

**Conejo Valley
Unified School District**

State Preschool
Parent Handbook
2020-2021



The Safe, Friendly, Respectful Place

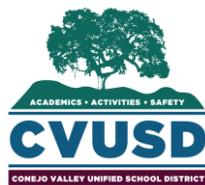


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CVUSD Preschool Program Philosophy

The staff and administration at CVUSD State Preschool know that young children thrive in safe, friendly and respectful environments. These elements are foundational and at the core of our program's philosophy; a philosophy that fosters a child-centered curriculum and is based on the guiding principles of the California Preschool Curriculum Framework.

- Relationships are central.
- Play is the primary context for learning.
- Learning is integrated.
- Intentional teaching enhances children's learning experiences.
- Family and community partnerships create meaningful connections.
- Individualization of learning includes all children.
- Responsiveness to culture and language supports children's learning.

The multi-age opportunity, along with parent participation, promotes empathy, self-regulation and leadership development. We offer care and curriculum that is age appropriate for children's developmental needs in a rich setting allowing for exploration, creativity, problem-solving, science, math, and language acquisition through play, group activities and individual choice.

Mission Statement

"To build a strong foundation for families with young children in the Conejo Valley by providing early care and education; and connections to wellness services for healthy families and a stronger community."

Motto:

**"Educating the mind without educating the heart
is not education at all." Aristotle**

Our Agency

CVUSD Preschool staff have specialized training in early education. Teachers have at least 24 units in Early Childhood Education and hold a Teacher Permit from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Assistant Teachers have at least 12 units in Early Childhood Education and hold Assistant Permits. New employees are provided an orientation to guide them to understand how agency policies relate to their respective job descriptions. We support continuous staff growth by assessing the needs of the staff and providing professional development activities as needed.

All children will be assessed within 60 days of enrollment and every 6 months thereafter using the California Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP). The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) will be given annually to provide the teachers with constructive feedback for improvement.

The agency will conduct an annual Program Self Evaluation that provides an opportunity to identify areas of need and areas of success. An action plan to achieve success in all areas will be developed and implemented.

Did you know that CVUSD Preschools are licensed? This means that our program is guided by over 100 pages of regulations and laws as set by the state of California. In California, licensing of child care businesses is handled through the Child Care Licensing Division (CCLD) of the Department of Social Services (DSS). As the state has the authority to inspect our operation, an analyst may visit our site routinely to check in and will also visit us in response to any reported concerns. These inspections may be unannounced and may include interviews of staff, students and parents. As you fill out your enrollment packet you will notice licensing forms. These forms are mandated and require annual updating including your child's Physician Report.

Freedom from Discrimination

We welcome the enrollment of children with disabilities and other special needs. It is the policy of the District to secure for all individuals freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, age, physical or mental handicap, marital status, sex or national origin; lack of English language skills; or sexual harassment.

No Religious Instruction

CVUSD Preschool refrains from religious instruction and worship in our preschool program in accordance with State Law regarding Funding Terms and Conditions for agencies contracting with the California State Department of Education.

Open Door Policy

CVUSD State Preschool maintains an open door policy and welcomes parent suggestions and concerns. Parents are always encouraged to speak with either the Assistant Director or Program Director.

City Center – 805-494-8100

EARTHs – 805-498-3686

University – 805-241-5410

Uniform Complaints

It is the intent of CVUSD State Preschool to fully comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Individual agencies, organizations, students and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding CVUSD State Preschool allegations of unlawful discrimination (Ed Code sections 200 and 220 and Government Code section 11135) in any program or activity funded directly by the state or receiving federal or state financial assistance. Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with the State Department of Education.

Early Learning and Care Division

Compliant Coordinator

1430 N Street, Suite 3410

Sacramento, CA 95814

Parent Appeal Information

For general information on parent appeal rights and responsibilities please visit The California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/parentappealinformation.asp>.

Policies and Procedures

The Conejo Valley Unified School District State Preschool is funded by the California Department of Education to subsidize families for the State preschool program.

The California Department of Education regulations require that certain information and documentation be provided by families requesting to receive state funded preschool or childcare services. This information is confidential and necessary in order to process your application and to establish eligibility.

Provided you meet the requirements to qualify for State Preschool, your child(ren) will be placed on an eligibility list only after all intake forms and necessary documentation has been received and certified by authorized CVUSD State Preschool personnel as follows:

Required Documentation

Income Verification

We require that you provide proof of total combined family countable monthly income: all payroll check stubs, or other record of wages issued by an employer for the month preceding the initial certification, an update of the application, or the recertification that establishes eligibility for services.

For full day, full year services, the family is required to report to CVUSD State Preschool when their income exceeds 85% of the State median income.

Countable Income

See Attachment A for countable income

Enrollment

A child must be four or three years old on or before December 1 of the fiscal year he/she is enrolling. Children who have their third birthday on or after December 2 of the fiscal year, may be enrolled on or after their third birthday. Children must be **self-sufficient when toileting (i.e. no diapers or pull ups and able to clean and redress self)** to be admitted to the CVUSD State Preschool program. All children are ready to be self-sufficient while toileting at different ages. Children with disabilities who enroll and whose disability is related to lack of toileting skills will be excluded from this policy.

Priority

Eligibility is established at the time of enrollment by the California Department of Education Regulations. First priority is given to children receiving Child Protective Services and also for children at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Second priority is given to eligible four year olds. Third priority is given to eligible three year olds. Within these priorities, families with the lowest adjusted gross monthly income in relation to family size shall be admitted first regardless of length on waiting list.

Documentation and Determination of Family Size

The adult shall provide supporting documentation regarding the relationship of the child or children to said adult and proof of the birth dates of all children under the age of eighteen (18) in the family, whether or not the program serves them. In addition, the adult will also provide supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family. The number of children shall be documented by providing one of the following, as applicable:

1. Birth certificates;
2. Court order regarding child custody;
3. Adoption documents;
4. Records of Foster Care Placement;
5. School or medical records;
6. County welfare department records; or
7. Other reliable documentation indicating the relationships of the child to the parent.

Eligibility and Need Criteria and Documentation

Eligibility Criteria shall be established by 1, 2, 3 or 4 below:

1. Family is a cash aid recipient
2. Family is income eligible
3. Family is homeless
4. Family has a child who is at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, or receiving child protective services through the county welfare department

Families receiving full-day, full-year services shall meet both the eligibility criteria specified above and the need criteria as specified below.

Need Criteria: full-day, full-year services only

Child Protective Services

If eligibility and need are based on child protective services, then a written referral from a county welfare department, child welfare services worker is required, dated within the six (6) months immediately preceding the date of application for services and certifies that:

1. The child is receiving child protective services and that child care and developmental services are a necessary component of the child protective services plan; and
2. Probable duration of the child protective plan; and

3. The name, address, telephone number, and signature of the child welfare services worker who is making the referral.

Families receiving full-day, full-year services due to the child protective services eligibility are eligible for not less than 12 months. Families may continue to receive full-day, full-year services for child protective services children if the case plan demonstrates continued need and is verified/certified by the county welfare department or a child welfare services worker. A family may also continue in the program if the child's eligibility changes and the family meets other appropriate eligibility criteria.

At Risk of Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation

If eligibility and need are based on the child being at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation, then a written referral from a legally qualified professional from a legal, medical, social service agency, or emergency shelter is required, dated within the six (6) months immediately preceding the date of application for services certifying that:

1. The child is at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation and that the family needs child care and development services; and
2. The probable duration of the at risk situation; and
3. The name, business address, telephone number, and signature of the legally qualified professional from the legal, medical, or social services agency, a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths, a Head Start program, or an emergency or transitional shelter that is making the referral and information that identifies the agency or shelter with whom the individual is associated.

Families receiving full-day services because the eligible child is at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation are eligible for receiving child care and developmental services for not less than 12 months. The family can continue to receive child care and developmental services based on any of the following reasons:

1. The child is receiving protective services and child care and developmental services are part of the case plan.
2. The family meets other need and eligibility criteria pursuant to California EC 8263(a).

The Parent(s) and any other Adult Counted in the Family Size are any of the Following:

Employed, seeking employment, participating in vocational training leading directly to a recognized trade, paraprofession, or profession; family is homeless and seeking permanent housing for family stability; or parental incapacitation.

Documentation of Employment

If the basis of need is employment of the parent(s), the documentation of the parent(s) employment shall include the days and hours of employment. Verification of need based on employment shall consist of one of the following:

- Pay stubs provided to determine income eligibility that indicate the days and hours of employment or if the days and hours of employment are not provided, CVUSD State Preschool shall verify the days and hours by; securing an independent written statement from the employer, telephone the employer and maintain a record, or if the provided pay stubs indicate a total hours of employment per pay period specify on the application for services the days and hours of employment to correlate with the total hours of employment and the parent's need.
- Self-certification of income if the employed parent does not have pay stubs or other record of wages. CVUSD State Preschool shall assess the reasonableness of the days and hours of employment and authorize only the time determined to be reasonable.

Documentation of Self-Employment

If the parent is self-employed the documentation shall consist of parent provided information which includes:

- A declaration of need under penalty of perjury that includes a description of the employment and an estimate of the days and hours worked per week; days and hours worked per week can be demonstrated by one or more of the following: appointment logs, client receipts, job logs, mileage logs, a list of clients with contact information, or similar records and as applicable a copy of a business license, a workspace lease, or a workspace rental agreement. CVUSD State Preschool shall assess the reasonableness of the total number of days and hours requested per week based on the documentation provided.

Unpredictable Hours

If the parent has unpredictable hours of employment, CVUSD State Preschool shall authorize the parent for a variable schedule not to exceed the number of hours determined to be needed per week.

If CVUSD State Preschool is unable to verify need based on the documentation provided, CVUSD State Preschool shall take additional action to verify self-employment that includes contacting the parent's lessor to verify the parent's renting of space, contacting one or more clients whose names and contact information have been voluntarily provided by the parent, or make other reasonable contacts or requests to determine the amount of time for self-employment.

If CVUSD State Preschool is unable to make a reasonable determination of the hours needed, CVUSD State Preschool may divide the parent's self-employment income by the applicable minimum wage. The resulting quotient shall be the maximum hours needed for employment per month.

Documentation of Seeking Employment

If the basis of need is seeking employment, the parent's period of eligibility for child care and developmental services is for not less than 12 months. Services shall occur on no more than five days per week and for less than 30 hours per week. Documentation of seeking employment shall include a written parental declaration signed under penalty of perjury stating that the parent is seeking employment and shall include the parent's plan to secure, change, or increase employment and shall identify a general description of what services will be necessary.

Participation in vocational training

If the basis of need is vocational training, the parent shall provide documentation of the days and hours of vocational training to include:

1. A statement of the parent's vocational goal
2. The name of the training institution that is providing the vocational training
3. The dates that current quarter, semester, or training period, as applicable, will begin and end
4. A current class schedule or document that includes all of the following; the classes in which the parent is currently enrolled in, the days of the week and times of day of the classes, the signature or stamp of the training institutions registrar
5. The anticipated completion date of all required training activities
6. Ongoing eligibility for services based on vocational training is contingent upon making adequate progress. The parent shall provide CVUSD State Preschool with a copy of the parent's official progress report from the most recently completed quarter, semester or training period. In a graded program, earn a 2.0 grade point average; or in a non-graded program, pass the program's requirements in at least 50 percent of the classes or meet the training institution's standard for making progress. The first time the parent does not meet the condition of adequate progress, the parent may continue to receive ongoing services. At the conclusion of this eligibility period, the parent shall have made adequate progress. If the parent has not made adequate progress, the family shall be disenrolled.

Documentation of Homeless

If the basis of eligibility stated on the application for services is homelessness, the documentation of homelessness shall include:

1. A written referral from an emergency shelter or other legal, medical or social service agency; (or)

2. A written parental declaration that the family is homeless and a statement describing the family's current living situation. The period of eligibility for services when the need for services is homelessness is for not less than 12 months.

Documentation of Seeking Permanent Housing

If the basis of need as stated on the application for services is seeking permanent housing for family stability, the parent's eligibility for child care and development services shall be for no less than 12 months. Services shall occur on no more than five days per week and for less than thirty (30) hours per week. Documentation of seeking permanent housing shall include:

1. A written parental declaration signed under penalty of perjury that the family is seeking permanent housing. The declaration shall include the parent's search to plan to secure a fixed, regular, and adequate residence and shall identify a general description of when services will be necessary. If the family is residing in a shelter, services may also be provided while the parent attends appointments or activities necessary to comply with the shelter participation requirements. At any time between the initial certification or recertification a parent may voluntarily request an increase to their certified child care schedule based on provided documentation of employment or on other basis for need as applicable, pursuant to section 18084.2

Documentation of Parental Incapacity

If the basis of need as stated on the application for services is parental incapacity, child care and development services shall not exceed 50 hours per week and documentation shall include

1. A release signed by the incapacitated parent authorizing a legally qualified health professional to disclose information necessary to establish that the parent meets the definition of incapacity ("Parental incapacity" means the temporary or permanent inability of the child's parent(s) to provide care and supervision of the child (ren) for part of the day due to a physical or mental health condition), and needs services
2. The documentation of incapacitation provided by the legally qualified health professional shall include:
 - a. A statement that the parent is incapacitated, that the parent is incapable of providing care and supervision for the child for part of the day, and, if the parent is physically incapacitated, that identifies the extent to which the parent is incapable of providing care and supervision
 - b. The days and hours per week that services are recommended to accommodate the incapacitation, taking into account the age of the child and the care needs. This may include time for the parent's regularly scheduled medical or mental health appointments

- c. The name, business address, telephone number, professional license number, and signature of the legally qualified health professional who is rendering the opinion of incapacitation and, if applicable, the name of the health organization with which the professional is associated
- d. CVUSD State Preschool will contact the legally qualified health professional for verification, clarification, or completion of the provided statement. CVUSD State Preschool shall determine the days and hours of service based on the recommendation of the health professional and consistent with the provision of the article

The period of eligibility for services when the need for services is incapacitation is for not less than 12 months.

Recertification of Eligibility

After initial certification and enrollment, CVUSD State Preschool shall verify eligibility and need and recertify each family/child once each contract period for not less than 12 months.

Families shall be recertified for services by CVUSD no later than 45 calendar days following the last day of the 12-month certification period, which starts with the day CVUSD's authorized representative signed the last application for services.

CVUSD State Preschool must obtain parental release authorizing agency staff to contact the parent's employer(s) to verify income, the parent's stated days and hours of employment, verify the parent's vocational training progress and health professionals to disclose information necessary to establish that the parent meets the definition of incapacity.

Involvement

The school year begins in late August. Once the school year starts, there will be mandatory orientation meetings to review structure, philosophy, calendar, policies and volunteer opportunities and expectations for parent support of the program.

It is important to be aware that as a family enrolled in our program you are in a partnership with your teachers and the program. It is a program requirement that we work as a team in the best interest of your child. We can be most effective in serving your child in the preschool environment with your input, assistance and volunteer time.

Multiple studies have shown that the more actively involved parents are in their children's preschool education, the more successful their children will be in elementary, middle, and high school.

As partners, we will be working together with you in the following ways:

- Teachers will be preparing your children for kindergarten.

- Administrators will be supporting you with any needs you have as parents that fall outside the classroom arena.
- We will be holding Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings to get your input and deliver information.
- Weekly lesson plans are posted providing information regarding how and what your children are learning in the classroom.
- You will have the opportunity to work in the classroom and observe what your children are learning and how capable they are becoming.
- You will have the opportunity to attend PAC meetings and helping out at special events.
- In the case where your child is having difficulty in the classroom, you will meet with the teaching staff and/or administration to create a solution together.

School Hours

You need to bring your child to school on time out of respect for the teachers and parents/children who have arrived at school on time. Your child misses out on greeting his or her teacher and other classmates in a relaxed fashion when they have to rush in late.

For half-day preschool the school year begins in late August. For full day preschool the school year is from July 1 – June 30. Prior to the school year starting there will be mandatory orientation meetings to review structure, philosophy, calendar, policies and volunteer opportunities and expectations for parent support of the program.

For City Center:

- **Half-Day Preschool** Monday-Friday Morning from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Morning children are not to arrive before 8:25 a.m. and need to be picked up promptly at 11:30 a.m.
- **Half-Day Preschool** Monday-Friday Afternoon from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Afternoon children are not to arrive before 12:25 p.m. and need to be picked up promptly at 3:30 p.m.
- There is a mandatory \$1.00 per minute late fee starting after the first five minutes you are late. If there are more than five (5) late drop offs or more than five (5) late pick-ups a Termination Notice of Action will be issued.
- **Full Day Preschool** (State) only available at the City Center. Available Monday-Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. upon verification of need. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged starting at 6:01 p.m.
- If you know you are going to be detained, please notify the school immediately so that we may reassure your child (late fee still applies).

For Earths and University:

- **Half-Day Preschool** Monday-Friday Morning from 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
- Morning children are not to arrive before 8:40 a.m. and need to be picked up promptly at 11:45 a.m.
- **Half-Day Preschool** Monday-Friday Afternoon from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Afternoon children are not to arrive before 12:25 p.m. and need to be picked up promptly at 3:30 p.m.
- There is a mandatory \$1.00 per minute late fee starting after the first five minutes you are late. If there are more than five (5) late drop offs or more than five (5) late pick-ups a Termination Notice of Action will be issued.

Attendance

To obtain the full benefit of the program goals your child is expected to be in class daily and to arrive on time. **Please inform the staff if your child is ill and will be absent. You need to inform us every day that your child will be out.** To alert staff that your child will be out please do so using one of the following methods:

Via our website: www.cvusdpreschool.org "Report an Absence" tab

- OR -

By phone: 805-494-8100 / 805-496-9035

Hours and days of attendance

Children may attend **only** the hours and days indicated on their Notice of Action. Child care is only available as stated on the Confidential Application for Child Development Services and Certification of Eligibility. Center staffing is maintained according to children's contracted attendance. If your days and hours of attendance do not reflect your contract, your child care days and hours of attendance will be amended.

Requirements

Excused absences

Parent must report to the center when a child is absent from the program. A child may be excused from the program for any of the following reasons:

- Parent/child illness, medical appointments included – Children who have chronic (excessive) absences due to illness may be asked to provide documentation from their medical professional.
- Quarantine of the parent/child.
- Family emergency, that is sudden, unexpected and of a short-term nature including illness of sibling, death of a relative, temporary lack of transportation and government appointments, i.e. WIC – **shall be limited to 5 days per incident (except for illness of sibling)**.
- Court ordered visitation – documentation must be provided.
- Best interest days – Excused absences "in the best interest of the child" such as

vacation, time spent with a relative shall be limited to ten (10) days during the year; parent must notify the center and sign the attendance sheet for each occurrence.

- Upon child's return to preschool, parents must sign the attendance sheet and fill in the reason as to why the child was not at school. Authorized staff is allowed to write in reason for absence and sign attendance sheet when notification is given by parent/guardian over the phone.

Unexcused absences

Unexcused absences include: overslept, chose not to bring child, bad weather.

Fees

Full Day Family Fees

The California Department of Education develops a yearly fee schedule based on the State Median Income. Families will be assessed either a flat monthly full-time fee or part-time fee, based on hours of care certified for the month, income, and family size. Families with a certified need of 130 hours or less per month will be assessed a part-time fee while families with a certified need of more than 130 hours per month will be assessed a full-time fee. Fees are charged for contracted hours agreed upon at time of enrollment.

Family Fees are due on the first of the month and will be considered delinquent seven (7) calendar days from the date the fees were due. A Notice of Action for Disenrollment of delinquent fees will be issued to terminate services two (2) weeks from date of notice unless all delinquent fees are paid or a repayment plan is established before the end of the two (2) week period. Paying fees late three times during the year will result in the issuance of a Notice of Action for Disenrollment.

When the family's basis of eligibility is income, the family must notify CVUSD State Preschool within 30 days if their monthly gross income exceeds the 85 percent State Median Income ceiling.

If a check is returned for non-sufficient funds the family can only pay by cash or money order.

Fundraising

There will be a limited amount of fundraising to augment the program each year. We typically have one large fundraiser in the fall. At this time we will ask you to participate or give a donation to help promote our event. There may be other fundraising opportunities throughout the year. Please let us know if you have any ideas that would assist our program.

Reasons for Disenrollment

- A Notice of Action for Disenrollment will be issued if your child exceeds 5 (five) unexcused or unexplained days of absence within a school year. (Refer to "Requirements" listed on previous page.)
- Services will cease if documentation for re-certification is not provided within the allowable time, or when the agency requests any necessary additional documentation.
- Family Fees will be considered delinquent seven (7) calendar days from the date the fees were due. A Notice of Action for Disenrollment of delinquent fees will be generated to cease services two (2) weeks from date of notice unless all delinquent fees are paid or a repayment plan is established before the end of the two (2) week period. Paying your fees late three times during the year may result in the issuance of a Notice of Action for Disenrollment.
- Your child's attendance will be monitored on a daily basis. When unexcused absences reach twenty percent within a one month period, the situation will be monitored by staff and may be cause for dismissal from the program. Illness is excusable and may require a note from a medical professional.
- Classroom behavior or safety issues that have not been resolved after taking the following steps:
 - Consult with the child's parents or legal guardians and teacher to maintain the child's safe participation in the program. The agency will provide available resources to support caregivers regarding challenging behaviors.
 - Inform the parents or legal guardians of a child exhibiting persistent and serious challenging behaviors of the process that the CSPP will use to assist the child in order to safely continue to participate in the program.
 - If the child has an IEP or IFSP, and with the parent or guardian's written consent, consult with the local educational agency (LEA) or the local regional center on how to serve the child.
 - If the child does not have an IEP or IFSP, consider (a) completing a universal screening including social and emotional development, (b) referring the parent or guardian to local community resources, and (c) implementing behavior supports, before referring the child to the LEA to request an assessment to determine the child's eligibility for special education support and services, including a behavior intervention plan.
 - If after following and documenting the reasonable steps referred to above to foster the child's safe participation, and concerns about safe participation remain, the contractor will consult with the child's parents or legal guardians, the child's teacher, and if applicable, the LEA providing special education services to the child.

- If the contractor determines that the child's continued enrollment would present a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children the contractor shall refer the parents or legal guardians to other potentially appropriate placements such as Resource and Referral agencies and programs, or other local referral services available in their community.
 - Once the reasonable steps outlined above have been completed, the contracting agency may then disenroll the child, subject to the due process requirements and procedures identified in 5 CCR sections 18119–18122.
- A current physical and TB test must be completed within 30 days of enrollment or your child will be terminated from the program.

Health

Your child's health is important to us. It is mandatory that the teacher perform a health inspection when your child arrives at school. If there are any indications that your child is ill or has been ill within the last 24 hours, the teacher may fill out a *Health Inspection Checklist Form* before sending your child home with you.

For any child that has been sick: Your child may return to school when he/she has been fever-free (without medication) or has had no diarrhea or has not vomited in 24 hours. In the case of a communicable disease, treatment and a doctor's note is required to return to school.

Children who are absent due to a serious injury or following a surgery are required to bring a doctor's note verifying that child is able to come back to school and whether or not the doctor has recommended any restrictions. If there are any restrictions that are not feasible in a child care setting, the child will have to remain out of the center, until such time that he can return without restrictions.

Remember to call the center when your child will be absent and for every day your child will be absent.

In the best interest of your child and his/her classmates, please keep your child home from school if he/she has:

- Any sign of head lice and/or nits. A child may not return until treated.
- A fever above 101° F or vomited during the previous twenty-four hours.
- Heavy nasal discharge.
- Been fussy, cranky and generally not him/herself.
- Symptoms of a communicable disease.
- Unexplained rash or skin eruption.
- Had excessive diarrhea during the previous twenty-four hours.

- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) - cannot return until after treatment has been initiated.

“Exclusion from School Criteria” comes from Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards.

During any medical or dental emergency or in case of illness or accidental injury we will immediately attempt to contact a parent or guardian. If we cannot reach a parent we will call 911. **Please keep school personnel up to date on current contact information. In case of severe injury, 911 will be called first.**

Immunizations, Physicians Reports, and Records

The Center is required to have on file a physician’s report verifying overall good health and required immunizations. Current information on immunization status must be maintained while the child is enrolled. A current TB test must be on file or the child's physician must determine no risk factors are present.

Exemption to immunizations is only made for the following reasons:

- Medical Reasons: A doctor's written statement is required.

Medication Policy

The Conejo Valley Unified School District’s policies and protocol regarding medication are.

When it is determined that a child in our care needs to be on a temporary or long term course of prescribed medicine:

- Parents must have their physician complete a school district “Authorization for Any Medication Taken During School Hours” form.
- The parent and/or a school nurse must provide training for the staff as to the proper administration of the medication, including dosage and delivery.

Staff will not dispense over-the-counter medication.

Sunscreen will be handled on an individual basis. Please see your teacher for a *Permission to Apply Routine Care Products* form.

Safety

The safety of your child(ren) is our most important job and we count on your participation:

- CVUSD State Preschool will not provide any transportation on a daily basis or for any field trip.
- No child will be released to a parent or parent representative who does not have the proper restraint system in place for the child according to state law. California state law requires children to ride in a federally approved baby car seat or child booster seat in the back seat until they are 8 years old.
- Per Kaitlyn’s Law, signed into law in 2001, it is illegal for a child under the age of 6 to be left unattended in a motor vehicle without being attended by someone 12 years or older (California Vehicle Code 15620).

- All CVUSD State Preschool staff members are Mandated Reporters and are obligated to report to Child Protective Services any situation or behavior that is dangerous or can cause harm or injury to a child.

Disaster and Emergency Procedure

Community emergency numbers are posted in each room. In the case of a disaster each classroom will follow the disaster procedure that is posted in the classroom. Each class has a first aid kit and emergency cards in a bag/backpack that will be transported to the prearranged spot on the campus. Children can only be released to those persons identified on their emergency card. Monthly fire/emergency drills are practiced. Our emergency procedures will be covered at the first PAC meeting of the school year.

In case of a local emergency, you may tune in to the following Emergency Alert System radio stations for information:

KVEN 1450 AM

KHAY 100.7 FM

KMLA 103.7 FM (Spanish)

Nutrition

The Conejo Valley Unified School District's Child Nutrition Department offers foods and beverages that represent current nutrition standards and are also served in appropriate portion size for the preschooler. Snacks and lunches are provided at no additional cost. CVUSD Child Nutrition follows guidelines set forth by the **National School Lunch Program**. NSLP guidelines include:

- Calorie ranges are based on science and data on children's food intake
 - Ranges apply on a weekly basis and are averaged over the week
- GRAIN PRODUCTS
 - Must be 51% or more whole grain
 - Do not contain refined sugar
 - Low in fat and sodium
- SUGAR
 - Products must have less than 35% sugar by weight (CVUSD's average menu is less than 25%)
- FAT
 - No more than 35% calories from fat
 - No more than 10% calories from saturated fat
 - No trans fat
- SODIUM
 - Meals must contain less than 800 mg sodium
- JUICE
 - Must be pasteurized 100% juice; no sugar added
 - Snacks; juice cannot be served when milk is served as the only other component

- BREAKFAST CEREAL
 - Must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce
- MILK
 - Children between 12 and 23 months should be served whole milk
 - Children two years and older can only be served low fat (1%) or nonfat (skim) milk

Two daily nutritious snacks from a variety of food groups are provided as well as lunch for full day children. Drinks include water, juice and low-fat (1%) milk for children over the age of two years.

We maintain a **"low sugar" and "no nut" policy**. Please inform staff of any food allergies your child may have.

Tree Nut List:

Walnut, Almond, Hazelnut, Cashew, Pistachio, Brazil nuts, Beechnut, Butternut, Coconut, Ginkgo nut, Lychee nut, Macadamia nut, Pecan Pesto, Pine nut, Praline.

Since we have such a strong nutrition policy and do not serve sugary snacks, no treats may be brought into the classroom or exchanged at school for Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day or Easter or any other holiday.

Birthday invitations may not be passed out at school, unless the entire class is invited to the child's party.

Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures

- A designated sign-in form is used by each classroom on a daily basis.
- All parents must sign their children in and out each day noting the exact time of arrival and departure.
- Your legal signature must be used when signing in and out.
- Anyone other than the parent picking up the child **MUST** be at least 18 years old and be listed on the child's Emergency Card and must have a photo ID.
- As a courtesy please notify your teacher when someone other than you will be picking up your child.
- In the case of a situation where a child will be picked up and returned during the day, the parent **MUST** sign out and back in again on the same day.
- PLEASE NOTE: Sign-In/Out times are not an appropriate time to meet with teaching staff. If you would like to schedule a meeting with your child's teacher please speak to your teacher to set up a meeting time.

Parent Participation

- Parent volunteers are highly appreciated in each classroom. Teachers will provide a sign-up sheet in the classroom.
- Please give the teachers a 24 hour notice if you know you will not be able to

work the hours for which you signed up. All parent/adult volunteers must have a current negative TB test, show immunization records for influenza, pertussis and measles, and have a Statement of Health on file with CVUSD State Preschool before being allowed to volunteer in the classroom.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- Working with the children and teachers in the classroom and on the play yard.
- Assisting with snack preparation and clean-up.
- Playground, yard, garden and classroom maintenance, as needed.
- Creating or assisting in special projects in your child's classroom.
- Attend Parent meetings.
- Work on fundraising opportunities.
- Share hobbies, interests or talents with the children in the classroom.

Parent Advisory Committee

Each preschool site has a Parent Advisory Committee and parent participation is strongly encouraged. Your involvement is extremely valuable and will help to strengthen CVUSD State Preschool while increasing leadership skills and support for all children. Meetings will be held quarterly and are an opportunity for you to:

- Share your ideas.
- Make suggestions.
- Form committees or participate in group work.
- Plan fundraisers.
- Learn about services available to you and your families.
- Get information about how and what your children are learning.
- Find out how you can help.
- Hear from your teachers and learn about general classroom updates.

Clothing and Personal Items

Children are actively involved in hands-on experiences at preschool that are frequently messy and clothing can become stained. Please think of your child's comfort and provide simple clothing, free of complicated fastenings. Please consider your child's needs when using the bathroom. Buckles and belts, etc. or other types of clothing that take a lot of time to remove can cause accidents. Clothing should be washable and shoes should be sturdy and close-toed. Sneakers are the preferred footwear for preschool.

We require that you:

- Provide one **full change of clothing** for your child in a clear zip-lock bag.

-
- Label the bag and each item of clothing with your child's name.
 - Do not allow your child to bring toys from home, except on prearranged sharing days.

Toileting Procedures

Children will wash their hands after toileting. If the need arises for a child to change wet or soiled clothes, please remember to return an extra set of clothing for your child's cubby. Children must be able to clean and redress themselves after toileting in the preschool setting.

Separation

How each of us handles separation and new situations varies from person to person... and this is the same for children.

As parents, you can help children with the transition to school in a variety of different ways:

- Reassure the child that you will be back when school is over.
- Place emphasis on what the child is going to do at school rather than what your activities will be while he/she is at school.
- See that the child is involved in the specific activity or is in the hands of a teacher before you leave him/her.
- Always tell your child when you are leaving.
- Avoid prolonged good byes. Leaving school campus immediately after saying "good bye" to your child is recommended.
- Ask the teacher for help in separation. They are there to help the child through the sadness of separation.

Please notify your teachers if there are any significant changes or events in your and your child's life. We may see some changes of behavior in class and with your support we will be able to help your child handle the changes that are occurring.

Educational Goals

Developmentally Appropriate

We believe that children are unique, develop at different rates and are interested in different things during the early years. We allow for these individual differences by taking into account each child's current stage of development, ability and language when planning activities. We are a preschool. It is our job to teach pre-reading skills, pre-writing skills, and pre-math skills.

Social-Emotional Development

We believe that children must form close, nurturing relationships in order to build trust. We use strategies from the Center for Social Emotional Health to support:

- Promotion of healthy social emotional development
- Prevention of challenging behaviors
- Development of individualized intervention plans when needed
- Children learn best when their environment and daily routines are:
 - Predictable
 - Flexible
 - Child-centered

Language and Literacy Development

Young children's language grows when teachers provide:

- Chances for meaningful conversations
- Narration about everything that is going on in the classroom
- New vocabulary words
- Information
- Songs, poems, rhymes and chants

Books are available throughout the classroom, as well as a designated book area.

Children are given many opportunities to express language through dictation of their drawings and journaling.

English Language Development

We know that some of the children in our classrooms are in the process of learning English. We want to make them feel welcome and encourage them to use English in their own time and to use it as they feel comfortable.

Mathematics

Math is a natural part of the preschool environment.

We create opportunities to incorporate math into everything we do:

- Math vocabulary with the children, including *more, less, smaller, bigger*
- Counting (how many children are at school today?)
- Setting the table for snack, serving snack, i.e. take two crackers and one scoop of yogurt
- Sorting
- Classifying
- Creating patterns
- Measuring

Visual and Performing Arts

Children are given daily opportunities to:

- Paint
- Draw
- Play and listen to music
- Pretend play

Physical Development

Each child grows at his own pace in the physical area as in other areas of development. Teachers enhance physical development for large muscle development by encouraging and offering various activities including:

- Running
- Leaping
- Hopping
- Sliding
- Climbing

Small muscle development is promoted through:

- Use of small manipulatives: puzzles, building materials, writing practice
- Use of eating utensils
- Sensory activities such as pouring water and playing with sand, as well as using play dough
- Squeezing wet sponges and using small tongs and tweezers

Health

We encourage children to become aware of the basic skills needed to develop healthy bodies. Children learn about healthy habits through activities and curriculum integration.

Play materials, books and charts that reflect this area of development are available to the children throughout the classroom. Discussions take place about nutrition, the growing body, dental hygiene, and being safe in their physical environment.

Healthy habits are as equally important as other areas of curriculum. We promote good habits from the start by providing foods that are nutritional. Snack and meal times are used as an opportunity for children to socialize (practice manners, take turns, and engage in conversations). Food is served family-style with children and teaching staff eating together as a group.

Our approach to health allows children to participate in self-help activities that promote healthy practices such as: washing hands upon entering the classroom, before and after meals and after using the toilet.

Individual Development and Identity

For preschoolers, we stress that they are part of a community and help them to understand that it is each one of their jobs to help take care of each other and their classroom environment as well as the outdoor environment.

Planting and taking care of a garden are ways that teachers may help the children understand that they are part of nature and what they do can affect other living things. Teachers help children practice turn-taking and seeing situations through the perspective of others which helps children become a part of the classroom community.

Science

Teachers provide activities for the children that include:

- Scientific inquiry
- Hands-on/minds-on playful experiences that help them understand how things work
- Cause and effect

The children learn about the physical environment when they study rocks, volcanoes, leaves, bugs and other things found in nature.

They use scientific tools such as magnifying glasses, scales and rulers. These activities foster curiosity and questioning and help children to make hypothesis that they can test.

They study life science when they have fish or other pets in the classroom.

Parent Conferences

We hold Parent Teacher Conferences two times per year (late October and late April) to share information with you regarding your child's development and to let you know what we are doing in the classroom to prepare them for kindergarten.

We use a developmental assessment tool called Desired Results System, which evaluates children in the following areas:

- Self and Social Development
- Language and Literacy Development
- English Language Development
- Cognitive Development
- Mathematical Development
- Physical Development
- Health

In order for you to be an active partner in your child's education, we provide a series of three workshops that highlight your children and what is happening in the classroom. It is important that you attend these workshops.

Desired Results Workshop I: How Your Children Learn Through Play (September)

Desired Results Workshop II: What Happens at the Parent Teacher Conference? and How You Can Contribute to your Child's Success (October)

Desired Results Workshop III: Kindergarten Transition---Your Child is Ready! (January)

Discipline

"To teach, to guide; a state of order maintained by training..."

"If a child doesn't know how to read,
We teach."

"If a child doesn't know how to swim,
We teach."

"If a child doesn't know how to multiply,
We teach."

"If a child doesn't know how to drive,
We teach."

"If a child doesn't know how to behave,
We teach."

As Early Childhood Educators, we believe that Discipline means teaching and guiding children. We rely on techniques from the Teaching Pyramid to help children learn social skills and develop emotional competence. The behavior expectations that we have for all children and the adults in our program are that they are **Safe, Friendly and Respectful**. We spend a lot of time in the classroom teaching these skills and supporting your child's Social and Emotional skills.

We understand that discipline and punishment are not the same. We also recognize that every moment is a teaching moment and therefore, discipline is happening constantly. Punitive and negative reactionary responses such as "time out" and the habitual use of the words "no," and "don't" are to be avoided. No form of corporal punishment is ever allowed. (Please refer to the appendix, *Tell Me What to Do Instead!*)

All children have the right to be treated with respect and to play and learn in a safe environment. Teaching staff will establish classroom expectations from the first day of class. They will use the Teaching Pyramid Expectations of Safe, Friendly and Respectful.

Staff will:

- Create a safe and welcoming environment for every child and family.
- Model and encourage conflict resolution skills.
- Encourage respect for others' feelings.
- Recognize the strengths in each child.
- Help children to problem solve first with adult help and then on their own.

We know that all children do not come to preschool knowing how to be a preschooler or how to make friends. We recognize that it is our job to teach them how to express their feelings, ask a teacher or another child for help and how to be a good friend.

However we will not allow any child to:

- **Hurt him/herself or any member of the staff.**
- **Use habitual profanity or vulgarity.**
- **Be consistently and persistently uncooperative.**
- **Run away from the teachers or leave the school premises by himself/herself.**

When teachers have a child who is not being safe, poses a danger to himself/herself or others, or uses inappropriate language on a consistent basis, we expect to meet with the parent(s) and resolve the problem together. If these problems persist, you will be asked to pick up your child immediately.

When your child exhibits challenging behaviors that are not harmful or causing injury to himself/herself or others, but are affecting the routine of the classroom, teaching staff will work with you and your child to replace the behavior with more appropriate behaviors that align with being Safe, Friendly and Respectful.

During the process of working with your child we may require that you attend a series of the *Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)*. This will help you help your child to become more successful at school and at home. We may ask you to partake in an Ages and Stages Questionnaire that will help identify your child's strengths and where we can concentrate our intervention efforts.

As a last resort, CVUSD State Preschool will release your child from our program and attempt to find a school placement that can support your child's needs.

Supplementary Services Provided by CVUSD State Preschool

- Information and Referral to community services
- Literacy Programs – Literacy Workshops, Snuggle Up and Read Program
- Speech, language, behavioral health and special education referrals
- Information on Car Seat Installation and Education

Sexual Harassment Policy

The CVUSD Governing Board is committed to maintaining an educational environment that is free from harassment. The Board prohibits sexual harassment of students by other students, employees or other persons, at school or at school-sponsored or school-related activities. The Board also prohibits retaliatory behavior or action against persons who complain, testify, assist or otherwise participate in the complaint process established pursuant to this policy and the administrative regulation.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that any complaints regarding sexual harassment are immediately investigated in accordance with administrative regulation. When the Superintendent or designee has determined that harassment has occurred, he/she shall take prompt, appropriate action to end the harassment and to address its effects on the victim.

ATTACHMENT A: Countable Income

Countable income shall include but not limited to:

- Gross wages
- Salary Advances
- Commissions
- Overtime
- Tips
- Bonuses
- Gambling/lottery winnings
- Wages for seasonal work
- Public cash assistance
- Self-employment income
- Disability
- Workers compensation
- Unemployment
- Spousal support
- Child support received
- Financial assistance for housing or car payments
- Survivor and retirement benefits
- Dividends
- Interest on bonds
- Income from estates or trusts
- Net rental income or royalties
- Rent for room within the family's residence
- Foster care grants, payments or allowances
- Financial assistance received for the care of child living with an adult who is not the child's biological or adoptive parent
- Veterans pension, pensions or annuities
- Inheritance
- Allowance for housing or automobiles provided as part of compensation
- Portion of student grants or scholarships not identified for educational purposes
- Insurance or court settlements for lost wages or punitive damages
- Net proceeds from sale of real property
- Stocks
- Inherited property; or other enterprise for gain

Tell Me What To Do Instead!

Family Version



COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY

1. Tell your child what to do instead of what not to do.
2. Show your child by demonstrating, modeling, or using a picture of the action.
3. Clearly and simply state what you expect your child to do.
4. Remember young children use inappropriate behavior because they may not understand the social rules and/or because they are unable to consistently apply what they are in the process of learning.
5. Talk to young children using language they understand. Young children may not understand a word like “don’t” because it is a short word for “do not” and he/she may not know what the “negation” of a word means.
6. Encourage your child in a way that lets him/her know that he/she is exhibiting the desired behavior. Use positive, descriptive acknowledgement while the child is making an effort or is doing the desired behavior.
7. Some children will respond better to more subdued expressions, and acknowledging them in a “matter of fact” way might be more effective.
8. For the most part, be enthusiastic and generous with encouragement. Most children can never get enough!

Examples:

Avoid	Say/Model	Positive Descriptive Acknowledgement
Don't run!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walk ▪ Use walking feet ▪ Stay with me ▪ Hold my hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You're holding my hand. That is so respectful. ▪ You walked carefully when carrying your drink. You made a safe choice. ▪ You are so friendly to walk beside me and keep me company.
Stop climbing!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keep your feet on the floor ▪ Do you need something up high? Let's find a safe way to reach it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wow! You have both feet on the floor! You are being safe. ▪ You asked for help to get something, you are being careful. ▪ You really like climbing! I'm glad we went to the park.
Don't touch!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look with your eyes ▪ Keep your hands down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You were really listening; you are looking with your eyes! ▪ You kept your hands down. That is respectful.
No yelling!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a calm voice ▪ Use an inside voice ▪ Turn the volume down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You are using a calm voice! You look happy. ▪ You are using a soft voice inside the house. That will help Daddy to finish his nap.
Stop whining!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a calm voice ▪ Talk so that I can understand you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You are talking so clearly! That is so easy to listen to. ▪ You told me with your words what was wrong. That is helpful. ▪ You used your words. How respectful!
Don't stand on the chair!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sit on the chair ▪ Chairs are for sitting ▪ Do you need something up high? Let's find a safe way to reach it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You are sitting on the chair. What a careful girl. ▪ You were responsible when you sat in the chair. ▪ You stood on the ladder. You chose to be safe.
Don't hit!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gentle hands ▪ Hands are for playing, eating, and hugging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When you used gentle hands you were being respectful. ▪ You used your hands for clapping! You like being safe. ▪ You are hugging her. What a friendly girl.
No coloring on the wall!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Color on the paper ▪ Put the paper on the easel if you want to color standing up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wow. You are coloring so carefully. You are focused. ▪ You put the paper on the easel. That is being responsible. ▪ You are an artist standing at the easel.
Don't throw your toys!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Play with the toys on the floor ▪ Toys stay close to the ground ▪ Please keep the toys on the table ▪ If you are finished, please put the toys away. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You are playing with the toys on the floor. So safe. ▪ You decided to keep the toys on the table. That will keep them out of the vacuum cleaner. ▪ You put the toys away all by yourself! It looks like you are finished with those. What will you do now?
Stop playing with your food!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Food goes on the spoon and then in your mouth ▪ Say “all done” when you are finished eating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You're using your spoon. You're being careful. ▪ You said “all done.” That is helpful. ▪ You are practicing manners by eating your food with a spoon and fork.
Don't play in the water/sink!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wash your hands ▪ If you're finished washing your hands, please dry them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You washed your hands. What a healthy guy! ▪ You followed the hand washing steps! You try hard.