Hope Early Learning Center

240 Brown Street S.E.

Grand Rapids MI 49507

Phone 616.301.8458

Great Start Readiness Program

Parent-Student Handbook 2018-2019

Daily Hours

**Monday-Thursday**

7:40-3:05

Exception: Early Release at

2:05 pm every Wednesday



Mrs. Heidi Cate – Superintendent

Mr. Teriena Schwartz – Building Principal

Director

Pam Duffy – Teacher

Sara Potapa - Teacher

Mary Demski – Teacher Assistant

Myron Hardey- Teacher Assistant

**School Year 2018-2019**

**Hope Academy of West Michigan**

**Board of Directors**

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**Welcome!**

**Mission Statement**

Hope Academy of West Michigan is a safe place for pre-kindergarten to 12th grade students and their families where they can succeed academically and grow psychologically, emotionally and socially.

**Statement of Beliefs**

The following are beliefs held by preschool staff and adult family members regarding the Great Start Readiness Program of Hope Early Learning Center.

* Staff and adult family members work together to help children and families develop a high level of self-esteem.
* Staff and adult family members strive to assist children in social and emotional development.
* Staff recognizes and accepts diverse family background, beliefs, and needs; and strives to support the family in achieving long-term success their child.
* Staff and adult family members work together to help children acquire academic and social skills in order for them to meet future demands and become enthusiastic lifelong learners.
* Each staff member reflects the program’s beliefs about children and families and knows that she/he is a vital and important contributing member of the team serving children.
* Staff ensures the program is highly flexible in its developmentally appropriate curriculum and provides a safe, friendly environment in which children develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically.
* Staff ensures the program provides diverse opportunities for learning that address the individualized special needs of all children.
* Staff and adult family members work together to involve the entire community in the learning process of children, families and staff.

**Educational Philosophy**

Hope Academy of West Michigan and Hope Early Learning Centerempower students and their families who are struggling to be successful. Whether your child was in a private or public school in West Michigan, Hope Academy offers the opportunity for academic success by providing:

* **positive learning experiences**
* **life skills development**
* **career exploration**
* **treatment services addressing life stressors**

**Core Values** Openness – Honesty – Respect – Diversity – Compassion – Commitment – Forgiveness

**Community**

We are built around the concept of *family*. Community is built from the relationships made between our families, neighborhood, staff and school. We believe all of us can – and do - make a difference.

**Who Are We?**

The Great Start Readiness Program at Hope Early Learning Center follows procedures and policies set by three organizations

* Great Start Readiness Program, funded by the Michigan Department of Education,
* State of Michigan Child Care Centers
* Hope Early Learning Center, housed in Hope Academy of West Michigan

**Admission Criteria**

The Great Start Readiness Program, in Hope Early Learning Center, services eligible four year old children, preparing them for kindergarten. This program is funded through a grant from the Michigan Department of Education, which makes this preschool experience free of charge for families who are eligible.

**Eligibility Requirements**

* Students must be at least four, but not five, by September 1st, 2016 in which they are enrolled in the program.
* Students must meet qualifying factors, determined by the Michigan Department of Education.

**Great Start Readiness Program**

The Great Start Readiness Program is a general education preschool program funded by a grant through the Michigan Department of Education. Through this annual grant, the State has been providing high-quality preschool since September 1, 1998. This grant has requirements and expectations on adult family members and school staff that help facilitate maximum learning and communication between school and home.

**Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers**

The Great Start Readiness Program operates within Hope Academy West Michigan, and follows licensing guidelines set up by the State Of Michigan for Child Care Centers. A copy of Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers can be found in the office or by viewing the copy available in the preschool wing. Additionally, a Licensing Notebook is available for families to view. This contains inspection reports, corrective action plans and letter of findings for Hope Early Learning Center Great Start Readiness Program. This notebook is available Monday-Friday, 7:30am-3:30pm in the office. Licensing inspections and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

**Hope Academy of West Michigan**

Welcome to the Hope Academy of West Michigan family! We take great pride in the educational opportunities offered to children of all ages. The Great Start Readiness Program follows Hope Academy’s calendar, with one exception: there is no preschool on Fridays. Having no school on Fridays allows time for required Parent-Teacher conferences, home visits and staff professional development. You and your family are warmly welcomed to participate in all the various events happening at Hope Academy of West Michigan.

**School Policies and Procedures**

Policies are set up to ensure each child is safe in our structured learning environment. We want every family to be informed and feel comfortable trusting their children with us. Please feel free to ask for further explanation of any policies or offer suggestions on how to improve the safety and structure of our school.

**The following forms are REQUIRED before starting school:**

* Immunizations (Must be up-to-date on all shots)
* Birth Certificate
* 2 Proofs of Address
* Green Health Appraisal (signed by doctor). Physical has to be performed within the preceding year to quality)
* Recent Proof of Income (Check stub, W-2 or Income Tax form)

**The following forms need to be returned at time of initial attendance:**

* Registration Form
* Parent/Student Information
* Medical Information/Medical Use/Physical Exam Forms
* Field Trip Permission Form
* Full Internet Access Authorization
* Household Information Survey
* Parent Questionnaire

**Special Services, if applicable:**

* IEP documentation (most recent)

**Withdrawal Process**

Your child will be withdrawn from the program if the necessary forms are not properly returned within **30 days** from the start date. In the event a family chooses to not provide their child with regular attendance in the Great Start Readiness Program, the family will be contacted to learn if withdrawal from the program is their desire. If appropriate, a plan will be implemented to assist in ensuring regular attendance. It is up to the Program Director’s discretion as to the plan of action.

**Attendance Policy**

Please notify the school if your child is going to be absent. You can call 616.301.8458 24/7 to leave a message regarding an absence. Please give the reason for the absence and the anticipated return date. Consistent attendance is essential to your child’s progress at school. If you do not contact us regarding an absence, a staff member will contact you to discuss this. Please keep us informed of illnesses or emergencies that will prevent your child from attending. An excess of unexcused absences could lead to dismissal from the program for your child.

**Transportation, Field Trips**

Parents are expected to arrange transportation to and from school. In the event of a field trip scheduled to occur during the school day, details regarding dates, times, location, supervision and transportation will be shared with each family well in advance of the scheduled event.

**Drop- Off and Pick-Up Procedure**

Students may not arrive earlier than 7:40 AM, or 10 minutes before school starts. An adult family member must remain with their child as they must sign their child in with the teacher at the classroom door. Preschool parents also must sign their child out with the classroom teacher at the conclusion of the school day.

Please let your child’s preschool teacher know of any changes in the pick-up procedure by telephone, email or note. Permanent changes to the pick-up procedure must be written on the information card and initialed by the parent or guardian. We will ask for picture identification if we do not recognize the person picking up your child. We will not release your child to anyone not listed on the information card. Your child will need to be signed-out by the person picking up.

**Pictures for Publication**

Throughout the year we take pictures of activities and events that occur during the school day. These pictures are used in the classroom and/or displayed around the building, in the school newsletter or even in the local newspaper. Our first priority is to protect all children. If you wish NOT to have your child’s picture published in some of all of the above mentioned forms, please indicate that on the back of the **Registration Form.**

**School Closing and Delays**

Your child’s preschool follows the decision of Hope Academy of West Michigan in regard to keeping schools open, closed or any possible delay of start time due to weather conditions. If Hope Academy of West Michigan closes or delays school due to inclement weather or on other rare occasions, the decision to delay or cancel school will be posted on the major TV and radio stations in the Kent County area under “Hope Academy of West Michigan.” If the school district in which your child resides has delayed or canceled school, the parent/guardian may call the school office to indicate their child is staying home from school that day, and this absence will be considered excused.

If there is a one or two-hour delay due to weather, then preschool students will delay their start time accordingly.

**Safety Drills**

In accordance with State of Michigan for Child Care Centers’ rules and for the safety of the entire preschool, we conduct safety drills throughout the year. Our program will conduct fire drills once quarterly during the school year; along with two intruder and two severe weather drills.

Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers, who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

Safety drills and evacuation plans are posted in the classroom.

**Fire**

In the event of smoke or fire, children will be evacuated according to posted evacuation routes. Persons finding smoke or fire will sound the fire alarm. Teachers will be responsible for the child count in their class. The teacher assistant will be asked to check bathrooms and other areas to ensure all persons are out of the building.

**Tornado Watch/Warning**

* The following procedures will be in effect:
* If students are in school when a tornado watch is issued, they will remain in school until the regular dismissal time.
* If students are in school when a tornado warning is issued, they will be escorted to predefined areas of safety within the building and remain there until the warning is lifted.
* It is the policy of the district not to dismiss students to parents during a tornado warning, even if it means holding students beyond normal dismissal time.
* The district may delay starting school during a tornado watch or warning, including afternoon and evening functions. Check radio or television for information.

**Intruder**

In the event of an intruder, children will be instructed to sit quietly in an area that is out of sight to any intruder. Doors and windows will be shut and locked, lights will be turned off and blinds and/or drapes will be closed. The teacher will be responsible for the child count in their class. Once safety is determined, the class will be allowed to leave the area by office personnel or by law enforcement agencies.

During practice lockdown drills, entering and exiting the buildings will be restricted for approximately 15 minutes.

During an actual situation, an “Out of Order” sign will be posted on the doors, and parents/guardians/visitors must return to their vehicles. Situations may include external concerns such as hazardous material spills, police actions, etc.

**Volunteers**

Welcome! Our door is always open to family members who want to volunteer in their child’s classroom! You are an essential part of our learning environment. Volunteers are important to your school. Volunteers of the school are treated with the same respect as staff.

Our first priority is to make sure that the people coming into our school are safe to be around our children. It is the policy of Hope Academy of West Michigan that any person(s) coming into the classroom fill out the Volunteer Consent Form *prior* to coming in to volunteer. If anyone in your family (or your daycare personnel) plans on attending classroom parties or volunteering inside the classroom each adult will need to fill out a Volunteer consent form. This volunteer consent form will be provided at the office. These forms take two weeks to process at least, so please plan accordingly. Many families opt to complete these at the beginning of the year and return them early in the fall, making it easy to stop in any day of the school year. Most of volunteers help out within the classroom or within sight distance of preschool staff. On occasion a volunteer might be unsupervised assisting students in the coatroom, taking a student to the bathroom if we are outside, walking a student to the office, etc. All volunteers will reviewed by our police department. Volunteers who have contact with children for at least 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks must have documentation of a negative TB test, required only once.

**Non-custodial Issues**

In situations where there is a custodial issue, we must have legal documentation to show guardianship. We need to prevent an unauthorized person from visiting or picking up a child. If there is a custody concern for which we should be aware, please let your child’s teacher know.

**Confidentiality**

Information is gathered so that the Great Start Readiness Program staff at Hope Early Learning Center can completely understand the needs for your child/family and work together to meet those needs. All information obtained from you is completely confidential. Except for your local school district, records will only be sent to another agency with written permission of the parent(s) or legal guardian. Only the parent(s) or legal guardian signing the enrollment forms will have access to the records.

**Health Care**

We know how important it is for children to be healthy. Being healthy enables children to reach their full potential. Healthy habits are established in the classroom with daily emphasis on handwashing and health education activities. We encourage handwashing after using the bathroom, blowing noses, coughing or sneezing into hands/elbows, and before eating.

If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent will be notified to come and take the child home. The child will be isolated while the parent is contacted and arrives to pick up the child in the office. The incidence of illness can be reduced if we work together.

**When to keep your child home**

* Fever is 100 or higher; the child may return to the center 24 hours after the fever has gone
* Abdominal pain
* Contagious cold and runny nose (green or yellow nasal discharge)
* Cough – wet, wheezy cough with mucous secretion
* Vomiting
* Diarrhea
* Sore throat, strep throat
* Eye infection –green or yellow drainage or pink eye; children must be on medication for 24 hours and have very little drainage before returning
* Ear infection – children must be on medication for 24 hours with no symptoms before returning
* Communicable infections- a child may return when infectious symptoms have subsided
* An unexplained rash
* Lice or nits

**Note**: If you know or suspect your child has a contagious disease, please call your child’s teacher. If you know your child is going to be absent please call the attendance line at 616.301.8458. You can call this automated line 24/7.

**Health Care Plan**

The hands of children and staff shall be thoroughly washed prior to handling food, before eating, after using the bathroom, and after sneezing or coughing into hands.

**Hand Washing Procedure**

The following procedures are considered best practice for hand washing.

* Have a clean paper towel available.
* Turn on the water to a comfortable temperature between 60-120 degrees F.
* Moisten hands with water and apply soap.
* Rub hands together until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 10 seconds.
* Rub areas between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, jewelry, and the back of hands.
* Rinse hands under running water until they are free of soap and dirt. Leave the water running while drying hands.
* Dry hands with a clean, disposable paper towel. Turn off water with the paper towel.
* Dispose of the paper towel in a lined trash container.

**Handling Children’s Bodily Fluids**

We use precautions when handling potential exposure to blood, including blood-containing body fluids and tissue discharges, and when handling other potentially infectious fluids. Protective gloves are available and cleaning/sanitizing will be done. Soiled clothing and/or personal belongings will be placed in a plastic bag and returned to parents.

**Cleaning and Sanitizing of All Equipment, Toys, and Other Surfaces**

The following steps are to be followed for cleaning and sanitizing.

* Wash the surface or article with warm water and soap.
* Rinse the surface with clean water.
* Submerge, wipe, or spray the surface or the article with a sanitizing solution.
* Toys and equipment are cleaned weekly, or more as needed.
* Snack table are cleaned before and after each snack time.

**Procedures with sheets, towels, blankets**

The school will provide the mats; standard size is 23 ½ inches by 48½ inches for students to use for rest time. Blankets will also be provided. These are assigned to each child for a one week period and washed at the end of each week.

**Controlling Infection, Including Universal Precautions**

Children need to be able to blow and wipe their own nose, cover their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and be able to use the bathroom without help.

We ask that parents use discretion when your child is not feeling well and needs to be kept home from school; examples include the above illnesses or symptoms. The teacher will call parent(s) when their child shares, over a period of time, or outwardly indicates they are not feeling well.

We are committed to doing our part to help keep the spread of germs low. Our tables are washed down before and after snacks. Toys and equipment are cleaned weekly, or more if needed. Bodily fluids are handled and disposed of as outlined by the Health Department.

**Medications**

A parent will need to administer medications to their children prior to coming to school. Children may not administer medications to themselves. No medications may be placed in a child’s backpack, including pain medication (i.e. aspirin, Tylenol, cough drops, etc.)

The following definition of “medication” is adopted for use at Hope Early Learning Center and Hope Academy of West Michigan: Medication includes prescription, non-prescription, and herbal medications that are taken by mouth, inhaler, or injection; applied as drops to the eyes or nose; or applied to the skin. Oral medication may be administered to students by school personnel according to the following conditions: The parent/guardian has submitted a written request to the school to give medication following label directions, and has brought the medication (in original pharmacy bottles) directly to the teacher/social worker. Parent may give permission using the Medication Use Form for student to receive Tylenol if necessary. If student needs to take over-the-counter medication, parent must drop off medication in the school office with a note and pick up medication at the end of the school day. Failure to follow this policy will lead to discontinuation of medication being distributed at school.

Unsupervised use of an inhaler is allowed with physician authorization and parent/guardian permission. These students should be instructed by their parents to notify their teacher each and every time they use their inhaler so that frequent use can be communicated to the parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians of students who need an Epi-Pen must contact the school office at the beginning of each school year to institute a medical plan.

Students with disabilities who have an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan are included under the policy and procedures that govern the administration of medications. Note: The policy and procedures do not violate either the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

**Health Related Resources**

There are many services available through the Michigan Department of Community Health at the Kent County Health Department.

Health Related Resources

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

[www.dhhs.gov](http://www.dhhs.gov)

Michigan Department of Community Health

[www.michigan.gov/mdch](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch)

Center for Disease Control

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

American Red Cross

[www.redcrdoss.org](http://www.redcrdoss.org)

Spectrum Health

[www.spectrumhealth.org](http://www.spectrumhealth.org)

Kent County Health Department

Address: 700 Fuller Ave Grand Rapids MI 49503

Phone: 616.632.7100

[www.accesskent.com](http://www.accesskent.com)

* Communicable Disease/Epidemiology Unit 616.632.7228
* Personal Health Services 616.632.7171
* Community Relations 616.632.7110
* Children’s Special Health Care Services 616.632.7066
* Immunizations 616.632.7020
* Maternal and Infant Services 616.632.7058
* Vision and Hearing Screening (free) 616.632.7047
* WIC (Supplemental Nutritional Program 616.632.7200

For Women, Infants, and Children)

* Women’s Health Network (Free pap tests, 616.632.7283

Mammograms and screening services for

Eligible women)

* First Steps (providing families information 616.632.1011

and access to quality health care)

Healthy Child Care – Health and Safety Ideas For the Young Child

[www.healthychild.net/volume1.php](http://www.healthychild.net/volume1.php)

Today’s Parent Magazine

[www.todaysparent.com](http://www.todaysparent.com)

Children’s Literature Health Stories

Carle, E. 1997 From head to toe. New York: HarperCollins

Aliki, 1989. My five senses. New York: Crowell

Feeney, K. 2001. Get Moving: Tips on Exercise. Mankato, MN: Bridgestone.

Perols, S. 1996. The Human Body: A first discovery book. New York: Cartwheel

Cole, J. 1990. The magic school bus: Inside the human body. New York: Scholastic

Sharmat, M. 1980. Gregory, the terrible eater. New York: Simon & Schuster

MacCarone, G. 1995. My tooth is about to fall out. New York: Scholastic

**Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases and Pests**

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school’s professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly transient pest such as lice.

Specific communicable diseases include the following: diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, pink eye, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will be for only the contagious period as specified in the school’s administrative guidelines and with the guidance of the Health Department.

**Parents/guardians are asked to notify the office** if their child has contracted a communicable disease. The school is obligated to communicate to other families and students the possibility that they may have been exposed to a communicable disease.

**Student Well-Being and Emergency Information**

Student safety is a responsibility of the staff. All Hope Early Learning Center staff are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire and tornado drills, lockdown procedures, and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, s/he must notify any staff person immediately.

All students must have emergency contact information completed and filed in the school office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled. If your daytime phone number changes anytime during the school year, please promptly notify the office and teacher. We need to reach you as quickly as possible if an emergency occurs.

**Accidents and Emergencies**

Great Start Readiness Program staff members are first aid and CPR certified. They also have been trained in the safe handling of Blood Borne Pathogens. If emergency medical help is required, the teacher will call 911. The parent will then be contacted by school personnel. For minor cuts, bruises, or bumps, treatment will be washing the injured area if necessary and cover with Band-Aid and or use ice.

**Student Accident Insurance**

Student accident insurance is **not** available. It is recommended that parents carry a family insurance plan.

**Illnesses during School Day**

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the parent/guardian will be notified. The school will not release a student unless there has been authorized consent for pick-up on the information card.

**Mandatory Reporting Policy**

Protective Services/DHS

Michigan's Child Protection Law requires that any mandated reporter (which includes Hope Early Learning Center staff members) who “has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect shall make immediately, by telephone or otherwise, an oral report to Children’s Protective Services of FIA, in the county in which the alleged abuse or neglect occurred. A written report must be made within 72 hours of the oral report to CPS, using form FIA-3200 ("Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect").”

**Confidentiality**

Information gathered so the Great Start Readiness Program staff at Hope Early Learning Center can completely understand the needs for your child/family and work together to meet those needs. All information obtained from you is completely confidential. Except for your Hope Early Learning Center, records will only be sent to another agency with written permission of the parent(s) or legal guardian. Only the parent(s) or legal guardian signing the enrollment form will have access to the records. Preschool staff will support families who have involvement with FIA and will preserve absolute confidentiality of all records pertaining to a FIA report, in accordance with state law.

**Pesticide Notice**

The Academy is required by Michigan Regulations 637, Rule 14, PA 171 to maintain an effective pest control program for our buildings.  As part of an effective pest management program, school buildings and grounds may be treated as needed to control or eliminate pests.  The least hazardous methods will always be incorporated to remove pests as per the Michigan Pesticide Control Act.  Under most circumstances, chemical treatments will be a last resort.  When pesticides are used, a notice will be posted on the front door of the school and in the school newsletter.  If you would like to request prior notification of the application of pesticides or herbicides, please see the school office.  However, pesticides may be used in an emergency situation without advance notice.  In such a case, we would make every effort to inform all affected parties.  If you have any questions or wish to review the school’s integrated pest management plan or records of pesticide applications, please contact the Principal.

**Parent and Teacher Communication**

As parent(s), you are your child’s first and most important teacher. Our job is to help support and engage your child’s learning during their time at school, and to provide extensions for learning for your child in their home. The easiest way for that to happen is using various formats to have an open door of communication between adult family members and teachers. Phone numbers and email addresses are listed on the front of this Parent Handbook for your convenience. If you call your child’s teacher during the school day, please leave a voicemail. Your call will be returned as soon as possible. If there is an emergency, please call the main office at 616.301.8458.

The grant for this free program does require that each family participate in a **minimum** of:

* 2 Home Visits
* 2 Parent-Teacher Conferences
* 2 Classroom or School Experiences

These activities will be spaced throughout the school year and offered at various times for your convenience. In an effort to ensure a successful, quality preschool experience for each child, every family will be asked to commit themselves to the minimum requirement of the program before the child is accepted into this program.

**Meet and Greet Night**

A Meet and Greet Night will be held before school begins to familiarize parents and children with the school, and allow parents and children to meet teachers and look at their classroom.

**Daily Notebook and Folder**

Your child will be provided a folder with a communication log. This is to be brought to school daily.

* The communication log is meant for parents and teacher to communicate on an “as needed” basis. When writing on the communication log, please remember to date every entry. Remembering to check this daily will help you and your family becomes aware of events happening at school.
* The folder will hold the communication log as well as learning projects your child has completed at school, newsletters, etc.

**Newsletter and Calendars**

A classroom newsletter will be sent home on a monthly basis. This will let you know what skills we are working on in the classroom and will offer suggested activities to extend learning at home. This monthly calendar will be sent home with your child at the beginning of each month. This will contain a schedule of activities planned for the month.

**Home Visits**

Teachers will conduct a minimum of two home visits with each family during the school year. The first one will be within the first month of school, and the second will be in March/April. The purpose of the home visit is to support parents as the primary educator of their children. Home visits must be conducted with the parent(s)/legal guardian and child. Please encourage all family members to be present at the time of the visits. A Home Visit report will need to be signed by parents at each home visit.

**Home Visit Guidelines**

With the parent, we will develop a plan for each visit to include an overall goal and specific activities to reach or work toward that goal.

* Coordinate home activities with classroom activities when appropriate
* Promote the following activities and experiences that are appropriate to the child’s developmental levels
* Develop a positive self-image
* Develop reading and math readiness skills
* Encourage children to organize their experiences and understand concepts
* Integrate health/safety, dental, mental health, and nutrition education
* Assist parents on becoming the “teacher” on home visits, and promote the development of parenting skills.
* With parents, develop goals and specific activities for the next visit and for follow up activities.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**

As a team we will participate in two parent-teacher conferences that will be held to discuss your child’s developmental progress. The first one will be in the fall, and the second will be in the spring. Parents and/or teacher may request additional conferences at any time, which is mutually convenient.

**Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement is an integral part in creating a successful education for your child. We offer many opportunities for you to be involved.

* Scheduling home visits and attending parent-teacher conferences are excellent ways to stay involved.

* We have a Program Advisory Committee that meets 3-5 times a year. Our objective is to gain advice and knowledge of different aspects of education through different perspectives. The committee is organized with parents, various grade-level teachers, administrative staff, and support staff.
* Throughout the year there will be projects for your child to complete at home. Every month, attached to the monthly calendar, there will be an art project page that will need to be completed and returned to school.

* We welcome parents and adult family members to come in and interact with students or to help the preschool teacher with projects. If you can let your child’s teacher know in advance that you are coming, we are able to better plan for best use of your time and talents.
* Due to parent schedules, we know it is not always possible to come to help in the classroom. If you would like to come in, you can stay as long as you choose.
* Below is a list of suggestions for being involved inside/outside of the school day.
  + help to prepare for a classroom project at home or school
  + play a game with children during learning centers
  + work with a small group of children with an activity the teacher provides you
  + sew dress up clothes
  + attend special events
  + bring a pet to share
  + arrange a bulletin board
  + help plan celebrations
  + record books on tapes for the listening center
  + make playdough
  + Visit us to talk about your job, hobby ,etc.
  + attend Parent Teacher Organization meetings

**Parents of Hope Meetings**

This is an organization made up of parent volunteers and teacher volunteers to encourage an active partnership between home and school. This parent support group helps our classrooms and our school. They financially support extra learning activities throughout the year. They would love for you to share your ideas and add input at meetings. The group meets the Wednesday of the third week of the month at 8:15 am.

**Daycare**

If you are in the need of day care, contact Great Start Connect. They have a list of certified in-home daycares and centers in your area.

GREAT START CONNECT 1.877.614.7328 or [www.greatstartforkids.org](http://www.greatstartforkids.org)

**Curriculum and Daily Schedule**

Our curriculum is designed with a balance of age appropriate academic, physical, creative, and social skill activities.

**Daily Activities**

* Arrival – taking care of belongings, children will sign in, and eat breakfast
* Morning Meeting – Looking at who is at school/home, good morning song, and talk about how you feel today
* Small Group – student lead activities; may be cutting, reading, writing, gluing, games, etc.
* Large Group- story, songs/poems, closing circle, music and movement activities
* Snack – self-serving of food
* Choice Time – One hour of uninterrupted learning, like blocks, dramatic play, library, art, technology, toys and games, sensory table, discovery, and music and movement.
* Planning and Recall – students choose activities for choice time and discuss what they did after choice time.
* Gross Motor – outside recess (weather permitting).
* Dismissal – packing up belongings

**Special Services**

Hope Early Learning Center believes early intervention makes it possible for children with special needs to be identified and their individual educational needs met. During the first weeks of school, each child is screened in the areas of speech and language, thinking and hearing skills, motor skills, and social and emotional development using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Parents are notified if further evaluation is needed in any of the areas and are involved in ways to help their children achieve their specific goals.

**Discipline Guidelines**

The approach to guidance and discipline in our program is that of a “teaching” philosophy. The task is to help children learn appropriate behavior. Children need guidance in developing skills as they learn to make appropriate decisions. Children benefit from identifying and recognizing a child’s feelings, offering choices, setting limits, use of distraction or redirection, and teaching of rules. Development of self-respect helps promote healthy interpersonal relationships and skills in problem solving. This is known as positive discipline. The approach helps maintain the relationships of trust, respect, and dignity. The discipline in the program will be based on the following guidelines listed below.

* Children will be taught and expected to show respect for school staff, themselves, and other children.
* Children will be taught to respect property and care of their environment.

Children will be guided through appropriate behaviors. As a last resort, children may be removed from an area or activity by sending them away from the group. This is a time for the child to think and reflect about what he/she has done. With the teacher, a discussion will occur as to “why” they have been placed in “time-out” and “what” alternative choices they could have made. For repeated offenses, a parent-teacher conference may be required.

The following will NOT be done:

* Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, corporal punishment
* Restricting child’s movement by binding or tying
* Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming or threatening
* Depriving a child of snacks, rest, or toilet use
* Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle

**Playground Expectations: Our Playground is For Learning**

Our playground is an enclosed area. Your child will always have adult supervision from their teachers during this important time of their school day. In the event of inclement weather, recess will be held indoors, using either the classroom or the gymnasium. What follows are the rules that we will encourage children to follow.

Learning happens when we are safe having fun.

* Remain in the designated area.
* Walk around other’s activities.
* Leave rocks, sticks, stones and other loose objects alone on the ground.

Learning happens when we are responsible having fun.

* Settle differences respectfully. Utilize help from the teachers.
* Line up quickly and cooperatively when the whistle blows.

**Nutrition**

* A light and nutritional snack will be served each day.
* Though not mandatory, we accept classroom donations from families.
* The school will provide 1% white milk or apple juice each day at no cost to the families.
* Any special dietary needs of children will be the parent’s responsibility to inform their child’s teacher.
* Celebrations: With advance notice, children may bring special treats for their birthday or any other time during the year for ALL sixteen children in the classroom. Please bring healthy items including cereals, crackers, cookies such as teddy grahams, and other items including fruit cups, applesauce, cheese and fresh fruits.

Because of safety and allergies, we do NOT serve gum and whole peanuts.

**Food**

There is a breakfast and lunch program available to all students.Students may also choose to bring their own lunch.

**Personal Belongings**

Please have your child leave ALL his/her toys and playthings at home.

There are no toy guns, war toys/clothes or other toys of destruction allowed in the preschool.

If your child should accidently bring a toy home from preschool, kindly return it as soon as possible.

**Clothing**

* Please provide an extra set of clothing for preschooler to change into in the case of an accident.
* Clothing should be washable due to the activities of the children.
* Bring children dressed in shoes and socks.
* Dress your child in appropriate play clothing.
* Please provide appropriate clothing according to weather conditions (boots, snow suits, hats, gloves). We will be going outside EVERYDAY, unless it is raining or colder than 10°.
* Please make sure all your child’s belongings brought to school are labeled with their name on it. This includes coats/jackets, backpacks, boots, mittens, folder, etc.
* There is no school uniform for preschool children.