

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

POLICY

The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities' Preschool Special Education program shall be guided by written policies of the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities (SCBDD) that are consistent with applicable statutory requirements contained in the Revised Code and Rules adopted by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth. Specific policies and procedures governing SCBDD Preschool are written in accordance with policies and procedures established by the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities. The Early Childhood Director shall be responsible for implementing the preschool policies and procedures.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the SCBDD Preschool program shall have unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation to contact the child, evaluate the care provided by the program or the premises, or for other purposes approved by the Early Childhood Director.

The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities shall maintain licensure through the Ohio Department of Children and Youth to operate a preschool special education program.

| Historical Resolution Information | | Reviewer: |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Date</u> | <u>Resolution Number</u> | Early Childhood Director |
| 4/24/18 | 04-23-18 | |
| 5/25/21 | 05-21-21 | |
| 5/28/24 | 05-26-24 | |

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PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

PROCEDURE

PERSONNEL GUIDELINES FOR PRESCHOOL EMPLOYEES

QUALIFICATIONS

All staff shall be recruited, employed, assigned, evaluated, and provided In-Service education in accordance with adopted Board Policies and without discrimination on the basis of age, color, national origin, race, sex or handicap, as well as the guidelines set forth by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth and the Ohio Department of DD. All assignments will agree with certification requirements, qualifications, and job descriptions.

The preschool staff members assigned in each preschool class shall be of good character, possess adequate physical and emotional health, be equipped by education, training, and/or experience for the work they are to perform, and meet the requirements as prescribed in section 5180-37 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

The Early Childhood Director shall hold a valid Principal OR General Education Supervisor license for grades pre-kindergarten through grade six or a valid educator license (teacher, administrator or pupil services) and have completed at least four courses in child development or early childhood education from an accredited college or university. All intervention specialists shall have bachelor's degrees in early childhood education from accredited colleges and be licensed or certified as an early childhood intervention specialist through the Ohio Board of Education. All intervention specialist assistants must be at least 18 years of age and have a high school diploma or certification of high school equivalency by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. The assistants shall have educational aide permits issued by the Ohio Board of Education. Copies of proper licenses and permits or verification obtained through the Ohio Board of Education licensure portal will be on file along with other necessary records when hired. All staff members are expected to remain current with licenses, and permits and will participate in the in-services, classes, trainings, etc., necessary to renew when appropriate.

MEDICAL STATEMENT

All appointees to positions of employment in the Preschool program must be examined by a licensed physician not more than thirty (30) days before employment. An employee medical statement shall be on file and be available for review by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth during preschool licensing reviews.

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Per SCBDD Policy 4.03, all staff members working in Preschool are required to update their medical examination to be kept on file every fifth school year. The Human Resources department will maintain a schedule of renewal and notify preschool employees during their year of renewal. The Board shall pay the full cost of such examination (OAC 3301-37-04) when employees have their medicals completed through the medical facility with whom the Board has an agreement. If employees choose to have the medicals completed by their own physician, any expenses will be the responsibility of the employee.

REFERENCES

In addition to employee file contents as determined by SCBDD personnel policy 4.37, preschool staff members shall have references checked from at least three sources. These references will be kept on file per preschool rule 3301.37.04.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Per SCBDD Policy 4.04, upon hire, the Human Resources Department will check each of the following databases to determine if the prospective employee is included. The Board shall not employ a person if their name is included in one of the databases described below:

- a. The list of excluded persons and entities maintained by the office inspector general in the United States Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to section 1128 of the Social Security Act.
- b. The abuser registry established pursuant to section 5123-52 of the Revised Code.
- c. The nurse aide registry established pursuant to section 3721.32 of the Revised Code.
- d. The sex offender and child-victim offender database established pursuant to division (A) (11) of section 2950.13 of the Revised Code.
- e. The United States general services administration system for award management database.
- f. The database of incarcerated and supervised offenders established pursuant to section 5120.066 of the Revised Code.
- g. The Ohio Medicaid provider exclusion and suspension list identifies individuals who are excluded from employment by Medicaid or Medicare providers because they have been terminated for cause.

NON-GUILTY NON-CONVICTION STATEMENT

Upon hire, each preschool staff member shall sign the Ohio Department of Children and Youth Non-Guilty Non-Conviction Statement. A new statement will be signed on an annual basis throughout the duration of the person's employment with SCBDD preschool.

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Appropriate professional development records shall be on file verifying that staff are adequately prepared and trained as required in the Ohio Administrative Code 5180-37. All professional development is to be considered "Ohio Approved" and completed coursework is to be listed under each employee on their Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (OCCRRA) profile.

All staff is to complete 10 hours of professional development annually between the dates of July first to June thirtieth

Part time preschool staff shall complete the professional development requirement based upon the percentage of time or full-time equivalency of their preschool assignment.

Within 30 days of hire, all preschool staff are required to establish an Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) account through the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Agency (OCCRRA) website. In addition, all new staff are required to complete an early childhood orientation course on the OCCRRA website within 30 days of hire.

For teachers, renewal of teaching licenses will be handled through the agency's Local Professional Development Committee.

Early childhood professional development providers may hold an associate or higher degree in child development or early childhood education, education, home economics, nursing, nutrition, psychology, dental hygiene, social work; or hold a pre-kindergarten certificate or endorsement or early childhood license issued by Ohio Board of Education; or be a licensed physician or registered nurse.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Early Childhood Director and staff shall be assigned responsibilities in accordance with written position descriptions commensurate with their certification and/or licensure pursuant to chapter 3301-24 of the Administrative Code, and qualifications respectively.

The Early Childhood Director shall be responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that the health and safety of the children are safeguarded by an organized program of school health services designed to identify child health

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- problems and to coordinate school community health resources for children as evidenced by, but not limited to, the following:
- Requiring immunizations and compliance with emergency medical authorization requirements under section 3313.712 of the Revised Code;
 - Providing procedures for emergency situations, including fire drills, rapid dismissals, tornado drills, and school safety drills in accordance with section 3737.73 of the Revised Code, and keeping records of such drills or dismissals;
 - Posting emergency procedures in preschool rooms and making them available to school personnel, children, and parents;
 - Posting emergency numbers by each telephone;
 - Supervising grounds, play areas, and other facilities when scheduled for use by children; and
 - Providing first-aid facilities and materials.
- Maintaining cumulative records for each child;
 - Supervising each child's admission, placement, and withdrawal according to established procedures;
 - Preparing a roster of children enrolled annually;
 - Ensuring that clerical and custodial services are available daily;
 - Supervising the instructional program and daily operation of the program;
 - Supervising and evaluating preschool staff members according to a planned sequence of observations and evaluation conferences, and supervising nonteaching employees (SCBDD Policy 4.10).

CUMULATIVE RECORDS (including health record)

The following records shall be compiled and kept on file for each preschool child enrolled in SCBDD's preschool program. This material must be reviewed annually and kept current. Appropriate releases must be signed if the child transfers to another educational setting and every effort will be made to keep the educational transition as uninterrupted as possible.

Staff will be made aware of each child's cumulative and health records and kept abreast of changes occurring in the lives of the children as the school is made aware.

These records include:

1. Copy of birth certificate (with name and date of birth);
- 2.
3. Emergency medical form listing name, address and phone number of each parent, name, address and phone number of primary physician and dentist, address and phone number of at least two (2) persons to contact in emergency if parents cannot be located and permission for emergency transportation and medical and dental treatment;

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4. Authorization form from physician/dentist to administer medications when applicable;
5. Medical information form, including allergies/treatments, chronic physical problems, medications, food supplements, modified diets, fluoride supplements, and complete medical history to include hospitalizations, list of diseases child has had;
6. Copy of immunization record;
7. Medication instructions and log, if applicable;
8. Medical statement including height, weight, lead and hematocrit testing with physician signature;
9. Dental health statement;
10. Vision and hearing screening results;
11. Permission forms: photographs/videos, roster permission, transportation;
12. Child release form with names of persons to whom the child may be released
13. Professional referrals and follow-ups;
14. Results from screening recommendations;
15. Previous educational records including IEPs, ETRs, progress reports, support services documentation forms;
16. Individual attendance records to include admission and withdrawal;
17. Copies of all incident reports reflecting notification of parent/guardian of any injury to their child during the preschool day.

The parent shall provide, prior to the date of admission or not later than 30 days after date of admission and every 13 months from the date of examination thereafter, a report from a licensed physician affirming that the child is in suitable condition for enrollment in the preschool program. The examination shall occur within 12 months prior to date of admission.

The medical statement shall be provided by a physician, a physician's assistant, a clinical nurse specialist or a certified nurse.

A preschool child with a disability shall not be excluded from the preschool program for lack of a medical statement though receipt of the medical statement will continue to be pursued by the nursing department.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PROGRAM

STAFF RATIOS

A ratio of 2 staff members to no more than 12 students will be maintained at all times. Each classroom will be staffed with a fulltime teacher and fulltime assistant. If a fulltime staff member is absent a substitute will be placed in the room for the duration of the absence. The needs of some students may require an attendant

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assigned just to him/her. These attendants are in addition to the teacher and assistant. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.

FOCUS

Developmentally appropriate practices will be followed in accordance with the program philosophy and goals as well as the standards of the Ohio Department of Children and Youth. Materials and equipment will be selected and reviewed by the Early Childhood Director, early childhood teachers and/or therapists and monitored and maintained by said staff. Meeting the developmental, intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs of the preschool child will be the criteria on which selection of materials and equipment and use of resources will be based.

The early childhood program will be housed in a setting designed to accommodate the identified needs of the preschool child and his/her family related to promoting the child's development. This shall include at a minimum: equipment, materials, curriculum, and assessments that are developmentally appropriate and reflect the functioning ability and safety needs of the preschool children.

CURRICULUM

The chosen curriculum for SCBDD Preschool program is the Creative Curriculum Guided Edition by Teaching Strategies, Inc. It is aligned to the Ohio Department of Children and Youth's Early Learning Content Standards. In addition, the preschool staff shall maintain a record of each child's ongoing progress in Creative Curriculum through use of its online data system, TS Gold.

SERVICES

For students with special needs, services shall be provided in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The LRE shall be discussed each year at each child's annual IEP meeting and will be based on what the IEP team determines is the most appropriate environment to meet the needs of the child. Classroom and support staff will provide all services in accordance with the child's IEP.

Enrollment shall include four to six age-eligible typically developing peers per preschool classroom.

Ongoing, systematic data shall be collected to measure the progress of individual goals and objectives. At a minimum, this data shall be shared in quarterly progress reports to the parents. The preschool program is future-oriented to reflect transition toward the next environment and includes systems for linking with agencies and other service providers. The Early Childhood Director, and other

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appropriate staff, shall be available for all children and families of children enrolled in the preschool.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The program is family-centered and responsive to the needs, interests, and priorities of the family. They may determine the extent of their involvement from a range of options that are listed on the parent activity calendar which is updated and distributed annually.

NAP TIME

In a room where children are napping or resting, the maximum number of children per preschool staff member is 12. Nap time is not to exceed 90 minutes. A preschool staff member shall be present in the room at all times. A working phone shall be in place in the room so that other staff members may be summoned if necessary. A light shall be on at all times. No room is to be completely dark. Each child will have his/her own cot with their name taped to the cot for easy identification if needed. Each cot will be sanitized each day. The students may bring in a blanket and/or pillow from home which will be laundered weekly. If children fall asleep with a blanket and/or pillow over their face, staff shall remove the covering so the child's breathing is not affected.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

PREVENTION

The services of this agency shall be prevention-oriented to insure the health and well-being of each child served. Emergency numbers and medical and dental emergency procedures will be posted in each classroom and by each telephone. In addition, all preschool staff members will be trained in the administration of first aid, CPR, child abuse recognition and prevention, and the management of communicable diseases.

A clinic shall be on the premises with a nurse, or personnel who have gone through SCBDD medication administration training, on duty. At all sites, first aid supplies shall be available in each classroom in a convenient, accessible area while the clinic will have a more extensive variety of supplies. Posted medical protocol as well as written procedures and documentation for the administration of medications shall be maintained and updated regularly by the agency's department of nursing and communicated via the SCBDD Health Plan

There shall be an organized program of school health services designed to identify child health problems and to coordinate school and community health resources for

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children to include: requiring immunization records and compliance with emergency medical authorization requirements in accordance with Revised Code section 3301.53.

Screenings of vision, dental, height, weight, hearing, blood lead and hemoglobin shall be required as part of the admission process into the SCBDD Preschool.

Preschool students shall be supervised at all times while in attendance at SCBDD preschool programs.

INJURIES

If an injury does occur, the parents will receive a written notice on the same day the incident occurs from the school nurse or classroom staff. A phone call will also often be placed if the injury is other than routine. An incident report will be completed by staff who were with the child at the time of the injury, and will be recorded in the SCBDD electronic incident report system which automatically saves it in an ongoing log.

ENVIRONMENT

The Stark County Board of DD shall maintain safe, sanitary, well-maintained facilities. Fire inspection, school environment inspections, and food licenses shall be current and on file. Fire and tornado drills shall be conducted according to the rules governing public facilities and procedures shall be posted in each classroom. Records of each fire and tornado drill are to be kept in the school office.

In addition, staff will be trained on at least an annual basis on active shooter procedures.

FURNITURE/EQUIPMENT

Furniture and equipment shall be maintained in a safe, sanitary condition. It shall be of an appropriate size and type. Adaptive equipment shall be provided to meet the individual needs of children with disabilities.

POTTY CHAIRS

Potty chairs shall be used strictly within already established bathroom areas in the classrooms. Potty chairs shall not be located in areas used for food preparation, serving or consumption. Potty chairs shall be emptied, cleaned, disinfected and rinsed with water after each use. The rinsing solution shall be disposed of into a toilet, not a sink. Only disposable cloths shall be used for cleaning potty chairs.

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They shall be used once and disposed of in a plastic lined covered receptacle such as the diaper pail.

LUNCH AND SNACK

As a full day preschool program, lunch shall be available to all preschoolers and shall be prepared according to regulations established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Preschool students shall have the opportunity to apply for free and reduced priced meals as administered through USDA.

A daily snack, free of charge to the parents, shall be served during the longest part of the school day between meals. Lunch and snacks shall be of a quantity, variety and quality in accordance with required daily allowance as prescribed by the USDA meal patterns.

Screen time shall not be allowed during meals and snacks so children are not distracted from eating.

Only fluid milk shall be served.

Snacks shall consist daily of selections from two of the food groups listed:

- meat/meat-equivalent group;
- bread/bread-alternatives group;
- milk group;
- fruit; or
- vegetable group.

Parents providing snacks for their children shall be given information on nutritious snack choices.

If a child requires a modified diet that eliminates an entire food group, written instructions from a physician, physician assistant, clinical nurse specialist or certified nurse are to be obtained. To the extent possible, a family's preferred dietary preferences (i.e., vegetarian, vegan) should be accommodated. Lunch and snacks will also take into account special dietary considerations of food allergies, etc. Snacks shall be modified or appropriate substitutions made for students in need of ground or pureed foods.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL EMERGENCY PLANS

- All preschool staff will be certified in first aid and CPR;
- In the case of a medical or dental situation needing staff attention, they will refer to the medical and dental emergency procedures on the wall in each room;

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- If professional attention is required, every attempt will be made to contact the child's dentist or physician identified on the child's Emergency Medical Form located in the file;
- Parents will be notified;
- Emergency phone numbers including Poison Control will be posted on each telephone in the building;
- The staff member involved with the child will complete an electronic Incident Report.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

FOCUS

It shall be the policy of the Stark County Board of DD to provide and maintain an environment conducive to optimal promotion of the health and safety of all individuals. The management of communicable diseases is essential to insure the health and safety of all persons in the agency who are assigned to or frequent the various buildings and administrative center. The maintenance of sound habits in personal hygiene is each individual's responsibility. Effective infection control measures are dependent upon the cooperation of all.

STAFF

Staff shall be trained in the prevention, recognition, and management of communicable disease signs and symptoms of illness, proper hand washing and disinfecting procedures as established by the Ohio Department of Health. At all times, at least one preschool staff member will be readily available who has completed courses approved by the Ohio Department of Health or the approved American Red Cross program in CPR/First Aid, prevention, recognition and management of communicable diseases and child abuse recognition and prevention.

ISOLATION OF ILLNESS

The clinic shall be the designated area for isolating ill children who need to be removed from the preschool classroom. The nurse shall observe and monitor the child's condition and shall notify parents of the child's illness. Cots and linens used by an ill child shall be cleaned, laundered and properly disinfected according to posted guidelines.

DISCHARGE/RE-ADMITTANCE

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There shall be a procedure in place for discharge and re-admittance of an ill child and notification of parents when a child is ill or exposed to a communicable disease.

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

**SEE SEPARATE BOARD ADOPTED SCHOOL HEALTH PLAN*

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION POLICY

**SEE SEPARATE BOARD ADOPTED SCHOOL HEALTH PLAN*

ADMISSION/PLACEMENT/WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES, SUPPORT SERVICES

ADMISSIONS/PLACEMENT

2. For children who are suspected of having developmental delays, the school district must conduct a complete assessment and then refer them to SCBDD Preschool for services if the child's team feels SCBDD is the Least Restrictive Environment for the child. Each referral is date and time stamped and children are placed in class on a first come basis.
3. In order to be accepted into the SCBDD preschool program, a child must have an educational category of multiple disabilities (MD), Autism (AU), traumatic brain injury (TBI), orthopedic handicap (OH), or other health impairment major (OHI).
3. Information from the assessment is used to write an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.) to meet the educational needs of the students within the preschool environment.
4. For children who are determined to be typically developing, a limited number of slots will be available. Anyone wishing to attend as a peer must have a completed application for enrollment. This may be done at any time. Each application is date and time stamped and children are placed in class on a first come basis. Each applicant must also participate in a developmental screening conducted by SCBDD staff at designated times during the year.
5. Openings for both children with I.E.P.s and typically developing are limited as per Ohio Department of Children and Youth established ratios.

WITHDRAWALS

If the need should arise to withdraw a child from the preschool program, parents should contact the SCBDD preschool office to receive a Withdrawal Form. This brief form should be completed and turned back into the Eastgate office as soon as possible. School records cannot be forwarded to another school without the Withdrawal Form on file.

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SUPPORT SERVICES

Support services are available for children with I.E.P.s. These may include:

1. Speech therapy
2. Occupational therapy
3. Physical therapy
4. Nursing services
5. Transportation services
6. Family Support Services
7. Service Support Administration Services
8. Specialized Autism services

ROSTER

For each group of children in the program, SCBDD Preschool shall send home at least once annually a roster of the name and telephone number of each child and child's parent, being careful to list only those children for whom the parents have given permission. No one but parents will be furnished with this preschool roster.

ATTENDANCE

STANDARDS

Attendance is a basic and integral part of education. Frequent absences disrupt the continuity of the instructional process. As a result, the benefit of regular instruction is lost. Students are enrolled on a 4 full day a week schedule. Exceptions to this attendance pattern are only given for children with significant medical needs who may need an abbreviated schedule due to stamina issues.

RECORDS

Individual attendance records will be kept on file no later than the first day of attendance and include admission date, attendance dates, and withdrawal dates as applicable. The Stark County Board of DD will confer with the LEA regarding action on school attendance issues.

ABSENCES

Anytime a student does not attend school, leaves early, or arrives late, the parent/guardian is requested to provide a written or verbal excuse to the school. Any illness beyond five days may require a release from the child's doctor saying the student is free of disease, not contagious, and capable of attending school. All

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communicable diseases that a student contracts should be made known to school officials so other parents/guardians or pregnant women can be notified. If an absence is due to hospitalization or surgery, parents are required to notify the school nurse as well as the teacher. A doctor's release must accompany the child upon his/her return.

DISCIPLINE

CLASSROOM CLIMATE

Preschool staff shall create a favorable climate for the children to help insure that the time spent in preschool will be relaxing, fun, and enriching for all. Discipline is a part of the climate and is the ongoing process of helping children to develop inner controls so that they may manage their own behavior in a socially approved manner.

INTERVENTIONS

Setting limits gives the child the security of knowing that one's strong emotions will not lead the child to do things that will later be regretted. The child knows an adult will take the responsibility for stopping unacceptable behavior until the child is able to do so for him or herself. Desirable behaviors will be complimented or otherwise rewarded and undesirable behavior will be kept at a minimum before problems arise.

SEE SEPARATE BOARD ADOPTED DISCIPLINE POLICY 5.10.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS

TRANSPORTATION

The Stark County Board of DD shall provide transportation services in accordance with Section 5126-05 of the Ohio Revised Code. Details of the services are distributed annually to all parents/guardians/enrollees in the Transportation Handbook. Emergency Medical Authorization Forms will be carried on each board owned vehicle in case of emergency.

FIELD TRIPS

School activities shall be set up based upon the idea and philosophy that they are activities for education and development of the students both physically and mentally. These criteria shall be met before authorization is given for any school activity, including field trips. Staff members will carry with them at all times when off school grounds a copy of each child's Emergency Medical Authorization Form.