

## **ELA Handbook Supplement**

***This Handbook provides information unique to the Early Learning Academy and is supplemental to the District Student/Parent/Activities Handbook.***

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is expected of all students on days school is in session. If a child will be absent from school on a given day, parents are asked to call the school office at 324-1841. Morning session, please call by 7:40 a.m.; afternoon session, please call by 12:00 p.m. If a student is absent without previously notifying the school, parents should expect a phone call from the principal's office. Regular attendance is essential for your child to receive maximum benefit from the preschool program.

### **Absences Due to Illness**

The school will contact parents if a student becomes ill at school.

### **Planned Absences**

Parents who know in advance that a student will be absent must call the school or send a written note at the earliest possible date. Parents should make every attempt to schedule medical and other appointments after school hours when possible.

### **Enrollment**

Enrollment at the Early Learning Academy is for children living within the boundaries of Lexington Public Schools. In the event that ELA's enrollment is not at capacity as established under Nebraska Department of Education's Rule 11, children living outside of the district will be allowed to attend. At any time if ELA's capacity exceeds enrollment limits required for compliance with Rule 11, non-resident students may be removed from ELA's roster and the child will not be able to continue attending ELA. Children living outside of the district must be enrolled at the ELA before the end of the 3rd quarter in order to qualify for option enrollment consideration for kindergarten.

### **Backpacks**

It is requested that parents send a backpack with their child for notes and papers to bring home from school. If your child does not have a backpack, please check your child's cubicle each day for papers and notes.

### **Dress Code (Policy 5031)**

Students must come to school dressed in clean, neat and appropriate clothing to conform with educational standards. Children must be toilet trained in order to attend preschool and, therefore, should be dressed in clothing that enables them to use the restroom independently and without assistance. Dress, grooming and personal conduct can have a strong influence on how others react to an individual. If a style demonstrates that it is disruptive to the educational process, constitutes a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the child or others, or is in violation of a statute, it will not be permitted in school. Clothing that advertises alcohol, drugs, shows disrespect, or promotes violence, i.e., gang membership or is not acceptable school attire.

Students may be directed by the principal to wear a face covering to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in school. If so directed, students are expected to wear their face covering each day. Exceptions may be granted based on a student's IEP or 504 plan or other relevant factors as determined by the principal.

### **Early Dismissal**

Early dismissal times are listed on the calendar and in the school newsletter. All early dismissals are at 1:30 p.m. unless otherwise decided by the superintendent. On days of early dismissal for schools within the district, there will be no preschool classes for children in the afternoon.

### **Entrance Age**

Children accepted for enrollment into the Early Learning Academy must be at least three years old by July 31. Children who are four years old by July 31 are enrolled first. Children three years old by July 31 are enrolled based on space available.

### **Food Service Program (Policy 3012)**

The school district provides a food service program that is designed to provide adequate nutrition and an educational experience for students. Children who attend preschool classes in the morning receive breakfast at no cost to the family. Children who attend preschool classes in the afternoon receive lunch at no cost to the family.

### **Notice of Non-discrimination**

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20230-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### **Parking**

There are sufficient parking spaces near the Early Learning Academy at the Opportunity Center for parents to park their vehicles when bringing children to school and picking them up after school. Please park only in designated areas and avoid parking in areas reserved for handicapped, school bus loading/unloading and emergency vehicles.

### **Playground Rules**

1. Contact games that may cause injury will not be permitted.
2. Play is permitted only in designated areas.
3. Misconduct on the playground may result in disciplinary action.
4. If an object travels outside the play area, students must obtain permission from the supervisor on duty before the object may be retrieved.
5. Students should be properly dressed with snow boots, caps and gloves during inclement weather.
6. Students are not allowed to exchange boots, gloves, coats, hats or any other garments without permission from parents or school officials.

7. When the playground area is muddy or wet, students should keep out of those areas. Students may be required to stay on the hard surface areas of the playground.
8. Personal property (footballs, softballs, basketballs, etc.) will not be allowed at school.
9. Students will form a line and enter the building in an orderly manner.

### **School Day Schedule**

Morning Classes: 7:40-11:10 a.m.

Afternoon Classes: 12:00-3:30 p.m.

Children are expected to arrive on time for the start of school each day and must be picked up within five minutes after the session ends. Upon arrival at school, please keep your child with you in the parking area and inside the building until the child is checked in and under the supervision of school staff. At the end of the session, a child will only be released to a parent or a person authorized by parents. It is important that children are closely supervised. Upon arrival and departure, please keep your child with you at all times.

In case of an emergency that a child cannot be picked up at the designated time, please contact the teacher or school office to inform them of the situation. If a child is consistently not picked up promptly at the end of the day and contact cannot be made with a parent, guardian or other authorized individual, Child Protective Services or law enforcement will be called to assist in reuniting the child with their parent or guardian.

### **Transportation Services**

The district operates school buses as a convenience for students and parents. They represent a substantial investment, and students are expected to care for and respect them.

### **Transportation to School**

Except for those who qualify for certain programs under state and federal law, transportation is not provided to children who attend preschool classes.

### **Visitors**

Parents are encouraged to participate in the early childhood program. You are welcome to visit school and become involved in your child's education. Please feel free to talk with staff members and learn how you can help your child have a successful school experience. If you plan to visit school, please contact your child's teacher.

### **Mission and Goals for Preschool**

The mission of Lexington Early Learning Academy is to help children acquire the knowledge, skills and behaviors necessary for them to enter kindergarten ready to learn and enable them to have a successful school experience.

### **Curriculum Objectives**

The preschool program is child-centered and designed to enhance a child's social,

emotional, intellectual, language, physical and aesthetic development in a play-oriented environment. The curriculum holds high expectations for all children and is developmentally appropriate. Although play-oriented in nature, learning activities are designed to meet academic objectives described in the curriculum. Health, nutrition and safety are an integral part of the program.

### **Discipline Policy**

The Early Learning Academy uses a positive and proactive approach to helping all children develop social/emotional skills. We use the Pyramid Model to ensure that all teachers and staff use effective and culturally responsive teaching practices. The Pyramid Model (Positive Behavior Support - PBS) is guided by a leadership team that uses data for decision making, builds partnerships with families, and identifies challenging behaviors.

In our program, we have established the following program-wide expectations for all children and adults:

#### **Be Safe—Be Respectful—Be Responsible—Be a Friend**

All staff members teach children about these expectations. These expectations can also be taught at home. Children are more capable of understanding and meeting these expectations when we all work together.

The Pyramid Model Framework involves “best practices” to teach children how to get along and use skills to solve their own problems. The Pyramid Model uses three main stages of learning:

1. Show and tell (explain expectations to children)
2. Practice makes perfect (planned activities or teachable moments that implements the skill)
3. You Got It! (children use the skill without prompting)

The model provides a plan for identifying challenging behaviors, an understanding of their purpose and function, and developing a support plan to help change the behavior and teach new skills, if needed. If a child has behavior challenges that are a concern:

- We will work with the family to develop and implement a plan to teach the child social/emotional skills.
- If dangerous or harmful behaviors occur, we will continue to work with the family and district specialists.

**We encourage families to ask questions if they have concerns about their child’s development.**