GECC staff will help children out of the car and walk them to their classroom.

All classes begin at 8:45 a.m. We encourage parents to walk their children in when possible to have a few minutes to connect with your child's teachers. GECC staff will be outside from 8:45-9:10 a.m. for parents who prefer to use our carpool drop-off service. Infant parents are required to walk in with their children.

Dismissal time for morning classes is at 12:45 p.m. Our Pre-K classes dismiss at 1:45 p.m. The ECP program ends at 5:45 p.m. You must "check in" and "check out" your child and those in your carpool with the attending teachers. At pick up time, we ask that you take responsibility for your children from that moment until you exit the building.

Please keep your school calendar handy to check special days and schedules. The GECC closes on legal and Jewish holidays.

### **ARRIVING LATE FOR CARPOOL OR OUTSIDE OF CARPOOL HOURS**

Children will be taken to the office if the parent is not at the GECC by 1:00 p.m. (2:00 p.m. for Pre-K students) and the parent will be contacted. Late fees of \$1.00 per minute will be charged.

### **“STAY AND PLAY”**

The GECC provides a drop in “stay and play” program available to children in the 3’s or Pre-K class on weekday afternoons. The service is available from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Monday-Friday on a reservation basis for a maximum . The fee for this service is \$8.50 per hour. Late fees of \$1.00 per minute will be charged. For additional information, call the preschool office at 214-239-7117. *Please note that we are currently trying to hire staff for this role and we will be able to resume offering Stay and Play as soon as it is possible.*

### **WHEN IS THE CENTER OPEN?**

Days of operation are included on the GECC Calendar. A calendar will be provided each school year listing start/end dates, staff development days, and holidays. A copy of the center calendar will be provided to enrolled parents in the early spring and a copy will be posted on the GECC website.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN BRINGING OR PICKING UP MY CHILD?**

If you are not utilizing our carpool service, parents are required to park and bring their child into the classroom each morning. When arriving in the preschool parking lot, we ask that parents and all other drivers please refrain from unnecessarily idling their cars in the parking lot unless it is due to extreme hot or cold weather conditions. and begin the arrival with guiding their child to wash his/her hands upon entering the classroom. After your park and bring your child into the center, please proceed to your classroom where parents must sign the child in each day with one of the classroom teachers. As you leave, always say goodbye and tell your child you will return to pick him/her up. This helps your child transition into the room. Parents should come to the classroom/group at the end of each day to take their child home. This is a great chance for parents and teachers to connect about the child’s day. Children must be signed out daily through the classroom teacher by the parent/authorized adult. For the safety of all children, adults are not allowed to let children out of the car in the parking lot to come into the center without an adult, or to expect children to wait outside to be picked up by parents. A center staff member must be aware of each child’s arrival and departure. At arrival and departure, we encourage you to share information about your child with an employee, preferably either the classroom teacher or the Director. This helps us respond appropriately to your child throughout the day, and helps us plan curriculum.

### **WHAT ARE THE PROCEDURES FOR RELEASE OF CHILDREN?**

The parent or guardian must complete appropriate forms for other adults to be authorized to pick up a child. The center staff will not release a child to an unauthorized adult. Both parents should also be listed on the form. A child’s parent *will* be allowed to pick up her/his child unless legal documentation is provided to the center, such as a divorce decree or restraining order.

Photo identification is required to verify the identity of adults picking up children. Make sure that any authorized adult is aware that they will be asked for a photo ID; copies of the ID will be made at the front desk to be kept in the file for release of the child. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) requires a record of the identification to be maintained on file in the center for at least three months.



## **SMOKE-FREE FACILITY**

The entire facility and outdoor play areas are entirely smoke-free. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

## **ILLNESS & EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

If your child will be absent for any reason, please call the office at 214-239-7117.

### **What if my child is sick at home before coming to the GECC?**

Parents should have their child's health checked by the classroom teacher when entering the classroom. The child must be free of symptoms of illness, i.e. elevated temperature, diarrhea, vomiting, impetigo, conjunctivitis, thick colored nasal discharge, before coming to the child care center each day, or returning to the center after an illness. If your child was sick with these symptoms at home within the past 24 hours, your child will not be admitted to the center that day. Children recovering from illness and on restricted diets of Pedialyte or similar treatments will not be admitted until they are on a regular diet and symptom-free. Fever-reducing medication will not be administered to mask this symptom to allow a child to attend the center.

If your child is sent home with temperature, vomiting, or diarrhea during any day in care, she or he will not be able to return to school the next day. After that period of time has passed, your child may return if she/he has been symptom-free for 24 hours.

*Note: An exception for re-admission the following day when sent home with slightly elevated, low-grade temperatures related to non-contagious problems like teething in infants/toddlers, or ear infections, etc. will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Director. An exception will only be considered if supported by a written note from a doctor confirming that the child has been seen and treated by the doctor on the day sent home by the center. The doctor's written release must include a diagnosis which states: 1) what is causing the temperature, and 2) also state that the child is not contagious to others. If the doctor's note or instructions say "not contagious if proper handwashing is followed," this is not a case for an exception due to germs spread by contact. Employees always follow proper handwashing routines; however, this type of illness is often associated with gastroenteritis or diarrhea infections. No exception will be made for the symptom of diarrhea.*

### **ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ILLNESS AT THE CENTER ARE BASED ON THE REQUIREMENTS OF TDFPS**

According to the TDFPS, a child must be well enough to participate in all daily activities and not require more care than the center can provide to be admitted each day. In our program, this includes outdoor play since this is an integral part of each day's curriculum. The group will play outdoors unless there is weather alert; children, who are not well enough to play outdoors, or to participate in the day's other activities, must be kept home for the day. Precautions are necessary to protect the health of all children in the group. Parents will be notified of any communicable diseases that are reported to the center. Parents must notify the center of any communicable or contagious diseases, i.e., head lice, pink eye, exposure to chicken pox, etc., which their child or immediate family members have awareness of and/or symptoms.

## **MEDICATIONS**

If your child is well enough to participate and able to be admitted to the classroom, medication and special medical procedures will be administered to the child as follows:

Medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's full name and date brought into the center. It must be given to the front office, where it will be stored in a locked box. Medication will only be administered to the child for whom it was intended. Medications must be administered according to label instructions and in amounts for the child's age or as amended by a physician. NOTE: Fever-reducing medication will not be administered to mask symptoms of a contagious illness. Medication will not be administered after the stated expiration date. If medication is needed, the parents must sign a permission form *each time requesting the staff to give the medication* to their child. The form must be completely filled out indicating the child's full name, the name of the medication, the date, time and the amount to administer. All medication will be administered by administrative staff who have received training in how to appropriately do so.

Medication for recurring medical problems, such as asthma attacks or allergic reactions, will require a form to be completed to meet the following DFPS standards:

- Parent can give permission for a period of up to six months to administer medication when symptoms occur.
- Non-Prescription requires a form filled out by the parent and at times, a physician's signature.
- A new authorization form is required every six months, or less if changes are needed.
- The form must describe in detail information on the symptoms to watch for.
- The parent will be notified IMMEDIATELY if this medication is given.
- Any substance such as lip balm, cough drops, other medication-type substance brought to the center, must not be left in reach of a child in a cubby or diaper bag/backpack, but given to staff to be placed in locked storage and out of the reach of children. The staff must also have a permission form signed (if it is to be administered at the center).
- No medication can be administered by telephone approval.
- Diarrhea treatments like Pedialyte fluids or rice water will not be substituted for regular diets so children may attend center while illness is treated. Children must be symptom-free before attending care.

If a child has a specific medical or dental need that requires special management procedures as ordered by a physician, then an adult trained in that procedure must be on-site if the child is present. Depending on the needs and the procedure, this may be the responsibility of the family to ensure.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

What if my child gets sick or injured while at the center?

It is important that parents have a backup system in place to ensure that sick children can leave the center quickly. If a child has an illness which requires that the child be sent home, the parents will be notified at once. Parents must come to pick up and attend to their sick child immediately. Parents or authorized adults must come as soon as possible to avoid exposing others to an illness. Appropriate attention and supervision will be provided until the child's parent or authorized adult can arrive to pick up the child. The center cannot provide care for ill children until time for doctor's appointments, or other reasons.

Parents will be notified of injuries, such as minor cuts, scratches and bites requiring first aid by center employees verbally when they pick up their child. Additionally, the center staff will always call the parent immediately if a child bumps his/her head, or something appears to be more serious and needs a parent decision for possible medical treatment.

In case of critical illness or an accident occurring at the center requiring medical attention by health care professional, parents will be notified immediately. For this reason, it is important that all contact numbers be current at all times. The information that is provided by parents on the enrollment form for emergency medical treatment and transporting children to hospitals (if necessary) must always be up to date to ensure the safety and health of all children in care. Parents are required to sign the form authorizing the Director or a staff member to obtain medical aid in the event of a serious injury or illness occurring at the center if parents can't be reached. In this case, parents will be notified as soon as the child's medical needs have been met.

In case of a medical emergency arising from sudden illness or accident, the GECC Staff will make the determination whether to call 9-1-1. If the emergency personnel determine that transport to the nearest hospital is necessary, a staff member will go with the child and remain until the parent arrives. Staff is certified in First Aid and CPR and will give treatment until additional support arrives. The parent will be contacted immediately.

### **PARENTAL NOTIFICATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

Parents will be notified any time there is a situation related to the safety or health of their child. The center must be able to contact parents at the contact numbers provided in the child's record. Some situations such as policy or procedure changes or changes in the enrollment agreement require written notification to parents. Written notification will be provided to parents regarding any changes in center policies or procedures. The parent will be required to sign a form stating they have been notified about these changes as they occur.

### **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS & TEACHING STAFF ON LEAVE/ABSENCES**

During absences, an employee's assignment may change. If they know in advance they will be out, teaching staff will tell parents about the absence. Absences due to a teaching staff's illness or unknown situations may result in a substitute in the classroom. Substitute employees working with our children are carefully selected to ensure quality early care and education services.

The summer months and days between sessions may also require a change of assignment for temporary coverage due to personal leave and vacations. Parents will be notified about these changes in writing (notes, memos, etc.) with as much advance notice as possible.

On occasion you may need to drop off or pick up your child at another classroom as we accommodate an employee's absence and locate substitute care. On those days, every attempt is made to ensure continuity by placing children with a familiar teacher/group.

### **DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY**

At the GECC, we strive for a warm comfortable atmosphere in which children feel free to interact with other children and with staff.

In compliance with the Texas Administrative Code, Title 26, Chapters 746 and 747, Subchapter L,

Discipline and Guidance, our procedures for discipline and guidance are as follows:

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child.
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A teacher may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- Remind a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
- Using brief supervised "recovery time," when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than 1 minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps or toilet training.
- Pinching, shaking or biting a child.
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument.
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth.
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting or yelling at a child.
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive or profane language.
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room bathroom, or closet with a door closed.
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

All guidance techniques will be consistent; will be based on the understanding of each child's individual needs and development; and will promote self-control and acceptable behavior. Staff is continually deepening their practice of Conscious Discipline and uses those techniques for guidance. Consistent with our study and use of Conscious Discipline, the following are examples of how we focus on engagement and redirection in the classroom. When a child's behavior exceeds the limits of expected classroom behavior, the teacher follows these guidelines:

- Teachers will use non-judgmental responses and descriptive praise to recognize and encourage positive behavior.
  - Example: You did it! You put the blocks back on the shelf when you were finished so no one would trip on them.
- Teachers will use assertive commands to provide clear expectations and guide children through the directions with the use of modeling.
  - Example: Jason, walk carefully in the classroom, with each foot going like this (modeling the walking)
- Teachers will use redirection to find alternative options to children’s choices. Teachers will offer two acceptable choices and state one non-option firmly.
  - Example: You may build a tower with the blocks like this or you may connect them to build a road like this. You may not swing them in the air, that is unsafe.
- Teachers will practice self-reflection and active calming before responding to children’s upset in order to be in-tune and present in the moment.
- Teachers will use empathy and reflection to build emotional awareness in children. They will observe body language cues and facial expressions of the child to identify possible emotions. Teachers will then name the emotion and offer a potential reason why the child is experiencing it based on the circumstances.
  - Example: “Your arms are going like this” (demonstrate) “And your face looks like this” (demonstrate) “Your body is telling me you might be feeling frustrated. You wanted to keep building with your Legos”
- Children will be taught active calming techniques, such as breathing, during times of non-stress. These same techniques will be used to return children to a calm and relaxed state during times of stress. Once a child has returned to their calm, they will be offered two acceptable choices to move forward.
  - Example: There you go, your body is calming down. You have a choice: you can pick up the large blocks or the small blocks. Which do you choose?
- Teachers will hold children firmly and safely if the child’s behavior is such as to harm themselves or others.
- No staff member of this facility will ever use physical, psychological or coercive punishment of any kind.

We do know that sometimes the above steps may not always work. Our focus is on being present with the child and helping them calm down. If that is not safely possible the child may need to be separated from the group – either inside or outside of the classroom. Parents may also be included in the discussion if the behavior(s) continue.

### **DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY cont.**

As stated above, the steps may not always work and there may be more disruptive behaviors that require a long term plan to address those. In those situations, the steps below will be the standard procedures at the GECC, though if the behavior presents an ongoing safety issue in the classroom, the timelines and steps below may need to be shortened. The below policy complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

- Teachers who are noticing a behavior challenge in the classroom will fill out a red flag checklist that documents the behaviors being seen in the classroom, as well as tracking the

time of day, frequency and antecedent causes of the behavior, and purpose the behavior achieves for the student.

- The teachers submit that documentation to the school interventionist and administrative team.
- The child will be observed by the school interventionist.
- The teachers, interventionist and school administrators will meet to make a plan to address the behavior(s) focusing on the desired behaviors we are looking to nurture. The teachers and interventionist will then meet with the parents to share information and gather feedback before finalizing the plan.
- The plan will be put into place for 4 – 6 weeks and teaching staff and interventionist will document the success of the plan and impact on behavior.
- At the conclusion of that time, the documentation will be shared with the team and a decision will be made as to whether the plan is working and should be continued, whether the plan needs to be modified, or whether it seems like it is appropriate to make a referral for outside services and evaluations.
- Based on the interventions, evaluations, assessments and documentation, parents, teachers and administrators will talk about next steps, accommodations that can be made in the classroom and potentially whether GECC is an appropriate educational fit to meet the needs of the child.
- In the event that the GECC cannot meet the child's needs, the administrative team will facilitate a two week transition timeline to find a new program and assist in making referrals to programs that may be better suited to meet the child's needs. *Please note that it is extremely rare that the GECC cannot meet the educational needs of the enrolled students and every effort is made to reach accommodations that allow students, families and teachers to find a path to success in the classroom.*

## **SNACK**

The foods that children eat influence their growth, development, capacity to learn, and overall behavior. Menus are nutritionally balanced according to USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Some examples of our snacks are: fruits, crackers, cheese, cereals, and yogurt. Sugary, high fat foods will be avoided. We serve only milk or water. As mandated by TDFPS children 2 years and under are served whole milk, 2 years and up are served 2% milk. Wholesome nutritious snacks are served each day. Often the children participate in baking activities during this time. The GECC staff prepares and provides snacks for all children. Children are encouraged to taste all the food served. They are never forced to eat if they choose not to eat.

If required by the parent, variations to menus can be developed for the purpose of meeting a child's ethnic and religious needs. A signed form stating the food restriction must be provided to the center.

Children in the toddler through Pre-K programs should not bring bottles to the center, if possible. The staff will work with you to help separation anxiety and develop alternative methods of helping your child feel secure. Staff will work with children who are not ready to use a sippy cup to develop those skills and transition away from bottles as quickly as possible.

If a child has any food allergies, the school must be notified in writing by the child's health professional or physician, including the symptoms resulting from the allergy, the remedies and food substitutions, and precautions to be taken.

*When a child needs a special diet, the center must receive a written statement from the physician describing the type of modifications needed for the special diet. A food group substitution list to meet the child's physical needs must also be provided to the center as required by TDFPS.*

Copies of menus are posted monthly on the bulletin boards in the kitchens of each classroom.

Please leave gum, candy, food/drinks/snacks brought from home, etc. in the car or at home. These items can create problems among children in the room. Also, if your child's lunch has food that needs to be kept cool, please place an ice pack or frozen juice box in his/her lunchbox.

## **HOLIDAYS**

The GECC is a place of Jewish joy and celebration. Through the teaching of songs, the preparation of foods and the explanation of history, we share the following Jewish holidays: Shabbat, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Hanukkah, Purim, Passover, Yom Ha'Atzmaut and Shavuot. There will be many special programs and activities to which parents are happily invited and encouraged to come. The GECC does not observe Halloween, Valentine's Day, Christmas or Easter. We celebrate Jewish and national holidays only.

## **KOSHER POLICY**

The Jewish Community Center and the GECC has a policy of keeping Kosher. All food served to the children will be Kosher. Children need to bring a kosher lunch. Please include either a meat lunch or a dairy lunch. There should be no mixing of milk and meat products within the lunch you send. Never send shellfish, pork or products containing lard. Children in our center are not permitted to share lunches. When bringing special treats for birthdays or classroom parties please remember to



adhere to this policy. Please call the GECC office if you have any questions.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Birthdays are special at the GECC and children enjoy celebrating with school friends. Parents may bring a special birthday snack, but please do not send favors or gifts. All food must be kosher. All baked goods must be from a Health Department-inspected kitchen or commercial bakery and have an accepted hechsher indicating that it is kosher. Please do not bring home baked goods. If parents wish to supply a snack item in celebration of their child's birthday, this should be arranged and coordinated with the child's teacher prior to bringing any food items into the classroom. Birthday invitations must be mailed and not passed out at school. Questions and concerns about this policy should be directed to your child's teacher.

### **NAP/REST TIME, ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES & SLEEP POSITIONING**

All children are required to have a quiet time after lunch. Children are provided with cots/mats to sleep or rest upon. A child may bring his/her own blanket, pillow, and/or stuffed animal if he/she chooses to do so. The following will be adhered to by staff: An appropriate naptime will be created by providing a restful environment. This includes turning off lights, shading windows to outside sunlight, providing a comfortable temperature and letting children snuggle with blankets, pillows, a stuffed animal, doll or other familiar object. Individual attention to help a child go to sleep, if needed, will be given. This includes appropriate touching such as rubbing or gently patting a child's back, arm or leg; stroking hair; and maybe even rocking some toddlers. The rest area will be light enough to allow visual supervision at all times.

Nap or rest period will be between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. (2:00 – 3:00 p.m. for Pre-K) depending on individual schedules and classroom schedules. Children are not forced to sleep; but, all children are provided a supervised rest period on their cot/mat resting quietly for one (1) hour. After one hour, children who are awake must be allowed to get up and to participate in quiet activities until all children are awake. Children who are not sleeping at the end of the hour will be allowed to get up and choose from quiet activities provided. These quiet activities will take place in a designated quiet area in the room.

Also, the nap or rest period must not exceed three hours for any child. The staff must wake the child up if he/she is still asleep at the end of the rest period.

## **ADMISSION/ENROLLMENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

### **ENROLLMENT**

The GECC is committed to enrolling and serving all children. It is our goal to provide appropriate and beneficial inclusion for each child. Program modifications will be made on a case-by-case basis, as individualized learning needs will vary for each child.

To achieve the goal of providing a positive experience for each child, the staff continually observes and assesses both individual and class needs. Determinations will be made concerning the child's continuation in the program.

We reserve the right to reconsider your child's enrollment if pertinent information regarding medical, psychological, educational or other relevant evaluation or medical care has not been adequately shared with the preschool administration. This would include but not be limited to, occupational, physical or speech therapy; psychological, psychiatric, or neurological evaluation/care; or developmental pediatric evaluation.

Families will also be required to sign a release of information in order for early childhood staff to obtain information from these providers of services.

Parents may be requested to have their child assessed by a professional of their choice or by one of the professionals listed on the available resource list when it is perceived as necessary by preschool staff.

If we are unable to accommodate your child's level of function, or if their behavior limits their ability to participate in or benefit from our preschool program, we reserve the right to reconsider your child's attendance. In certain situations, additional staff support and/or accommodations may be required at an additional cost to the parent.

A current physical (within the past year) and current immunization records are required for enrollment. Physicals are required annually. The Center follows the recommendations of the NAEYC and the City of Dallas Health Department.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

The JCC and GECC provides programming for young children with special needs. A major effort is made to integrate these participants into appropriate on going JCC classes, groups, and events. Our goal is to provide participants with developmental, physical, and learning disabilities an opportunity to improve self-esteem and social skills, as well as develop new and meaningful relationships, and participate in the Jewish community to the fullest extent of their ability. Our staff meets with therapists, doctors, etc. to ensure that each child's individual needs and goals are being met. For students who have special feeding needs, the type and quantity of food consumed is to be logged on individual sheets and provided to the family at pickup each day.

### **HEARING & VISION SCREENING**

Parents of children over four years old will need to provide vision and hearing examinations by a licensed professional with children's health records and physicals. (See *Health Information Card* in Enrollment Packet). More information can be found at [www.dshs.state.tx.us/vhs/](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/vhs/).

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

All children must have a current health statement or health record signed by both parent and physician. In addition to the required Annual Health Statement, all children at GECC and J Camps must provide proof of immunizations in accordance with the most current immunization schedule adopted by the State of Texas before the first day of school/camp. A child's enrollment process will only be considered complete once immunization records from a physician or clinic have been reviewed and approved by the GECC or J Camp. Immunization records must remain current for a child to attend school or camp.

We recognize that individuals who have had a documented allergy or severe adverse reaction to a particular vaccine, or with a documented medical condition, may not be able to complete the immunization schedule in the time frame adopted by the State of Texas. In these extremely rare circumstances, a written and signed statement from a physician (M.D. or D.O.) licensed by any state in the United States, and who is board-certified in the subspecialty of allergy/immunology, infectious disease or hematology/oncology, will be required. These statements will be reviewed and approved/declined by an anonymous team of physicians selected by the JCC.

An exemption from immunizations for reasons of conscience will not be accepted.

In the event that a child who is not able to be immunized is exposed to a vaccine-preventable disease to which they are susceptible, the parents of the child will be notified immediately and the child will be excluded from the program until their doctor has cleared him/her for a safe return to school and the JCC's team of physicians has reviewed the case and approved the return on the child.

## **OUTDOOR LEARNING TIME**

Children participate in outdoor learning center time in the morning and afternoon, unless it is raining or a local health alert due to air quality has been issued. Children will not be allowed to go outside on red ozone days. Outdoor time is an integral part of your child's day. Since your child will go outside in very hot and very cold weather, please dress your child appropriately for the season and send extra clothes for the season. On days when the temperature is extreme, extra precautions are taken, such as shortening the amount of time your child spends outside. We are not able to provide staff to stay inside with a mildly ill child, therefore parents will need to make alternative care arrangements if their child cannot go outside.

In hot weather, we encourage the children to drink water and play in the shade. We require parent permission to apply sunscreen. Permission forms can be filled via Camp Doc.

In cold weather, we layer the children's outer clothing. Please send hats and mittens for cold days, in addition to sweatshirts and coats. We believe that the playground is probably the safest place to be in the winter as staying inside in close contact with others encourages the spread of germs and limits exposure to fresh air and exercise. Children need the outdoor play and exercise to be healthy.

When public health authorities recommend the use of insect repellent due to high risk of insect-borne disease, staff applies this no more than once a day and only with written parental permission. This is the guideline of the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards. The parent will supply the repellent for use as directed by their health professional for the age of their child. Parents can apply insect repellent prior to bringing the child in for the day if they prefer.



## **CLOTHING REQUIRED FOR ACTIVE PLAY & SELF-HELP SKILLS**

Children learn through play: They may get dirty and need to have their clothing changed. Each child must have two (2) complete sets of clothing (excluding shoes) for emergency changes as needed during busy play days. Each item must be labeled with the child's name. Toileting accidents are treated matter-of-factly. No child is punished, or made to feel ashamed. Parents must bring enough extra clothing and/or diapers to ensure that the child's daily needs for clean and dry changes can be met while in care at the center.

Children must be dressed in simple, washable clothing suitable for play. While smocks are worn by children during messy activities, occasionally accidents do occur. Also, clothing should be easily managed by children for toileting. Pants with suspenders or tight belts are difficult for children to handle when toileting and should be avoided as school clothes.

Tennis shoes are suggested as footwear for the children as they are soft-soled and provide fairly safe footing. Children should not wear boots since an accidental kick can result in injury to a child or another person. Also, *sandals* can be dangerous when worn while climbing. The children will be playing outside almost every day, including cold days. Each child needs appropriate clothing such as, hats, scarves, mittens, coats, and long/short pants for different types of weather.

## **SUPPLIES TO BRING TO THE CENTER**

Please leave toys, gum, money, candy, food/drinks/snacks brought from home, etc. in the car or at home. These items can create problems among children in the room if it is something your child does not wish to share. Also, the center does not have space to store your child's after-school snack/drinks for you to leave each day and pick up as you leave for the day.

Children may bring a soft toy (label with child's name) for naptime or an item from home, like a picture of his/her family, to provide security during the day. The center cannot be responsible for items brought from home.

A supply list is included in your opening packet of information.

In addition, please note:

- All items must be labeled with your child's name.
- Gym shoes need to be worn on gym days.
- Two changes of clothes, labeled with the child's name and packed in a plastic bag, are to be kept at school for emergencies.
- A school bag or backpack is needed for carrying important items.
- Diapers and wipes are needed for Toddlers and Twos.
- Children enrolled in ECP program will also need bedding for naps.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The GECC does not provide transportation to and from the center. We ask that parents transporting children to and from the center in personal automobiles use seat belts, car/booster seats and safety restraints appropriately to protect all the children. As children exit your automobile, please use caution as they walk from the vehicle to the entrance and back to ensure safety at all times.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are part of the regular curriculum in our program for children in Pre-K. The project approach to planning learning experiences is used to ensure that children are engaged in meaningful activities in our community. This approach includes investigation and fieldwork by the children. Even young toddlers are engaged in investigation and explorations; their fieldwork is limited to on-campus trips to avoid transporting them due to the child seat and supervision difficulties in field trips for children younger than three.

It is expected that parents sign the field trip permission form for their child to participate. If not participating in that part of the curriculum, parents will be expected to make alternative care arrangements on days of field trips: No teacher will be available to remain on-site when the child's group is on a field trip. All precautions will be taken to ensure the safety and health of each child during field trips. Parents will be notified in advance by posted notices at least 48 hours before the trip.

### **WATER ACTIVITIES**

Water activities in our program include sensory tubs, sprinkler play, splash pools and swimming pools (for 3 years and up). Care is taken to ensure the health and safety of children during water play activities by preventing children from using sprinkler equipment on or near a hard, slippery surface, such as a driveway, sidewalk, or cement area. All sprinkler play equipment and hoses are stored out of children's reach when not in use. Sensory tubs are emptied and disinfected daily.

### **ANIMALS AT THE CENTER**

Children love to learn about animals. Occasionally, pets will be brought in for a visit. Parents will be notified in writing in advance if animals will be visiting the classroom. We will follow Texas Health and Safety Code for vaccinations of animals on the premises. Small rodents, such as guinea pigs, hamsters and mice, are not required to be vaccinated, but must have a signed statement by a veterinarian allowing them to be at school. These animals are managed by teachers to prevent practices that are unsafe or unhealthy to children as required by Texas Administrative Code Minimum Standards.

### **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parents are welcome visitors in our program to observe their child without prior approval. We ask parents to please contact the classroom teachers for optimal times to visit your child's classroom, the center operation, and program activities. Be aware that long visits may be difficult for your child when you leave. Please check in at the Office when you arrive.

We do ask visiting parents for their understanding in a few concerns related to group care:

- Regular and frequent visits in the classrooms may require additional forms from parent volunteers due to licensing requirements for adults in child care classrooms.

- Only employees, lab students, or volunteers (including parents) who have submitted criminal history and central registry affidavits and adult immunization records to comply with Minimum Standards are able to perform child care routines for other children in the room.

Parents are asked to evaluate the program annually through an open-ended questionnaire that is distributed and completed each spring. Please note that animals may not “visit” and must remain outside of the preschool. Parents may review the Minimum Standards for ChildCare Operations and see the latest visitation report. Parents are welcome to discuss all policies and procedures with the director and may take any questions or concerns to the JCC Board of Directors.

### **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

A Board of Directors governs the Jewish Community Center of Dallas. Input and involvement from all members is invited and welcome. The GECC is committed to family involvement. The GECC Advisory Committee, which functions as a standing committee, recommends policies. If policy changes are decided upon by the Board of Directors, you will be notified 30 days prior to the change taking place.

### **COMMUNICATION**

At the GECC, we encourage two-way communication. You will receive regular updates through Storypark, the communication platform that we use. You are able to send messages and provide feedback to your child’s teacher in Storypark as well. Staff will also communicate with you through phone conversations, email or verbally in the school. Feel free at any time to schedule a conference to discuss your child. If you need the communications in another language besides English, we are happy to provide you with an interpreter.

We will use email to communicate frequently. All parents will receive the weekly “Shout Out” with important announcements and programming information. If you change your email address or do not receive weekly emails from the school, please contact us immediately so that we can update your information.

## **PARENT ASSOCIATION (PA)**

The GECC supports an active Parent Association. The PA plays a very integral role at our program sponsoring on-going programs throughout the school year. Volunteer parents are actively involved in efforts, which directly benefit the children. All parents are invited to attend PA meetings. Parents are our most important resource. We encourage you to contribute your skills and talents to enrich our program and your child's school experience. We also invite you to join the PA community on our Facebook page. Request an invitation from the PA co-chairs.

## **ASSESSMENT OF CHILD PROGRESS**

There are a number of ways that the GECC assesses students, beginning with the registration and enrollment process. When a student enrolls, they will be assessed in the following ways:

- The Family Profile filled out by the parents on Camp Doc
- An Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and an Ages and Stages Social Emotional Questionnaire (ASQ-SE) that will be conducted either by age level pedagogistas or classroom teachers, all of whom have been trained in conducting and interpreting results of these tools.
- Initial observations by teachers based on age appropriate developmental guidelines
- Conference Reports and/or files from previous schools

As students continue in the GECC, we conduct different types of assessments to gather information about each individual child's learning, development and progress. These include the following:

- Observations & Anecdotal Records gathered during whole group times, small group work and individual work in the classroom
- Progress towards meeting the age appropriate developmental guidelines for that school year and age level.
- Work sampling that is collected and held for parent-teacher conferences
- Continued conducting of ASQs and ASQ-SEs on a semi-yearly basis
- Red Flag Checklists (if necessary)

Children will be assessed at regularly scheduled intervals as noted above and/or when concerns arise from teachers or parents. Assessments will be made in both the classroom as teachers are working with children (informal) and in a designated area, at a designated time (formal) if that is necessary. We are happy to work with parents on modifying assessments when necessary to best fit the needs of their children. Twice yearly (fall and spring) children will be formally assessed and student observations and work samples will be used to facilitate a Parent-Teacher conversation. A conference can be called at any time by parents or teachers. Additionally, teachers will send home progress letters in October and February.

The purpose of assessment is to monitor children's progress developmentally and in the program and to aid in curriculum planning. When teachers use observation as a form of assessment, they are able to discover what the children are interested in and reflect this in their teaching. Teachers will also use the assessment to understand what skills level each child is at and to plan for that child individually in a way that challenges them within their proximal zone of development. Assessment is also used to identify developmental red flags and to advise parents when outside evaluation is recommended. If a teacher thinks that diagnostic assessments are needed, they will follow the same procedures laid out at the end of the Discipline and Guidance Policy with the focus on the developmental issues suspected. At this time, a plan is put together and the teachers hold a conference with the parent. Teachers and administrators will only share results of the assessments with the child's parents. Looking at schoolwide trends and results of assessments is the responsibility of the pedagogical team and administrative team in order to make recommendations about changes that can be made to the



GECC to improve the program and more closely align it with its vision.

Assessment results will automatically be passed into the assigned teachers of the next age level to provide continuity of learning. In order to share with other people, the child's parents must sign a Release of Information form giving the school permission to release the information.

Optional Speech & Language and Hearing & Vision screenings are set up by administration annually to be conducted by outside professionals. (Hearing and Vision Screening is required by the state of Texas and must be included in the Health Record for children four years old and older enrolled in the program.)

## **PARENT CONFERENCES & COMMUNICATION**

Parent-teacher conversations are scheduled twice a year. A notice of the schedule will be sent home with your child. Evaluations and documentation of progress will be shared with parents at the time of the conversation. If you wish to talk with the teacher or the director at any other time, please call the GECC office. We are always happy to discuss questions and concerns with you. ECP will close early at 3:30 PM for conversations.

Ongoing, daily communication – both written and photographic – is provided through Storypark. Parent bulletin boards provide posted notices and other information. Daily plans for activities are posted in each classroom area. We will use email to communicate frequently. If you change your email address or do not receive almost daily communication from the school, please contact us immediately so that we can update your information.

Assessment of children's progress in the program is an ongoing process. Teachers develop portfolios for each child. As teachers observe your child and write individualized plans for him/her, an enhanced developmentally-appropriate curriculum based on the child's strengths and areas of projected development will be developed. A collection of your child's work and a summary of progress will be shared and discussed regularly with parents each semester. Parent conversations will be held in the fall and in the spring for in-depth discussions. Other parent-teacher conversations may be held at any time to discuss problems or concerns throughout the semester.

## **PRIVATE SCHOOL EVALUATIONS**

The GECC staff will complete a private school evaluation on its current students based on a written request from the parent(s) according to the following procedure:

- Each form must be submitted to the GECC office at least one month prior to the date it is needed. Forms will be completed by the classroom teacher and approved by the Director of Early Childhood. If forms are being submitted electronically they should be e-mailed to [eccadmin@jccdallas.org](mailto:eccadmin@jccdallas.org)
- At the discretion of the Director of Early Childhood, the child's teacher will request a conference with the parent(s) in order to discuss the evaluation before mailing it to the private school. The Director will participate in the meeting.

## **ECO-HEALTHY POLICIES**

As we endeavor to be increasingly eco-healthy in our school, it is the GECC policy to utilize green cleaning solutions whenever available. Currently, our teachers utilize Force of Nature cleaning

products to clean and sanitize. We also avoid using artificial scents or fresheners including air fresheners and diffusers. This is done to reduce the amount of chemicals we are exposing our staff and students to on a daily basis.

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Program Staff keeps a current list of child and family support services available in the community. We are happy to share this list with you and assist you in locating, contacting and using community resources.

## **SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM**

Through a partnership between Jewish Family Service and the GECC, counselors work closely with school personnel and parents to assess student behavior and make recommendations for intervention. As part of the special needs initiative school, counselors will work with teachers to determine the students' abilities and disabilities in relation to the curriculum.

The following services are provided to the school by the consultants:

- Assess the behavior of children who have been referred, by observing classrooms, outdoor time and lunch, and then making recommendations.
- Assist teachers, parents and administrators with academic, behavioral, social/emotional or family issues.
- Provide crisis intervention and limited individual counseling to students (1-2 sessions).
- Provided group intervention when appropriate on topics such as peer relationships, problem solving and conflict resolution.
- Offer consultation to parents.
- Provide Second Step or a similar program which emphasizes feelings, problem solving and anger management.

The purpose of the program is to be a resource for the school, the parents and caregivers, as well as the teachers and students at the GECC. When indicated, referrals will be made to community agencies, private mental health professionals, and or/Rabbis for additional assistance. Faculty or parents may refer students to the counselor. All personal information about the students is kept in strictest confidence. Information about the student will only be released with written consent from the parent or caregiver.

## **REQUEST NOTICE**

The GECC policy states that class assignments must be based on educational variables rather than parent requests. In order to maximize each child's potential, children will be carefully and thoughtfully placed in a group for the next school year.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Children's records and information about children in the program must be maintained in a manner which promotes confidentiality. It is expected that all employees refrain from discussing confidential

information about children and families in the program. Children's files will be kept in locked cabinets/closets. Records will not be released to a third party without written permission from the parent. Records will be release to a child's parents or legal guardians as well as to regulatory authorities.

### **PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING QUESTIONS, CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS**

Questions or concerns regarding the GECC policies and procedures should be first discussed with your child's teacher or the Director, depending on what/who is involved. All problem-solving methods are based upon the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. Every attempt will be made to resolve differences through a variety of methods. If the teacher is unable to help resolve the concern or answer the question, please make an appointment with the center director. At that time, if the director is unable to resolve or answer it, the next level is to appeal to the executive director of the JCC. You may also contact the GECC Advisory Chair whose contact info can be found in the early childhood office. The center also plans informal meetings for individual/group parent discussions, and routinely gathers advice from groups of parents at meetings on difficult issues. If a parent needs an interpreter in their first language, the GECC is happy to provide one for you.

### **CHILD CARE LICENSING/Texas Department of Family & Protective Services (TDFPS)**

A copy of the Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers and our most recent Licensing inspection form are available for your review at the front desk area. If you need to contact Licensing, the local childcare licensing office can be reached at (214) 583 – 4253 or <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>

### **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

State law requires suspected abuse or neglect be reported so that a specialist can intervene before harm is done to a child. Parents are encouraged to discuss child abuse and neglect with the GECC Director of Early Childhood and/or their child's teacher. Because of our concern for the welfare of children, we provide information on kinds of abuse and neglect. The phone number for the Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-252-5400. Anyone suspecting child abuse or neglect is expected to report this under Texas law.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

All staff is trained in procedures to follow during an emergency. As part of this training, monthly fire drills, quarterly lockdown drills and quarterly inclement weather/tornado drills will be conducted with staff and children. If evacuation of the building is necessary or any of these procedures are put into action, families will be alerted as soon as is safely possible. This will be done via Remind Texts, Storypark Updates, E-Mails and/or phone calls. children will be moved to a safe location.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

The GECC closing policy for severe weather, adopted by the JCC Board of Directors is as follows:

- The GECC will follow the closing decision of either the Dallas or Richardson School Districts. If either district is closed, the GECC will be closed.
- The GECC will not open late. If the above district opens, for example, at 10:00 a.m. the GECC will remain closed.

## **FEES, PAYMENTS & CONTRACTS**

JCC Membership is required for GECC participation. Prior to enrollment a non-refundable registration fee must be paid. (Refer to contracts for fee amounts.) No tuition will be refunded nor transferred upon withdrawal of the child from the school. The only exceptions to this rule are if the withdrawal is due to: a) student illness, or b) mutual educational decision; and in both cases, the refund must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer of JCC Dallas.

## **TERMINATION OF SERVICES & WITHDRAWAL FROM CENTER**

For other situations or problems that could come up and result in termination of enrollment, parents will be notified prior to action being taken to terminate services. A conference to resolve the problem will take place immediately. If the problem can't be resolved and termination is necessary, two weeks notice will be given to facilitate a smooth transition for the child provided that this does not cause a safety issue in the classroom. Child care may be terminated by the Director at any time because of non-adjustment to the program or failure to cooperate with the policies of the center.

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### *Safety Precautions Requirements:*

Children must not be allowed to cross a street unless accompanied by an adult. All children must be accounted for before leaving the vehicle unattended. No child must ever be left unattended in the vehicle.

### *For Pre-K Field Trips Only:*

Parents may provide the safety seat system for use in transporting their child, provided the equipment is appropriate and can be properly secured in the vehicle. The equipment must be used according to manufacturer's instructions. Only one person may use each safety belt or safety seat system. A child may ride in a safety belt with a shoulder harness if the shoulder harness goes across the child's chest and not across the child's face or neck. The lap belt should fit low across the child's thighs or top of the legs and not across the child's stomach area. Never put a shoulder belt under the child's arm or

behind the child's back. If the lap belt and shoulder harness do not fit properly, a booster seat or harness adjustment latch must be used.

*Equipment Requirements:*

A list of children being transported along with emergency medical transport and treatment authorization forms for each child being transported including parent's names, telephone numbers and emergency contacts. The child-care center's name, child-care center director or permit holder's name, and child-care center telephone number in the glove compartment or clearly visible inside the passenger compartment, or the child-care center's name and telephone number must be clearly visible on the outside of the vehicle. A fire extinguisher approved by the local or state fire marshal, secured in the passenger compartment and assessable to adult occupants. A first-aid kit as specified in 746.4003 of the Child Care Licensing Manual along with a communication device such as a cellular phone, message pager, or two-way radio.

*Emergency/Transportation Plan:*

The driver of the vehicle and/or caregiver in route must be aware of instructions for handling emergency breakdowns and accidents, including vehicle evacuation procedures, supervision of the children, and contacting emergency help. The director or designee in charge of the child-care center must know what action to take responding to a transportation emergency.

If the regular driver is absent, a familiar caregiver must accompany the van on route. The driver of the vehicle and/or caregiver in route must know the routine arrival and departure times of the vehicle and take action if the vehicle does not return to the child-care center at a scheduled time. The driver must travel a known fixed route within an approximate timeframe. Cell phones should be used for business/emergency purposes only while in route.

*Driver Requirements:*

All drivers will be asked to submit a current driver's license. A background check and driver's record check will be completed for all drivers. And all drivers will be asked to complete a training session on transportation policies and procedures.