

# **East Side Preschool**



Attendance Center for Preschool  
Effingham Unit #40  
Effingham

## **Parent Handbook 2024-2025**

## Effingham Unit #40 Preschool Handbook for Parents and Students

East Side Preschool

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### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to East Side Preschool! Our preschool staff hopes this will be a positive and productive year for your child. To help make the year go as smoothly as possible, this handbook has been prepared so that you can become familiar with Effingham Unit #40 policies and procedures, as well as the daily operations of the East Side Preschool/

I wish you and your child a wonderful experience at our school. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time if I can assist you in any way this school year. The best way to reach me is by calling 217-540-1380. I look forward to a wonderful year with each of you!

*Jennifer Fox*

*Lacy Althoff*

### SCHOOL HOURS

The East Side Preschool office is open from 7:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. and 11:45 a.m.-3:30 p.m. daily. Students enrolled in our half day morning program attend from 8:15-10:50 a.m., while students enrolled in our afternoon program attend from 12:15-2:50 p.m. only.

### ABSENCES

#### Parent Responsibilities:

Parents have responsibility for requiring and promoting their child's regular school attendance, the first step in achieving academic success. Unless the circumstances make it impossible, all requests for excused absences during a trip or vacation must be approved by the PRINCIPAL at least seven (7) days in advance of the absence. Please submit a written request. In any case, the parent/guardian must notify the PRINCIPAL or TEACHER as soon as possible prior to the proposed absence.

#### Preschool Absence Notification Policy:

A parent/guardian must: (1) upon child's enrollment, provide **telephone numbers** to the Building Principal and update them as necessary; and (2) authorize all absences and notify the school in advance or at the time of the child's absence. Students are required to attend school daily unless they are ill. For students, parents must call the school by 9:00 a.m. to report any absences. Students are also required to be at school on time. If the child is not at school, phone calls will be made to the parents and all emergency contacts. If the school cannot reach anyone by phone, a home visit will be made by the principal, another district administrator, and/or School Resource Officer. Please schedule doctor/dentist appointments during school holidays or teacher institute days. If this is not possible, doctor appointments should be scheduled after school hours. Refer to the Effingham Unit #40 School Handbook for additional excused/unexcused absence information.

### ACCIDENTS – EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Despite our best efforts, accidents sometimes happen at school. If a serious accident occurs, parents/guardians will be called and asked to come to school for the child. If parents cannot be reached, the person designated at registration, as "Person to Notify In Case of Emergency" will be called. If neither the parent nor the emergency contact can be reached, the child will be taken to the hospital.

It is important that all medical information in our computer system be accurate, as it is the school's main source of information in any emergency. Parents should inform the school secretary immediately if the home address, home or work phone, designated emergency contact person, or any other data changes.

## **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN NOTIFICATION**

The US EPA published their AHERA (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act) Regulations in 1986. The federal regulation required that all local education agencies (LEA's) have their buildings inspected for asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM), to have a written Asbestos Management Plan developed, and to institute an Asbestos Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Program to train in-house personnel how to properly manage and work around the ACBM in their buildings. This notification serves as the annual notification which is required to be sent to all school district employees, parents, groups and organizations to explain the Management Plans and any current relevant activities. The purpose of this Annual Notification is to explain the status and availability of the Asbestos Management Plan, to review recent asbestos-related activities in the school district, and to list the asbestos-related activities that are planned to take place in the upcoming calendar year. The Management Plans are available for review in the main office at all school buildings and at the Board Office, 2803 South Banker Street, Effingham, IL 62401. Questions pertaining to asbestos are to be directed to Todd Thoele at (217) 540-1500, the asbestos coordinator.

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Students are welcome to celebrate birthdays within their classroom. Treats which can be served as individual portions are preferred. The Board of Education of Effingham Unit #40 School District is committed to providing a learning environment that supports and promotes wellness, good nutrition and an active lifestyle and recognizes the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity and the capacity of students to develop and learn. As such, we encourage parents to choose healthy options when providing birthday treats. Items such as 100% juice boxes, dried fruit, single serve applesauce, pretzels, reduced fat crackers, fat-free or low-fat pudding cups, string cheese and granola bars are ideal. Students will not be allowed to hand out treats in other classrooms, as this procedure causes unnecessary disruptions. Games, party hats, decorations, helium balloons are best left to be given at home, and we prefer to have the children not bring take-home treat bags. Students with summer birthdays are welcome to choose a school term attendance day to celebrate their birthday. Prearrange this date with the classroom teacher. Please do not choose the last week of school for this celebration. **We also want to notify parents if they are taking photographs at a birthday party at school, those pictures cannot be posted on an outside media source, for instance Facebook, if that picture contains images of other students in the classroom.** Do not send invitations to be handed out at school unless you intend to invite every student in that classroom. If wanting to invite one or two students, please mail invitations from home. The school office cannot provide addresses or phone numbers due to privacy issues.

## **BUS SERVICE**

All Unit #40 bus-riding students will be assigned to one bus stop at the beginning of their day and one stop at the end of their day which is not necessarily the same stop. Parents will be asked at registration to designate one pick-up location and one drop-off location for each child. A child may be picked up or dropped off at a stop along the same route that he/she normally rides. In order for the child to be picked up or dropped off at another stop along his/her route, a note must be sent to the school office the day before or that day so that the transportation department can be notified. Please refer to the Effingham Unit #40 School Handbook for all district bus information. Loss of bus privileges may last from one day to a school year. Notification is made to the Building Principal when the bus driver turns in a **Bus Conduct Notice**. This information is discussed with the student, and a copy is sent home to parents.

## **CELLPHONES**

The presence of cell phones at East Side Preschool is discouraged. If there is a legitimate reason to have one, the student's family should schedule a meeting to discuss with the building administrators. Students will not be allowed to use cell phones at East Side Preschool. If a student brings a cell phone to school it must remain off, and in the student's bookbag. All phone communication between school and home will be through the school office.

1st Offense: The student is asked to put it away and is reminded of the rules.

2nd Offense: The phone is turned into Administration and the parent must pick up the phone.

3rd Offense and additional offenses: Administration will impose discipline in a progressive manner.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

School personnel are mandated by law to report any suspected child abuse, including neglect. Referrals are made to the Department of Children and Family Services.

## **CLOTHING**

Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for playing time at school. Children are taken outside most days unless it is raining or severely cold. Shirts advertising alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or violence, or those with obscene or questionable sayings will not be permitted. If clothing worn to school is found to be improper, parents will be called to have a change of clothing brought to school. Hats are not to be worn inside the school building.

Students do not have to wear expensive clothes. Clean, neat clothing is what needs to be worn. It is recommended that female students wear shorts under their dresses and skirts for playground purposes. We also do not recommend children wearing flip-flops or clogs to school. Loose fitting shoes make it difficult to run, climb and walk on the playground. For preschoolers, it is often helpful to send in an extra set of clothes for students in case of an accident. If students are still in diapers or pull-ups, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide the school with a supply of diapers/pull-ups and wipes to be kept at school for their child.

## **COMPUTERS**

Parents complete an "Acceptable Use of Electronic Networks" form during registration.

Exhibit - Student Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks

This form accompanies Administrative Procedure 6:235-AP1, Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks. It must be signed when students will have unsupervised Internet access or when supervision will be minimal. Please submit this form to the Building Principal.

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Our School District has the ability to enhance your child's education through the use of its electronic networks, including the Internet. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Students and their parents/guardians need only sign this Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks once while the student is enrolled in the School District.

The District filters access to materials that may be defamatory, inaccurate, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate in the school setting. If a filter has been disabled or malfunctions it is impossible to control all material and a user may discover inappropriate material. Ultimately, parents/guardians are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their child should follow, and the School District respects each family's right to decide whether or not to authorize Internet access. With this educational opportunity also comes responsibility. The use of inappropriate material or language, or violation of copyright laws, may result in the loss of the privilege to use this resource. Remember that you are legally responsible for your child's actions. If you agree to allow your child to have a network account, sign the Authorization form below and return it to your school.

A copy is attached at the end of the booklet.

## **DISCIPLINE**

See attached sheets at the end of this booklet.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL FOR EMERGENCY**

From time to time, there will be early dismissals, school closures due to weather and other events unforeseen and not included in a school calendar. In the event of such circumstances, the school will provide information to the radio stations. We urge you to tune to WCRC-FM (95.7), WXEF-FM (97.9) or WKJT-FM (102.3), especially during bad weather, to find out the latest information on school cancellations. Cancellations may also be followed on the district website at [unit40.org](http://unit40.org). Please refer to the Effingham Unit 40 School Handbook for further information.

Effingham Unit #40 also participates in “School Messenger”. This program allows Unit 40 to contact all parents by phone in an emergency situation. At registration, parents/guardians are asked to list the phone number at which they can be contacted during the school day. If the “School Messenger” phone number provided at registration should change after school has begun, it is extremely important that a parent/guardian contact the school with an updated phone number.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

In order to provide consistency and uniformity on field trips, the following guidelines are listed.

- The classroom teacher will choose chaperones, as needed, to accompany the class on the field trip.
- All chaperones are to ride the school bus with students to and from the field trip destination. Chaperones are to assist with the student supervision from the beginning of the field trip until the end. Chaperones should not use tobacco products during the trip. We must set a healthy and positive example for the children.
- All chaperones must have attended the Unit #40 volunteer training.
- Younger children are not allowed to accompany parents on the field trip.
- Parents are strongly discouraged from attending separately in a vehicle so that the numbers are kept to a minimum at the field trip destination.
- If students bring their own lunch, the lunch must have food that does not require refrigeration.
- Each child must have a parental permission form signed by parent or guardian.

## **GRADING & STUDENT RECORDS for STUDENTS**

For preschool students, homework or projects may be sent home at the discretion of the teacher but will be kept to a minimum. Homework and projects are intended to reinforce skills that are taught in the classroom as well as giving parents the opportunity to support their children’s learning at home. A preschool checklist is issued three times a year in the fall, winter, and spring.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

### Sick Children

We need your help. If your child appears to be ill or does not feel well, please let him/her stay home from school. Keeping your child at home when he/she is ill helps to prevent the spread of cold, flu, etc., to the other children.

Often during the year children become ill at school. If a child’s temperature reaches 100.4 degrees, if he/she has diarrhea, and/or if the child is vomiting, a health risk exists for other children. Since our schools are not equipped with sickroom facilities, parents will be called at home or at work. If you cannot pick your child up, please make arrangements to have someone else pick him/her up as soon as possible. Please stop by the office to sign out the child before taking him/her home. **Students MUST be fever, diarrhea, and vomit-free for 24 hours BEFORE returning to school, without medication.**

### Medication

Parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for administering medication to their children. Administering medication during school hours or during school-related activities is discouraged unless it is necessary for the critical health and well being of the student. Non-prescription medication will not be given to children (example: aspirin, cough medicine, etc.) at any time by any of the kindergarten personnel. In order for prescription medication to be administered at school, the student’s parent and physician must complete the school district’s “Doctor’s Medication Authorization Form” picked up at registration. Additional medical information is available in the District handbook.

## **HEAD LICE POLICY**

Routine screenings for head lice will not be performed. Parents are encouraged to check their children’s heads for lice regularly. If you child shows symptoms of itching or is suspected of having head lice, a check of the child’s hair will be done by the school nurse or trained school staff. If live lice are found or if the child has multiple nits, the parent/guardian will be notified and the student may be sent home right away to begin treatment. If the child with live lice or multiple nits has siblings, the school nurse or trained school staff will check the siblings and/or notify the other schools where siblings attend. The school nurse or trained school staff will also check any of the student’s contacts for the presence of lice. If you child has only scattered nits, a note will be sent home with the child at the end of the school day notifying parent/guardian that prompt treatment is necessary. If more than one student is affected with lice in any

class, the school nurse or other trained staff will determine whether to examine all students in the class and/or will provide information about head lice to all parents/guardians of students in the class.

Various products are available to treat head lice. It is recommended that the **WHOLE FAMILY** be treated for lice. All nits (eggs) must be removed from the hair. It is important to also treat your surroundings. Your child must be checked by the Effingham School District #40 School Nurse and given clearance before returning to school. One day to get clearance from the Effingham School District #40 School Nurse is excused if the student has not reached the ten (10) days allowed per school year without a doctor's excuse. **Head lice are treatable and should not lead to excessive absences from school.** The Building Principal or designee will notify any parent/guardian whose student has not returned to school within five days of school attendance laws, actions that may be taken if absence continues, and resources for treatment information.

### **LOCKED DOOR POLICY**

As of the 2006/2007 school year, it has been a district-wide policy that all doors of all schools be locked down during the school day. East Side doors are locked from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day. The building is closed daily from 11:15-11:45 for lunch. Please enter through their east door if bringing children to school late or picking up early. However, parent drop off for the beginning of school each day is at the northwest door. This policy was enacted as a safety precaution for students. If you come to East Side during "lock down" hours, please push the button located next to the front doors and be prepared to state your name and purpose for coming to the school.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Articles are kept for a period of time after being found. These may be re-claimed by describing the lost article. Articles left at the end of the year will be gathered and given to a local charity. To help safeguard your child's belongings, please label all possessions and clothing with your child's name.

### **MULTI-TIER SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT**

Our district implements Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS) which is based on the premise of intervening early to prevent failure and to maximize the effectiveness of grade level curriculum and instruction. Providing every P-12 student differentiated, high-quality instruction matched to their specific needs to be successful in our education system through a system of support for academic, behavioral and social-emotional student needs. MTSS is grounded in the belief that ALL students can learn and achieve high standards. A comprehensive system of tiered interventions is essential for addressing the full range of students' academic and behavioral needs. Collaboration among educators, families, and communities is the foundation of effective problem solving. For additional information regarding MTSS in your child's school, please contact the school.

### **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

In divorce cases, both parents have all the rights of the Act, unless a state law or court order provides for the contrary. However, a non-custodial parent cannot violate a specified visitation court order by actually visiting with the child on school grounds or by physically removing the child from school grounds. In joint custody judgments, both parents will always have equal rights and privileges regarding the child's educational progress. If a child is not residing with a parent who has joint custody and s/he wants a copy of the child's reports, calendar of events, etc., that parent should request the information from the child's teacher in writing. We also would appreciate self-addressed stamped envelopes, and the teacher would gladly mail all classroom information to the other parents.

### **PARENT DROP-OFF PROCEDURES**

We strongly encourage parents of children at East Side Preschool to not drop off students any sooner than 7:45 a.m. but by 8:15 a.m. Students in the afternoon classes cannot be dropped off until 12:10 p.m. Teachers or paraprofessionals will be at the door to greet them and escort them into the building at 7:45 a.m. and 12:10 p.m. All students being dropped off via a car or vehicle must go through the parent drop off line on the west side of the building. Parents may not park their vehicles on the side road and walk their children to the door. Please help us keep our arrival procedures orderly and safe by following these policies.

### **PARENT PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

You must send a note to the teacher in the morning when your child will be Parent Pick-Up. **We cannot take your child's word that he/she will be Parent Pick-Up. We MUST have a note or a phone call.** No child may be picked up by a person other than a parent/guardian during the school day without a written note, signed by the parent/guardian. A note must also be sent when a child who usually rides a bus will be picked up after school. For the child's safety, please indicate in the note WHO will be picking up the child.

No child may be picked up by a person other than a parent/guardian during the school day without a written note – signed by the parent/guardian. A note must also be sent when a child who usually rides a bus will be picked up after school or when he/she needs to leave early for an appointment, etc. For the child's safety, please indicate in the note WHO will be picking up the child. For early pickup, the adult will meet the child in the office. **Children will NOT be allowed to wait outside to be picked up. Parents should meet the child in the office and not go directly to the classroom.**

At East Side Preschool, parent pick-up time is at 10:50 a.m. and again at 2:40 p.m. Vehicles can line up on the south side of the building and the children will be dismissed by staff at the SW door. Please wait to get in line with all the other vehicles for parent pick-up, and your child will be put in your car as you drive up. A teacher will escort each child to his/her car. Please display the visor card provided by your child's teacher.

If you plan to pick up your child **before** dismissal, send a note in the morning or call in. **For your child's safety, please come in to the office to sign your child out.** When you sign your child out, we have a record of who picked up the child. This saves a lot of confusion if the child is not on his/her regular bus, does not get off at the regular bus stop, or some adult or sibling does not know where a child is after school.

All students being picked up via a car or vehicle must go through the parent pick up line on the west side of the building. Parents may not park their vehicles on the side road and walk up to pick up their child. Please help us keep our dismissal procedures orderly and safe by following these policies.

## **PETS AT SCHOOL**

Children will be allowed to show a pet at school if the parent brings the pet. We would prefer this pet be related to a class theme, and the final decision will be left up to the teacher. They are not allowed on the bus. Also, for the children's safety, pets can only be shown outside. They are not allowed in the buildings due to accidents and allergies.

## **PLAYING OUTSIDE**

Local medical authorities have advised us that the cold air associated with Illinois winters does not by itself present a health hazard to normal healthy children who are **properly dressed**, and that we should encourage children to play outside during the winter months. Please be sure children are appropriately dressed for the season. **Put your child's name on all hats, gloves, scarves, warm winter coats, and boots.** All students will go outside for play periods when the outside temperature is not extreme.

Other weather conditions, such as wind chill factor, will be taken into consideration when deciding whether or not children will go outside. We will use the following guideline when determining whether or not to go outside. If the actual air temperature or the wind chill factor is below 20 degrees Fahrenheit, we will stay inside. **In changeable weather, please send a jacket even though it may be warm at the end of the day. Some recesses are early when it is still quite chilly.**

If a child is recovering from a serious respiratory illness a parent may request that the child remain inside for a few days. **Requests for children to remain indoors for extended periods of time require a doctor's verification.**

## **TOYS**

**PLEASE DO NOT send toys with your child to school,** unless requested by a teacher for a special day. Many times the pieces become broken, and the child gets upset. It is very difficult to identify the toys that children think they bring.

## **VISITORS**

You are always welcome at the school. However, **visitors to school are required by state law to report to the office whenever they enter a school building.** We will have a place for you to sign in and sign out when entering and leaving the building.

- All volunteers must sign in and sign out in the designated book in the entrance when they come in and go from the building. **If you bring your child to school after 8:15 a.m. for morning classes and 12:30 p.m. for afternoon classes, you must sign in at the office. This is very important for attendance records.**
- If you come in for any other reason, you must sign in and out.
- If you wish to have a conference with your child’s teacher, please call to set up an appointment.

**VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS**

All volunteers and field trip chaperones in Unit #40 schools must go through the district volunteer training and background check procedures.

**East Side Preschool  
Building Rules, Cafeteria Rules, Playground Rules, and Consequences**

**General Building Rules:**

1. Do not bring candy, toys, or electronics to school unless permission has been given by the teacher for special occasions.
2. Show respect for everyone.
3. Be quiet and walk in the hallway.
4. Take care of our school building.

**Indoor and Outdoor Playground Rules:**

1. Students will keep hands and feet to themselves. (Fighting, pretend fighting, pushing, hitting and kicking are not allowed.)
2. Students will slide down the slide sitting only, never climbing up the slide.
3. Students will not jump from the swings or off of the equipment.
4. Students will only run in the grass outside or on the carpet inside.
5. When the whistle is blown, students will line up to go into school and walk in an orderly fashion.
6. Students will use all balls and playground toys on the grass or concrete outside or on the carpet inside.

**East Side Preschool Discipline**

A goal of Effingham Unit #40 schools is to teach students self-discipline. Children are expected to follow rules and be good citizens. They have rights, but they also have responsibilities. Positive behavior will be rewarded. Inappropriate behavior will be dealt with consistently and effectively.

Classroom teachers and staff will explain **school and class rules** to all students. We would appreciate it if parents would discuss this at home also. It is important that a strong partnership is formed between parents and the school regarding discipline at home and discipline at school. We expect parents to follow through with supporting our discipline efforts at school. If a student does not follow the rules, classroom consequences will be followed. If this does not change the behavior, or if the behavior is very serious, the building principal, or dean of students will be notified.

Each teacher or other school personnel when students are under his/her charge is authorized to impose the building level disciplinary measures outlined in the “disciplinary techniques” section of this document. District administration along with the Board of Education may also impose suspension, expulsion, or in-school suspension, whichever is appropriate and in accordance with the policies and rules on student discipline. Teachers, other certified employees, and other persons providing a related service for or with respect to a student, may use reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel, or other persons, for the purpose of self-defense or defense of property. The behavior expected from students at school is a combination of common courtesy and safety considerations.

Below is a list of behaviors that **will not be tolerated** at East Side Preschool:



1. Placing hands, feet, etc. on another person in a disrespectful manner (including but not limited to slapping, hair pulling, pinching, kicking, biting, head butting, spitting, wrestling, punching, or fighting in any manner)
2. Possessing any controlled substance, look-a-like drug, designer drug, unauthorized medication, drug paraphernalia, tobacco, tobacco products or syringes not required for authorized medical purposes or supervised use
3. Vandalizing or destroying school property (including but not limited to throwing objects)
4. Possessing dangerous objects or weapons (including but not limited to knives, guns, or look-a-like representations of such items, matches, and lighters etc.)
5. Physical abuse, severe profanity, willful defiance, or inappropriate hand gestures toward others Theft of any classroom objects or property of others.
6. ***Bullying will not be tolerated.*** *This is defined as any form or type of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to someone else and/or urging other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited aggressive behavior includes, without limitation, the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, bullying, or other comparable conduct. Juvenile authorities including the School Resource Officer will be notified whenever the conduct involves illegal drugs (controlled substances), look-alike drugs, alcohol, weapons or look-alike weapons.*
7. Wearing clothing that is inappropriate for the school setting or possession of items that cause disruption to the educational process or impose safety concerns
8. Bringing toys or handheld games to school (unless requested by the teacher)
9. The presence of cell phones at The Early Learning Center is discouraged. If there is a legitimate reason to have one, the student's family should schedule a meeting to discuss with the building administrators. Students will not be allowed to use cell phones at The Early Learning Center. If a student brings a cell phone to school it must remain off, and in the student's bookbag. All phone communication between school and home will be through the school office.
  - 1st Offense: The student is asked to put it away and is reminded of the rules.
  - 2nd Offense: The phone is turned into Administration and the parent must pick up the phone.
  - 3rd Offense and additional offenses: Administration will impose discipline in a progressive manner.

Disclaimer: Effingham Unit #40 is not responsible for lost or confiscated items under the care of Unit #40.

The above listed behaviors will be dealt with using the following list of disciplinary techniques:

- Reflective Listening
- Time away (in or out of the classroom)
- Withholding privileges (including but not limited to loss of recess)
- Parent contact (call, letter, e-mail)
- Behavior chart

***Depending upon the severity of the discipline issue,*** or if there is no improvement in the child's behavior, the child will be referred to the building administrator and the following action may be taken:

- Counseling Referral
- Temporary removal from classroom to the office
- Paying for or replacing damaged or stolen property
- Remaining after school including "late stays" (parent/guardian will be responsible for picking up their child)
- Loss of field trips and/or special events hosted at the schools
- In/Out of school suspension
- Suspension of bus privileges (bus conduct notices only)
- Contact of School Resource Officer

**\*\*Important Note:** Violation of items 2 or 4 could result in suspension or expulsion from school as per the District Discipline Code.