

# Early Learning Center

Phenix City Schools



## Parent Handbook

2019-2020

<b>Westview Campus</b>	<b>Creekside Campus</b>
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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the *Early Learning Center*! This year promises to be one filled with exciting learning opportunities for our students and families.

This handbook will ensure that you understand our school policies, procedures, and state requirements. Use it as a quick reference to answer your questions throughout the school year.

We want every child to have a memorable year in "real" school, and we need your help. The staff of the *Early Learning Center* work passionately to create and maintain an environment that is loving and conducive to learning. It is our goal to increase each student's self-confidence and self-regulation, as well as maximize their cognitive abilities.

Let us know how we can be of service to your family!

**Julie Norden**

Early Learning Center Coordinator

## **Phenix City School District Vision**

Pursuing excellence on behalf of every student in every school!

### **District Mission**

In collaboration with families and community members who are personally committed to the success of each student, Phenix City Schools strives to become a premier school system. Staff members effectively engage students and inspire their emotional, ethical, intellectual, physical, and social development. Through an inquiry-based teaching approach and utilization of innovative practices to foster student ownership of learning, these empowered students will possess the ability to adapt in an ever-changing world and will become responsible and productive citizens who positively impact society.

### **Early Learning Beliefs**

1. Student development is fostered through family involvement.
2. Our *school family* has access to a safe, nurturing, inviting, respectful, and stimulating learning environment in order to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically.
3. Students have access to a highly qualified, dedicated, and open-minded staff.
4. Children learn best through meaningful play that promotes social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth.
5. *Authentic learning*, through a variety of curricular resources, encourages inquiry, problem solving, creativity, independence and cooperation in children.
6. The staff supports all children in developing strong values that reflect empathy, respect, service, and integrity.
7. Students gain knowledge and skills, such as confidence, through active learning, collaboration, and meaningful experiences.

### **Early Learning Core Values**

Respect	Commitment	Confidence
Integrity	Service	Community
Empathy	Curiosity	Authentic learning

## Departure and Arrival



Good attendance is critical for your child's success in school. Everyday counts!

- Arrive between 7:30 AM-8:00 AM. If you arrive early, please remain in your vehicle until 7:30 AM.
- For safety, all students must exit their vehicles on the driver's side.
- Breakfast is served between 7:30 AM-7:50 AM.
- Pick up students between 2:30 PM-2:45 PM.
- A \$10.00 late fee will be charged to parents for afternoon pick-up after 2:50 PM. Repeat offenses will result in a mandatory meeting with the coordinator.
- In the afternoon, exit your car, hold up the laminated number, and load your child into an **appropriate safety car seat** required by law.
- For safety, we will load a group of cars, and then dismiss the cars. Please wait for directions. Do not pass other vehicles.
- During dismissal, please refrain from walking up to school to collect your child.
- We only release students to those with the school-designed laminated number. If the laminated number or student backpack tag is lost, a \$5.00 assessment fee will be charged for replacements.
- No early check-outs between 2:00--2:30 PM. If your child has an appointment, please check them out **before 2:00 PM**.

## Emergency Contact

- Keep your emergency contact information updated. Notify the office of any changes in person (not over the phone).
- The only person who can make updates to emergency information is the parent/guardian who completed the original application.
- After several failed attempts to contact parents, the school personnel may call local authorities (department of human resources, police, medical, etc).

## Dress Code

A student's school apparel must consist of clothing that is neat, clean, and appropriate for school. Appropriate refers to clothing that covers the body sufficiently enough not to cause undue attention of school officials and/or other students. Clothing must not be exaggerated to the point that it distracts from the educational endeavors of the school. In general, students are expected to abide by the following guidelines:

- Clothing will be appropriate and decent.
- Clothing will be worn as it was intended.
- Clothing deemed mutilated (torn/shredded) or vulgar in style or design is prohibited.
- Many clothing articles (short shorts, halters, midriffs, see-through tops, shoes with cleats or other sportswear) considered appropriate at home or on sports outings are **not** appropriate for school wear.
- Students may not wear caps, hats, or sunglasses inside the building unless under special circumstances.

The administrator will make the final judgement about the appropriateness of student clothing.

### Attendance

*Chronic tardiness* is defined as late arrival or early departure more than 2 days per week. *Chronic absenteeism* is defined as missing more than 4 days per month without medical or other reasonable explanation. Please note that children who do not attend on a regular basis or are routinely late may be dismissed from the program. If attendance becomes problematic, the following steps will be taken:

1. Phone call to parent after 3 unexcused absences or tardies
2. Letter to parent after 6 unexcused absences or tardies
3. Parent conference after 8 unexcused absences
4. Referral to the Alabama Office of School Readiness (OSR) monitor after 10 unexcused absences FOR POSSIBLE DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM.

Your child should attend school regularly unless they are ill. If your child has a fever, do not send them to school. If they are sent home with a fever, they have to be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning. If they vomit OR have diarrhea in the morning BEFORE COMING TO SCHOOL, they MUST remain at home.

Provide a written excuse or doctor's note for all absences within 3 days after your child returns to school.



## **Required Parent Involvement**

According to the state of Alabama and the *Office of School Readiness (OSR)*, family participation at the Early Learning Center is required. As per the OSR-Parent Contract, parents/guardians are responsible for **12 participation hours** each school year.

Ways to participate include:

- ❖ attending parent orientation
- ❖ volunteering in the classroom
- ❖ attending parent enrichment meetings
- ❖ attending mandatory parent/teacher conferences (2 per year)
- ❖ completing *family involvement activities* sent home with your child
- ❖ attending school-wide events

All of these activities enhance your child's learning and future success!

## **Communication**

The teachers and administrator will ensure that parents remain informed of their child's educational experience.

- Teachers will send REMIND app messages weekly; register with your child's teacher.
- Teachers will send home items in your child's folder; please check back packs each night.
- The coordinator will send monthly emails; therefore, please report any changes to email addresses to the secretary.
- The staff will notify you if your child is involved in a minor accident, such as a fall on the playground; therefore, please report changes in cell phone numbers.

Please let us know if you are not receiving adequate information.

## **Health**

### **Screenings**

During the school year your child will receive vision, hearing, dental, and physical screenings. We will utilize your child's assessment information to ensure that he/she has a quality experience at the Early Learning Center.

### **Medications**

The Board of Education recommends that medication will be administered by the parent or guardian at home. However, if under exceptional circumstances a child is required to take oral medication, board policy requires that only the school nurse or a trained designee will administer the medication, **including non-prescription over the counter medicines, in compliance with the following procedures:**

1. Written instruction signed by the parent or guardian and physician will be required and will include:
  - Name of student
  - Name of medication, including prescription number
  - Purpose of medication
  - Time to be administered
  - Dosage
  - Possible side effects
  - Termination date for administering the medication
  - Medication must be in the original container or prescription bottle from the pharmacy with correct information concerning name, doctor, dosage and times.
2. The school nurse or trained designee will:
  - Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication
  - Keep a record of the administration of the medication
  - Keep medication in a locked cabinet
  - Return unused medication to parent or guardian only
3. The parent or guardian will assume responsibility for informing the school director of any changes in the student's health or change in medication.
4. The school administrator will retain the discretion to reject request for administration of medication.

**\*Parents must bring all medication to the office immediately upon arrival on the school campus.**

### **Toilet Training**

Parents should complete all toilet training prior to entrance into the Early Learning Center. The staff work closely with parents of students with special needs to help them meet goals for toilet training. For the health and safety of others, parents will be asked to supply pull-ups for any child who repeatedly soils their clothing during naptime. Under some circumstances, parents will be called to school to assist their child in cleaning themselves after toilet accidents.

### **Nutrition**

Our district's Child Nutrition Department works hard to provide free well-balanced meals, including breakfast, lunch, and snack. If your child requires a special diet due to medical reasons, please notify the office and communicate with the teacher.

We stress the importance of hydration for proper brain function and encourage all parents to send a reusable water bottle to school with their child's name clearly written on the outside. Students have access to cold, filtered water during the school day.

### **School Treats (Birthdays, Celebrations, etc.)**

Birthdays are certainly special days! In the best interest of health (allergies), nutrition, and parent choice, if you wish to send treats on your child's birthday, the treats must be wrapped in individual take-home bags. This allows parents to monitor the child's diet.

On rare occasions, the teacher may plan a class party that includes food; however, teachers will notify parents in advance to provide them an opportunity to decline.

### **Safety and Security**

The Early Learning Center expects all adults to interact with one another in a professional manner as role models for our students. The policy is extended to include visitors.

Unreasonable or disorderly conduct, language, or mannerisms that threaten, intimidate, demean, harass, provoke staff or parents are not acceptable. Violence, or threats of violence displayed, plainly stated, or implied, is not tolerated by any adults on campus.

### **Tobacco, Weapons, Firearms**

The Early Learning Center abides by the policies of the Phenix City School Board, which promote healthy, safe environments. Therefore, all buildings and properties are to be free from and prohibit the use/distribution of smoke, tobacco, alcohol, or illicit drugs.

Possession of firearms on school property is considered a felony, and **ONLY** allowed by law enforcement. Other items considered weapons are not allowed on the premises.

### **Surveillance Cameras**

To help ensure safety and security throughout the school day, surveillance cameras are in place at the Early Learning Center. Students and visitors are monitored daily both inside and outside the school building.

### **Inclement Weather**

For the safety of all involved, students will **NOT** be released to a parent, or any other adult on their list, during a severe weather warning. Rather, we suggest that the parent comes inside to wait for clearance.

On some occasions, during significant rain showers or looming thunder storms near dismissal time, we will release students early to parents waiting in car line.

### **Notification Regarding Asbestos Containing Material (Public Law 99-519)**

The United States Environmental Agency has established regulations regarding asbestos containing materials in school buildings. These regulations (Public Law 99-519) require certain action to occur in response to any asbestos containing material found in our schools. The Phenix City Board of Education has had an asbestos management program in

place for several years. The Phenix City Board of Education had a re-inspection performed at all of their facilities in compliance with these regulations, and an asbestos management plan was developed. The plan describes in detail how any asbestos will be minimized. Students, parents, teachers, and others are invited to review this plan available in the director's office. Should you have any questions or desire further information, please contact the director.