

COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



FAMILY HANDBOOK

July 13, 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Columbus City Schools' Early Childhood Education Program (ECE) is a developmentally appropriate program that provides comprehensive services to preschool aged children and their families in the areas of education, health services, social services, and family and community partnerships. Every child we serve will be successful and prepared to enter kindergarten ready to continue learning as a result of being in a program that:

- Believes every child can and will learn
- Sees promise, hope and potential in each child
- Employs highly qualified and dedicated staff members
- Monitors its programs to ensure continuous improvement
- Provides ongoing professional development for its staff
- Involves and values families as partners in their child's education
- Aligns an appropriate curriculum and assessment with state and national standards

The mission of Columbus City Schools' ECE program is to provide a strong foundation for all children- a foundation which prepares each student for the next level of learning and beyond. This mission is based on the overarching mission and vision of Columbus City Schools: Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community and a vision of 100% Student Success.

This family handbook is a comprehensive reference guide regarding the policies and procedures for children who attend programs provided by Columbus City Schools Division of Early Childhood Education. Policies and procedures are subject to change as necessary.

CURRICULUM

Columbus City Schools' Early Childhood Education Program (ECE) implements a written, research-based curriculum that is comprehensive and aligned with Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards. These standards are set by the Ohio Department of Education, and emphasize all areas of development- cognitive, social, emotional and physical. The developmentally appropriate curriculum addresses the learning needs of individual children, as well as the group needs of all children, guiding them all to success.

The Office of Early Learning and School Readiness has provided direction for the screening and assessment of preschool-aged children. As a result, Columbus City Schools' Early Childhood Education Program believes that assessment is an ongoing process and should be used as a "snapshot" of where your child is within each area of childhood development. Assessing the progress of children occurs throughout the school year.

Developmental assessment tools may include:

- Ohio Early Learning Assessment (ELA)
- Brigance Screening Tool
- Informal Teacher Assessments: i.e. observations, anecdotal records, checklists
- Curriculum assessment

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

Having a highly qualified staff is essential to the quality of the program. As a result, several days during the school year are set aside for the staff to attend staff development sessions. These dates are established and given to all families at the beginning of the school year. **On ECE Professional Development days, there is no school for ECE children.**

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips for the ECE Program are considered a part of the curriculum and are planned around themes, special days/events and program goals. All families are asked to complete a form at the beginning of the school year, giving their child permission to participate in all school field trips. Any child without a signed permission form must remain at home on the day of the field trip. Only

those children who have been given permission will be allowed to go on the trips. The Division of Early Childhood welcomes parent and family involvement and encourages families to reach out to their child's teacher for more information on opportunities to chaperone.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Columbus City Schools has an open door policy. Parents are encouraged to visit the school, observe the classrooms, volunteer and participate in school functions whenever possible. Office staff will notify the ECE staff if a parent is coming to their room as a courtesy to the staff. For individual needs/conferences, parents are encouraged to arrange a separate time to meet with staff when students are not present.

In accordance with ODE Preschool Licensing Rule 3301-37-07-(E): "Any parent of a child enrolled in the program shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation to contact his child, evaluate the care provided by the program, the premises, or for other purposes approved by the director. Upon entering the premises, the parent shall report to the school office."

HOURS OF OPERATION

ECE Classrooms and most Inclusive ECE Classrooms (those classrooms with both children with disabilities and ECE peers) follow a full day schedule, generally from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

However, ECE students may participate in the breakfast program at their school which typically begins at 8:30 a.m.

In addition, there are half day ECE Classrooms for three- to five-year old children with disabilities. The morning sessions in these classrooms generally are from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.. However, these students may participate in the breakfast program at their school which typically begins at 8:30 a.m. The afternoon session in these classrooms is from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

EARLY LEAVE / SCHOOL CANCELLATION

There may be times when school is closed other than those that are identified on the school calendar. Weather conditions of ice, flooding, and snow have caused the closing of schools in the past. If the schools are closed due to weather conditions, information will be posted on the district website and announced on local radio and television stations.

TOILET TRAINING GUIDELINES

A child must be toilet trained before attending the ECE program in the district. Toilet trained ECE children: no longer wear diapers or disposable underwear (pull ups), can tell an adult when they need to go to the bathroom, and can attend to their own hygiene care. **(Please note, this policy does not apply to children with disabilities)**

Accidents can and do happen so we ask you to send a change of clothes for your child to school. Accidents, by definition, are unusual incidents and should only happen infrequently. If toilet accidents frequently occur at school, the ECE staff will consult with the family to create an individualized plan to address the toilet training concern.

REGISTRATION / ENROLLMENT

***Please note that the enrollment/placement process is slightly different for children with disabilities**

ECE students must be 4 years old by September 30th. If your child will be 5 years old by September 30th he/she is not eligible for Pre-K but eligible for Kindergarten. * Note: Children with disabilities have different age requirements.

The online registration (OLR) begins each year in February and appointments begin in April at Central Enrollment. The Division of Early Childhood Education adheres to the federal title fund

guidelines for priority Pre-K enrollment for students/families who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Foster care youth
- Families who receive SNAP benefits (food stamps)
- Families who are in temporary housing (homeless)
- English-language learners

Federal title fund guidelines also include priority enrollment for students who meet both factors:

- Students with challenges in literacy and language (information is collected through an online parent survey)
- Students with challenges in social and emotional behavior (information is collected through an online parent survey)

Families who do not meet those criteria will be placed on a waiting list and if space is available, will be notified at a later date.

Parent/legal guardian will complete the online registration and meet with the Enrollment Specialist. Once enrollment paperwork has been submitted and the appointment has been held, the parent/guardian will go into the Parent Portal and complete the Pre-K Pre-Application. They will have the opportunity to select up to three schools for their child to have the opportunity to attend. If an offer is made, the parent/guardian will have 48 hours to accept or decline. If the parent/guardian does not respond to the offer, it will automatically be declined.

PLEASE READ: Pre-K students enrolled in lottery schools (Columbus Spanish Immersion, Columbus Africentric, Duxberry Park, Ecole Kenwood and Oakland Park) for 2023-2024, will need to participate in the lottery process for Kindergarten enrollment for 2024-2025. There is no priority enrollment for Kindergarten.

Because the demand for the ECE Program is so great, students who live outside the Columbus City Schools district will not be considered for enrollment.

Documentation of a physical and dental exam by a health care professional within the last 12 months along with the other enrollment paperwork must be completed before a child attends the program. These exams must be updated with a documented new exam every 12 months.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Mobility is a factor in our schools, and families move from time to time. Please go to your Parent Portal and upload the required information. There is a short video on the district website, ccsoh.us

under enrollment for more information on how to upload the information. Necessary documents for change of address:

(Families must provide/upload one of the following items):

- A recent utility bill (gas, electric or water) in the parent/guardian's name. (Phone or cable bills are not acceptable).
- A current lease agreement with the parent/guardian's name. Name and phone number of the landlord must be provided in order to verify the lease.
- Two most-recent employment checks with the parent/guardian's name and address.
- Most recent check stub, received from the Department of Human Services or Social Security, addressed to the parent.
- Statement from the Department of Human Services or Social Security, on letterhead, indicating the address used by the parent for receipt of checks. Even if the parent has checks delivered to a post office box, the caseworker may be able to provide verification of an address for the parent, on the agency's letterhead.
- Statement from the Personnel Office of parent's employer, on letterhead, indicating the address used by parent for employment purposes and for submission of Internal Revenue Service (IRS) W-2 forms.
- [Student Housing Questionnaire](#) - for families displaced due to a housing crisis
- Proof of Custody/Guardianship (if other than biological/residential parent) - Custody Document - Certified copy of a judge's order or decree or modification of such order allocating parental rights and responsibilities and designating a residential parent and legal custodian of the child (if applicable).

Families residing with another individual NOT due to a housing crisis, should complete the [Verification of Residency](#) form and schedule an address change appointment by calling 614-365-4011. Please leave a message and someone will get back with you to schedule the appointment. You must have the individual with whom you reside attend the appointment with you. They will need their ID and a copy of their current utility bill (gas, water or electric only) or a lease/deed in his/her name for that residence.

A change of address due to a change in custody requires a new [online registration](#) and an enrollment appointment.

If your family moves outside of the attendance area of the school where your child is currently enrolled, please contact the ECE department to discuss possible openings in the new attendance area. *Enrollment in a new school is not guaranteed.*

Children with disabilities, an alternative placement will be made to a school closer to the new address when deemed appropriate.

DRESS CODE

Some schools have a specific dress code. Where this is the case, families are to adhere to those codes if possible. For those schools without a specific code, please dress your child in casual, comfortable play clothes. They will participate in many active and "messy" activities.

Dress your child appropriately for the season and weather. The children go outside daily, if the weather is above 20 degrees. Please remember to bring hats and gloves and appropriate footwear for your children.

For safety reasons, we ask that you not allow your child to wear open-toes or open-back shoes.

Consistent with the Columbus City Schools dress code, students are not permitted to wear clothing with bare shoulders or bare midriffs and pants must be worn around the waist.

EXTRA CLOTHING

It is important that your child has a change of clothing to be kept at school. While at school, there may be bathroom accidents, water play, painting, and outside activities which may cause clothing to become soiled or wet.

Please send in a pair of pants, a shirt, a pair of socks, and a pair of underwear on the first day of school. If the clothes are sent home, please replace them the next day. It is also recommended that you label the clothing on the inside with the child's name and send your clothing in a plastic bag with your child's name on it.

If your child has an IEP, and is not yet toilet trained, plan to send a set of diapers, or pull-ups as well as wipes to be kept at school throughout the year. The school does not provide diapers and wipes. (Students without an IEP must be completely toilet trained to attend school).

NUTRITION POLICY

The school serves breakfast, lunch, and a snack every day. Daily menus will include meals and snacks that meet or exceed the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Dietary Guidelines. Families are asked to check the monthly menu that is sent home with students and is available on the CCS website for food preferences. Hot dogs are not served to ECE students because they are classified as a choking hazard by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Food allergies and special diet requests require a physician statement which will be forwarded to the CCS Registered Dietician for evaluation and response on an individual basis.

Healthy Eating Habits

- Age appropriate nutrition education and promotion activities will be integrated into classroom instruction.
- Food and beverages will not be used as reward or punishment for academic performance or behavior.

- Staff members will encourage students to try new or less favorite foods and never force them to eat something they do not like. Staff members will introduce new foods and encourage students to try them but will not make them taste or eat food if they are not willing to do so.
- Staff will remind students that they can stop eating when they are full.
- Sufficient time will be allocated when students eat meals or snacks at school. The daily schedule will promote a relaxed and adequate period for meals and snacks.
- Children will be required to wash hands before eating.

As part of Columbus City Schools' health and wellness initiative, we will provide examples for parents of healthy meals to provide children with family eating alternatives.

Healthy Drinks

Water will be the only beverage provided to students outside of the breakfast and lunch served in accordance with the National School Lunch Program. This also includes offering water during other classroom celebrations. Drinking water will be freely available to all students throughout the day.

CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

The ECE classrooms adhere to the building policy of the district concerning classroom celebrations. Non-food treats are preferred for celebrations including donating a class game, book, or small item such as sticker or pencil for each child. If your child's building food policy does allow outside food for celebrations, please adhere to the list of healthy foods provided by the school or contact your child's teacher for suggestions and the food must be commercially prepared with nutrition and allergy information clearly labeled.

BREAKFAST

It is very important that students begin the day with a good breakfast. The school does have a breakfast program; however, parents must have their child at the program, during the breakfast time. If your child misses breakfast time, please provide that meal before coming to school. Your cooperation with this is most appreciated.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL EVALUATION

The Ohio Department of Education (ORC 3301-37-08) requires students to have documentation of required immunizations and a medical exam within the last 12 months stating the student is in suitable condition for enrollment in the program before starting school. Students may not attend class until this requirement is met. Documentation of an exam must include the child's name, date of birth, the date of exam, past medical history, current health concerns/diagnosis, results of

the exam, immunization record, healthcare provider's signature, and official office/clinic stamp. A copy of the CCS Medical Record is included as an attachment to this handbook but any document that contains the required information or an official print out of the exam from the office/clinic is acceptable. If the medical exam expires during the school year, staff will remind families of expiration dates, but it is ultimately the responsibility of the parent/guardian to assure medical exams are up to date. **Students will be excluded from attending class if an updated medical exam or immunizations are not received in the appropriate time frame.** All medical information should be given to the classroom teacher or the ECE or building nurse. If you are having difficulty with these requirements, please contact the ECE nurse for assistance at **614-365-5822**. Yearly dental exams are strongly recommended for all students. If a student has a chronic condition (such as asthma, food allergies, seizures, etc.) or special healthcare needs, please notify the ECE nurse so appropriate care can be made available.

Healthchek Services for Children Younger than Age 21

Healthchek is Ohio's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program. It is a service package for babies, kids, and young adults younger than age 21 who are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid.

The purpose of Healthchek is to discover and treat health problems early. If a potential health problem is found, further diagnosis and treatment are covered by Medicaid.

Healthchek covers ten check-ups in the first two years of life and annual check-ups thereafter and offers a comprehensive physical examination that includes:

- medical history
- complete unclothed exam (with parent approval)
- developmental screening (to assess if child's physical and mental abilities are age appropriate)
- vision screening
- dental screening
- hearing assessment
- immunization assessment (making sure child receives them on time)
- [lead screening](#); and
- other services or screenings as needed

If your children are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid, Healthchek services are available to them. If you are younger than age 21 and are also enrolled, you can receive Healthchek services, too.

MEDICATION

We prefer that any medication your child is taking be taken at home. If necessary, medication can be administered to your child at school after a medication authorization form has been

completed and signed by a parent/guardian and a health care professional. School staff are not permitted to accept any medications (prescription or over-the-counter) without this completed form. All medications must be provided by the parent/guardian in the original container with the child's name on the container and must be kept in a locked medication cabinet. **Please notify your child's teacher if medications are needed at school. Medication forms can be obtained from the school, school nurse, or on the CCS website.**

ILLNESS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately to pick up their child from school if he/she becomes ill during the school day. Per ODE licensing rules, a child will be excluded from school if he/she has any of the following:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four-hour period)
- Severe coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit
- Undiagnosed rash
- Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool
- Stiff neck
- Evidence of scabies, or other parasitic infestation
- Any signs or symptoms of communicable disease, including COVID-19

Please keep your child's teacher updated with any changes in emergency contact information throughout the school year.

If your child has any of the previously mentioned symptoms you should keep your child home until he/she is well enough to return to school. Your child should stay home for 24 hours after diarrhea, vomiting, or fever (without fever reducing medications) has ended.

If your child has an undiagnosed rash, he /she must be cleared by a health care provider or remain at home until the rash is gone.

Further health information and forms can be found on the CCS website under Health, Family, and Community Services.

HEALTH SCREENING

The Ohio Department of Education requires that a health screening be completed by a registered nurse yearly while your child is enrolled in our program. This screening includes height, weight, body mass index, vision, hearing, and dental check and will be completed at the school and results will be sent to parent/guardians. This does not satisfy the requirement for a medical exam by a healthcare professional.

PHOTOGRAPHS

During the school year many teachers take pictures or videos for various classroom or school projects. Pictures may even be taken to develop professional training materials. A “Permission to Photograph” release form will be given to you during school enrollment.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

It is important for your child to attend school on time every day. When your student misses a significant amount of school, even if the absences are excused, the child misses critical instruction time and learning opportunities. Missing 1 or 2 days every couple weeks can:

- Make it more difficult to develop early literacy skills
- Make it harder to get ready for kindergarten and beyond
- Develop a poor attendance pattern that is hard to break

Ohio law defines excessive absence and truancy:

Excessive absence: a student misses 38 or more hours of school in a single month, or 65 or more hours in one school year, with or without a legitimate excuse.

Truancy: a student is absent from school without a legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in a month, or 72 or more hours in a school year.

If a student misses 4.5 or more unexcused consecutive days (30 hours) or 6.5 or more total unexcused days (42 hours) during the school year, a reminder letter will be sent to the family to alert them of the number of absences the student has accumulated and encourage improved attendance.

If a student is absent for 10 or more consecutive days (65 hours) or 11 or more total days (72 hours) an additional letter will be sent to the family to schedule an intervention meeting with the ECE Social Worker to develop a success plan. The student will be withdrawn if they have 15 unexcused absences in one school year.

AUTHORIZATION FOR CHILD PICKUP

Each parent must complete an authorization form that indicates who is allowed to pick up your child from school. If the person authorized to pick up the child is someone other than the parent¹³

and someone unknown to the ECE staff, a **valid ID** will be requested on the first time of pickup. **Parents are to contact the ECE teacher when there is a change in the person authorized to pick up your child.**

EMERGENCY NUMBER

Parents/Guardians must have 3 emergency phone numbers to call and arrange for student pick up in the event of lateness or other emergencies. These numbers should be on the emergency card given at the time of registration or orientation. The parent must notify the school when the emergency number has changed, and the school **must have a working emergency number to contact at all times.**

CHILD SAFETY, PROTECTION AND THE LAW

Providing a good education for children and keeping them safe are important goals of Columbus City Schools. We will do everything we can to meet these goals. Please also keep in mind that we are legally obligated to report any suspicion of neglect and/or abuse.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) licenses all Columbus City Schools Early Childhood classrooms. An annual monitoring visit is conducted each year to ensure that all sites are in compliance with ODE Preschool Licensing Rules. Compliance reports are posted in each classroom. Parents can obtain a copy of the classroom compliance report by contacting the ECE teacher. To file a complaint regarding a violation of the Preschool Licensing Rules, parents may contact the Office of Early Childhood Education at 614-466-0224 or the Department Ombudsman at 614-466-4839.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

Columbus City Schools' Pre-Kindergarten Program uses a positive, progressive approach to classroom discipline. The preschool teacher begins the process of positive discipline on the first day of school by doing the following:

Engaging the children while establishing these simple rules:

- We respect ourselves and each other.
- We use our inside voices in the building.
- We clean our space when we finish our work and our play.
- We listen while others are talking.

Organizing the classroom to achieve the goal of good classroom management.

Planning activities that are appropriate and have a balance of active versus quiet activities during the day.

Showing concern, care and fairness to each child.

Consistently enforcing the rules and expectations.

Discipline in the preschool classroom is viewed as guiding the behavior of children. The ultimate goal of discipline is to help children control their own behavior.

Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are used at all times.

The measures include, but are not limited to the following: timeout, redirection, talking with the child and parent, praise for appropriate behavior and the establishment of these simple rules for the preschool classroom.

For the few children who may be disruptive or unable to settle down to a routine, the preschool staff will develop a plan of action with the parent(s) to help the child.

Positive, progressive discipline is based on the following guidelines:

- Respect for each child as a person.
- Commitment to the care and well being of each child.
- Avoidance of cruel, harsh, corporal or unusual punishment.
- Avoidance of physical restraints, profane language, threats, derogatory remarks and/or verbal abuse.
- Adherence to appropriate separation places and times that are based on the age and developmental ability of the child.
- Avoidance of any form of child abuse and or neglect.

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION LEVELS AND STRATEGIES

All students have the right to learn and no student has the right to disrupt the learning activities of others. The safety and security of your child is our highest priority and we are committed to providing a safe learning environment. As a Columbus City Schools parent, ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) states you have the right to: have access to their child's individual performance levels on the statewide assessments, and know if their child's school is making progress according to the state report card.

The Guide to Student Success provides definitions of behavior infractions and defines a menu of consequences that can result due to misbehavior. Misconduct is defined in a progressive order as:

Level I	Minor offenses
Level II	Repeated Level I offenses or serious misconduct
Level III	Repeated Level I or Level II offenses, illegal and/or serious misconduct, or life or health threatening offenses

Columbus City Schools' staff provides tiers of corrective intervention strategies and instruction to students who fail to meet the behavioral expectations. Corporal punishment in any form is not permitted.

Multiple options for correcting student behavior may be selected depending on an individual student's needs, including the age and grade level of the student, the student's history of misbehavior, and the specific offense and its seriousness. School personnel use intervention strategies outlined below to help increase desired behaviors.

CCS Intervention Strategies

Parent Contact/Conference – Notification and conferencing with the parent regarding the student's behavior for all disciplinary actions.

School-Based Behavioral Strategies – Examples include:

- Creating a behavioral contract with the student
- Teach/Learn anger management strategies
- Loss of school-based privileges
- Re-teaching the behavioral expectation
- Referral to school counselor or school social worker
- Referral to the Intervention Assistance Team or begin the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (M.T.S.S.)

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The Early Childhood Education Program provides many services for children with disabilities, and their families. A detailed description of these services can be found in the pamphlet “Whose IDEA Is This” which is given to parents during the referral, evaluation, and placement process. A brief description of these services is provided below.

Evaluation:

Children who are referred for special needs services may receive a multi-factored evaluation at no cost to the family. This evaluation may include evaluations by school social workers, teachers, school nurses, school psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and/or physical therapists. The evaluation consists of interviews, observations, standardized assessments, and criterion referenced assessments. Once the evaluation is complete, the parents are invited to meet with the evaluation team to determine the child’s eligibility for special education services.

Individualized Education Program (IEP):

If the child is determined to be eligible for special education services according to the Ohio Rules for the Education of Preschool Children with Disabilities, the parents will be invited to participate in a conference to write an Individualized Education Program (IEP). This program is to be developed jointly by the parents, the teacher, and related service personnel. The IEP will include the goals and objectives to be addressed for the child during the school year and must document the location where those services can best be delivered. An IEP must be written before service delivery can begin, must be reviewed at least four times during the school year, and must be revised at least once a year. Parents may request an IEP review at any time.

Related Services:

Following the evaluation, the IEP team may also determine that a child is eligible for related services. These services may include occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech and language therapy, school psychological services, school nurse services, orientation and mobility, and/or transportation. The amount of each service must be documented on the IEP. These services will be reviewed whenever the IEP is reviewed.

STATEMENT OF RE-EVALUATION FOR SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAMMING

(FOR STUDENTS WITH IEPs)

You will be notified when your child is ready for school-age programming. This re-evaluation process is generally referred to as transitioning. You will be contacted and your permission will be required to complete the process. If your child is currently enrolled in a Columbus City School, the evaluation will take place at that school.

The re-evaluation team may include the parents, Special Education Coordinator, School Psychologist, Special Needs Preschool Teacher, General Education Teacher, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and Speech and Language Pathologist. The team will conduct a series of tests and observations to determine your child's needs for the following school year. The results of these evaluations will determine if your child will be eligible for special education services under the school age guidelines. Once eligibility is determined then placement options will be discussed with you.

Your child's placement in an Early Childhood Education classroom does not automatically guarantee your child's acceptance into that building for school age services. If you are interested in a school other than your home school for kindergarten, then you need to complete a school lottery/school choice form.

TRANSPORTATION

(FOR STUDENTS WITH IEPs)

Children with disabilities are transported from home to school and to home again. The district is not required to transport from a baby-sitter's home or other alternative locations. If you live in an area that would be difficult for a school bus to enter and turn around, you may need to take your child to the nearest corner.

An adult will be expected to stay with the child until the bus arrives and assist with getting your child on the bus. An adult is also expected to meet the bus at the end of your child's school day. If there is no adult to meet your child on the return trip home, he/she will be taken to Franklin County Children's Services located at 535 E. Mound St. Columbus, 614-229-7000.

If your child is provided with a harness, which serves as the seat belt on the bus, it is required that your child wear it when he/she gets on the bus to go to school and also when your child returns home from school. The zipper is to go in the back. If your child will be using a car seat, it will stay on the bus.

Parents are expected to call the transportation office and the school when a child will be absent. Transportation's number is 614-365-5074. Initial transportation arrangements and changes are made through the Special Needs Preschool office. Questions about these arrangements can be made by calling 614-365-5205.

Also, if you are planning to pick up your child, please call the school and inform the teacher. If you are not at the school by the time the buses depart, your child will be placed on the bus for home. There is no before/after school child care provided.

PARENT MENTOR PROGRAM *(FOR STUDENTS WITH IEPs)*

For families who are referred for special needs services, the ECE program has parents of children with disabilities on staff to answer questions. If you would like to talk to a parent mentor they can be reached at 614-365-5211.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

Parents and family members are an integral part of the Early Childhood Education experience and are involved in all aspects of our program. As the child's first teacher, parents are viewed as partners in the educational process. The Early Childhood Education Program provides a number of options for families to become engaged in their child's learning:

- Get to know your child's teacher and determine the best way to communicate with him/her (phone, email, text, daily notes in a book bag, etc.). Share your aspirations for your child.
- Be an informed parent by checking your child's bookbag daily to discover what your child is currently learning in school. Ask questions when you feel you need to know more about a topic.
- Volunteer in the classroom.
- Attend and help plan family night events and Open House.
- Attend and help plan field trips.
- Participate in parent/teacher conferences and workshops.
- Volunteer to be a room mother/father.
- Participate in family-to-family mentoring opportunities.
- Help write a family newsletter.
- Plan a career day and share your talent with the class.

Families can help their children at home by trying the following tips and ideas:

- Help your child start each day ready to learn by ensuring that he/she has had a good night's sleep, ate a healthy breakfast and gets to school on time.
- Read daily to your child and model reading to your child.

- Make time daily to ask open-ended questions, listen and talk about what your child has learned at school.
- Sign your child up for a library card and visit the library often.
- Provide a quiet, special place for you and your child when reading or doing learning activities together.
- Collect materials to promote learning at home: books, board games, puzzles and art supplies. Those activities can encourage development of critical thinking skills.
- Each day ask your child to teach you something they learned in school.
- Continue to communicate the importance of school by setting appropriate expectations for your child's success.
- Attend ECE Monthly Family Events or quarterly F.A.C.E. meetings [Family Advisory Committee for Early Childhood Education].
- Create learning moments. Everyday events can be an opportunity to learn. For example: setting the table can teach math skills and following directions, during a shopping trip talk about the different colors, shapes, letters, numbers and words you see.
- Find more ideas in the ECE Monthly Family Newsletter at <https://www.ccsqh.us/>

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FAMILY AGREEMENT FORM

I have reviewed a copy of the Columbus City Schools Early Childhood Education Family Handbook which contains information on the Healthchek program.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I understand that should my child be placed in an Early Childhood Education classroom, a representative from the Ohio Department of Education will be visiting the classroom annually to ensure compliance to Ohio's Preschool Licensing Rules. I can obtain a copy of the compliance report by contacting my child's teacher. To file a complaint regarding a violation of the Preschool Licensing Rules, I may contact the Office of Early Childhood Education at 614-466-0224 or the Department Ombudsman at 614-466-4839.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I have reviewed a copy of the Columbus City Schools Guide to Student Success which contains the Early Childhood Education Discipline policy. I have signed the Consent for Release of Information statement located in the back of this document which describes how the district may or may not use photos, audio, video or electronic images of my child.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I understand that since my child is placed in an Early Childhood Education classroom, I have the option to be included in the classroom parent/child roster which includes my child's name and date of birth, my name and contact information. This information can be shared with other parents of children in the classroom.

_____ I give consent for the above information to be included on the classroom roster.

_____ I DO NOT give consent for the above information to be included on the roster.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I am interested in being a representative for the Early Childhood Education Parent Group-F.A.C.E. [Family Advisory Committee for Early Childhood Education].

_____ YES _____ NO

The Office of Academic Services

Division of Early Childhood Education

Attendance Policy

It is important for your child to attend school every day. When your student misses a significant amount of school, even if the absences are excused, the child misses critical instruction time and learning opportunities.

If a student misses 4.5 or more unexcused consecutive days (30 hours) or 6.5 or more total unexcused days (42 hours) during the school year, a reminder letter will be sent to the family to alert them of the number of absences the student has accumulated and encourage improved attendance.

If a student is absent for 10 or more consecutive days (65 hours) or 11 or more total days (72 hours) an additional letter will be sent to the family to schedule an intervention meeting with the ECE Social Worker to develop a success plan. The student will be withdrawn if they have 15 unexcused absences in one school year.

Please note absences are calculated by the number of minutes a child is absent from school. **If your child is late to school or picked up early from school several days, those minutes add up and count toward the number of absences for the school year.**

It is your responsibility to notify the school when your child will be tardy or absent and turn in a note for these to be excused.

Absences may be excused for the following reasons:

- Personal illness (may be excused by a parent/legal guardian phone call, written excuse or doctor's note)
- Illness or death in the immediate household (with parent/doctor's note submitted)
- Medical or dental appointments, may need written verification of appointment
- Religious holiday

I have read and understood the above.

Signature

Date