

Peoria Unified School District

# ECCEL

Early Childhood Center for  
Excellence in Learning



Parent Handbook  
2022-2023

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## **Early Childhood Center for Excellence in Learning (ECCEL)**

Welcome to Peoria Unified School District's ECCEL Preschool Program. The whole of what we offer children on a daily basis nurtures them physically, academically, emotionally, and socially. Our academic nurturing involves developing pre-reading and pre-writing skills as well as math readiness skills, executive function skills such as curiosity, attention, persistence, and group dynamics. Traditionally the emphasis has been on academic skills. Children need academic skills at the appropriate level, but it is not the sole criteria by which we, as parents or teachers, should judge the worth of a child or the child's experiences. Our program also concentrates on socialization, motor skills, language and the arts. We want each child to begin to discover what a fabulous amount of things his or her brain and body will allow him or her to do.

There is no way we can teach young children everything they will need to know for the future. In the first place, what they will need to know has not yet been discovered. The thing we can do is to foster the inquiring mind, the problem solver, the questioner. To this end we emphasize experience and experiments which will allow the questioner to answer his or her own questions. We want to teach a child HOW to think, not WHAT to think. Having DISCOVERED the answer, YOUR CHILD WILL NEVER FORGET IT!

The staff welcomes your child and family to our program. We have prepared this handbook so that you will know what you can expect of us and what we will expect of you. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. We will be happy to assist you.

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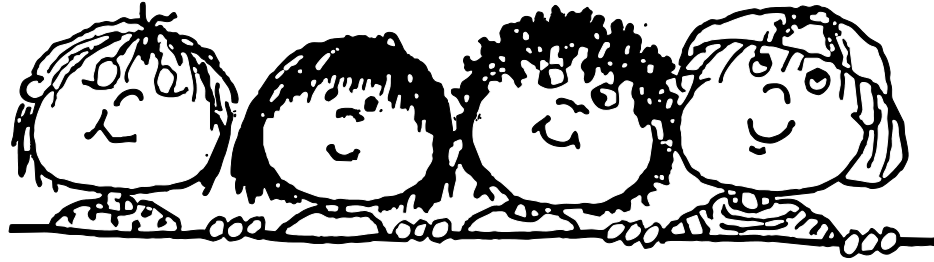


*When You:*

*Cut it for me,  
Write it for me,  
Open it for me,  
Set it up for me,  
Draw it for me or  
Find it for me,*

*All I learn is:*

*that you do it better than me*



## Belief Statement for Preschoolers

We believe that:

- Every child is unique and special with the ability and the right to learn.
- Parents are a child's first and most important teachers.
- A parent/teacher partnership is vital to a child's learning.
- All children need a positive learning environment, love, acceptance, safety, consistency, and positive reinforcement.
- Children learn through play, exploration, and interaction with others and guided activities.
- All school community members promote learning.
- Diversity is valued.

We know that:

- Children learn at different rates and in different ways.
- Children bring different backgrounds and experiences into the learning environment.
- Children need a nurturing environment that promotes strengths and accommodates individual needs.
- Children progress predictably through developmental stages, but at individual rates.
- Parents and teachers together provide a partnership that promotes a positive learning environment.

In the ECCEL Preschool, we:

- Teach to the whole child by ensuring that social, communication, cognitive, adaptive/daily living, and motor skills are modeled and taught.
- Implement programs based on appropriate assessments and parental input.
- Work as a team and collaborate to meet the needs of all children.
- Maintain a multi-cultural learning environment.
- Adapt instruction to enable each child to achieve his/her fullest potential.
- Provide a positive, multi-sensory learning environment.
- Emphasize the process of learning rather than the product.
- Utilize communication/language-based activities.
- Encourage children to strive for independence.
- Provide parents with resources, education, and activities.

## Program Description and Philosophy

The ECCEL Preschool Program will provide a preschool setting that will help the child become a life-long learner through:

- Strengthening social skills and manners.
- Learning to make wise choices.
- Developing responsibility.
- Practicing good listening skills.
- Developing a love of reading through a language and literacy-based curriculum.
- Practicing good health and nutrition habits.
- Exploring his/her world through hands-on experience.

The ECCEL Preschool is a readiness program. That is to say we are interested in developing those needed skills to prepare children for success in elementary school and beyond. It is our belief that at this age it is more important for the child to increase his or her awareness of self and to improve problem solving and observation skills (the abilities of story sequences, memory sorting skills, observation, auditory and visual memory). We want to teach children how to think, not what to think. We feel that in this way the child is ready to learn and understand more once he or she enters kindergarten.

The ECCEL Preschool Program bases classroom activities on the State of Arizona Early Learning Standards. These state standards were developed as a continuum with the state Infant-Toddler Guidelines and kindergarten standards for College and Career Readiness so there is a seamless transition between beginning at birth and through preschool and kindergarten.

## ECCEL Learning Options

ECCEL Preschool provides flexible programming that meets the needs of the whole child – socially, academically, and emotionally – to prepare them to enter kindergarten ready to learn. We believe that children need time to be children and learn best through discovery and play in a language and literacy-based environment that builds skills and challenges thinking. Through a variety of preschool classrooms on elementary school campuses and at Glendale Community College, typically developing and developmentally delayed toddlers, three- and four-year-olds have their individual needs met through interaction with general education teachers, special education teachers and therapists. Preschool staff members collaborate in meeting the needs of all children and readily integrate children across classrooms on a daily basis.

### Preschool Class with a General Education Teacher

Opportunities for preschool participation are available through a variety of half day programs and one full day program, each facilitated through instruction from a general education teacher certified in Early Childhood Education. Most classes are held in three-hour A.M. or P.M. sessions, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and include both three- and four-year-old children. There is a full-day, Monday – Friday program at Glendale Community College for both preschoolers and toddlers.

Preschool programs in general education classrooms are part of the continuum of special education services offered within Peoria Unified School District. Depending on individual needs, children may receive a variety of direct or indirect services from a special education teacher, speech therapist, occupational therapist and/or physical therapist. Services are typically provided using a “push-in” therapy model and occur within the general education environment.

## Preschool Class with a Special Education Teacher

Preschool programs facilitated through instruction from a special education teacher certified in both special education and early childhood education are part of the continuum of special education services within Peoria Unified School District. Most children enrolled and placed in these classrooms have been identified with special education needs and are being serviced through an Individual Education Plan (IEP). As an integral part of the program and provision of services, each morning and afternoon program has the opportunity to enroll "peer model" students. Peer model students are considered to be typically developing and are not eligible for special education services. Classes are held in three-hour A.M. or P.M. sessions, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and include both three- and four-year-old children.

This program incorporates a trans-disciplinary team model for provision of special education services. Trans-disciplinary teams rely on the collaboration of all professional members to share roles and responsibilities in an effort to look at the needs of the whole child when they assess, plan and provide intervention and monitor IEP progress. All participants learn from one another and work together to accomplish the goals of each child. Team members must be willing to share their knowledge with each other and be open to acquiring new skills.

Many children also receive individually determined integrated speech, occupational and physical therapies throughout classroom activities. An integrated approach to therapy services incorporates the use of naturalistic teaching techniques. The daily life in the classroom environment provides opportunities and reinforcers which allow children to develop spontaneous use of skills. Because there are opportunities to teach the same skills in different activities throughout the day, acquisition, generalization and maintenance of skills is more likely to occur. In addition, it allows teachers and staff members to observe therapists modeling techniques for building a child's skills in naturally occurring activities.

## **Child Find**

The preschool CHILD FIND process is established to ensure that all children with suspected developmental delays can be appropriately screened, and if necessary, evaluated, identified, and provided with individualized special education services. If you have concerns about your child's development including vision, hearing, communication, motor, socialization or special health problems call 623-773-6685 and request a preschool CHILD FIND screening.

## Classroom Instruction

### Arizona Early Learning Standards

The Arizona Early Learning Standards align to Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards and were developed to provide a framework for the planning of quality and developmentally appropriate learning experiences for all children three to five years of age. They are common, agreed upon goals and outcomes for teaching and learning. These building blocks illustrate the interconnectedness of emotional, social, language, cognitive and physical development and learning that address the whole child. The standards cover a broad range of skill development and provide a useful instructional foundation for children from diverse backgrounds and with diverse abilities. They are designed to be used to plan creative experiences that support children in reaching their highest potential, capture their interest in learning and build on what they already know. Weekly lesson plans are aligned to the Arizona Early Learning Standards and are posted in each classroom. Standards are available on the Arizona Department of Education Website at: <https://www.azed.gov/ece/publications-manuals>

### Curriculum

ECCEL Preschool classrooms use the Creative Curriculum System for Preschool. This system is a series of studies of a variety of topics interesting to children such as sand, ramps and tunnels and balls. The Creative Curriculum System for Preschool uses research-based objectives that are predictive of a child's future success in school. The curriculum aligns to the Arizona Early Learning Standards and to My Teaching Strategies. The toddler program uses the Creative Curriculum System for Toddlers.

### My Teaching Strategies

ECCEL Preschool staff uses My Teaching Strategies in conjunction with the Arizona Early Learning Standards and Arizona Infant-Toddler Guidelines and the Creative Curriculum System for Preschool or Toddlers to help design their classroom environment and activities. Throughout the year teachers collect data to document each child's progress in 36 objectives across nine areas of development and learning. Progress on these goals and objectives is monitored via anecdotal observations taken on a regular basis in authentic situations. Student progress is reported to the Arizona Department of Education three times a year.

### Quality First

Quality First is the signature program of First Things First. We know that 90% of a child's brain develops before kindergarten and high-quality early education prepares children for success in kindergarten and beyond. All ECCEL programs have voluntarily enrolled in Quality First and have achieved a star rating (1-5 stars) of three stars or above, indicating high quality early education. Ratings are based on assessments using the ECERS and CLASS tools and the Star Rating Point Scale. More information and star ratings can be found at: <http://qualityfirstaz.com/>

### Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R)

The ECCEL Preschool Program utilizes the ECERS-R for self assessment and to arrange the preschool environment in order to provide an optimal setting for child directed exploration, learning and socialization. In addition, the ECERS-R analysis assists teachers in an effort to continually make appropriate changes to meet the needs of their students. The toddler program uses the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS).

### Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

The CLASS is used to help guide the interactions between students and adults. These interactions are the most important mechanism for student development and learning. This system guides interactions and what teachers do with the materials they have.



## Routine

Every preschool classroom incorporates a sequence of similar activities in following a daily routine. Although the sequence of routine activities may vary between classrooms, the routine should include something similar to the following:

- Arrival
- Group Time
- Learning Centers
- Snack
- Outdoor Education
- Dismissal

## Learning Centers

Early childhood research indicates that play is probably the single most important activity through which children learn. Through play, children develop cognitive and language skills, engage in meaningful social interactions, discover cause and effect, role-play, problem-solve, and learn to follow rules and directions. Because play is pleasurable, children repeat activities and this repetition is what builds connections in the brain. They learn the responsibility of cooperating in a community by interacting with peers and the environment. Although listed separately, each center covers many content areas.

**Art Center:** Art is intended to be a process, not a product. In the art center children can enjoy making things of their own choosing and share stories about their creation. They can experiment with color and size and experience the feel of various materials. They develop hand-eye coordination and begin to discover how things are alike or different. Small muscles can be readied for writing through rolling and squeezing play dough, drawing, painting, and cutting.

**Writing Center:** Children begin to understand that what they say and think can be written to communicate with others. They learn that words represent pictures or ideas and have meaning. The purpose of this center is not to teach "handwriting" or penmanship but to understand that print has a purpose.

**Blocks/Building Center:** In this center, children learn about geometry through shapes and sizes and discover that parts can be put together to form a whole. They learn number concepts by counting blocks as they stack them. Language skills are developed by using words like "under/over", "big/small", and "more/less". Children learn to make decisions and solve problems by working together on building projects. They discover scientific concepts such as force, gravity, and balance as they play.

**Games, Manipulatives and Puzzles Centers:** Children develop mathematical concepts of numbers, matching, classifying, patterning and measurement when playing with games and puzzles. They develop reasoning and problem-solving skills that help in learning to read. They look at positive and negative space, color and shape as they begin to complete more complex puzzles.

**Library Center:** In this center, children look at books and learn book handling skills. They can get new ideas, develop new interests, and begin to recognize letters and some words as they develop an understanding of the concept of print. Children who enter kindergarten with a larger vocabulary have an easier time learning to read.

**Dramatic Play Center:** Children have the opportunity to use their imaginations and their abstract thinking. They can pretend to be whoever they want to be and begin to understand diverse roles in society and their world. Vocabulary and language skills increase while revealing thoughts and

attitudes through conversation. They begin to learn how to cooperate with others and see things from someone else's viewpoint. Through role play, they learn to negotiate, resolve conflict, solve problems, take turns, be patient, and share. In all areas of the classroom, but especially here, children develop those social skills necessary to succeed in society.

**Science Center:** Children have a natural sense of wonder and curiosity. Children observe, predict, form conclusions (correct or incorrect) and explain their understanding of the world through hands-on discovery.

**Music Center:** By listening to music or playing musical instruments, children become aware of patterns and rhythms and begin to discriminate sounds and pitches. These skills are all important when formal reading instruction begins in kindergarten.

## Enrollment

All children attending the ECCEL Preschool Program must be three years of age (18 months and walking for the toddler program) and are required to complete and submit all enrollment paperwork PRIOR to the first day of attendance. As part of the enrollment paperwork, parents need to provide a copy of the following:

- Current Immunization Records
- Original Birth Certificate
- Proof of Residency
- Students residing outside of PUSD boundaries must complete a variance request form. No variances will be considered until the beginning of August of the current school year. Exceptions will be made for children of district employees.

For more information, please visit the preschool portal at <https://www.peoriaunified.org/Page/820>

Should enrollment documentation not be in place PRIOR to school, the start of preschool could be delayed. There is a \$60 non-refundable registration fee for students participating in a general education classroom. This fee is waived for students on an IEP. The registration fee is \$20 for students participating in a special education class as a Peer Model. Feel free to call the ECCEL Preschool Registration Office at 623-773-6675 for more information or for any questions.

## Disenrollment

**For any student withdrawal, please contact the ECCEL Preschool Registration Office at 623-773-6675.**

Fee Based Students - We require **two-weeks notice** if your child will be withdrawing from the program. **Fees will be charged for this two-week period.**

Peoria Unified School District has the right to terminate your child's enrollment in the program if your child's behavior consistently disrupts or interferes with the learning process and/or goals set forth for the Peoria Unified School District's ECCEL Preschool Program or for non-payment of fees.

Preschool Students Receiving IEP Services - Parents have the right to withdraw their child from programming at anytime. A written statement or verbal confirmation must be received by emailing [preschool@pusd11.net](mailto:preschool@pusd11.net) or calling 623-773-6675.

## Attendance

Skills need to be reinforced every day. Regular daily attendance is also excellent preparation for kindergarten and it shows your child that school is important. Some children will be anxious and may even cry when left at school. It is okay! Your tension can make the child's reluctance even stronger. Let the teacher welcome your child and draw them into the class activities while you head on your way. The teacher will watch your child's adjustment to school and to other children and will notify you if any unusual difficulties arise. Poor attendance for fee-based students may result in your child's removal from the preschool program.

**If your child is ill or will not be attending preschool on any given day, please call the attendance line at the school your child attends.** In addition, if your child rides the school bus to and/or from school, please call transportation at 623-773-6625 if your child will not attend school on any particular day.

Consistent with district policy, your child will be withdrawn from preschool after 10 consecutive unexcused absences. In case of long-term absence, contact the ECCEL Preschool Registration Office at 623-773-6675 prior to the absence.

## Arrival and Dismissal

Upon arrival and dismissal from preschool, your child MUST be signed in and out of the classroom. Students riding the school bus as part of their IEP will be signed in and out by the classroom staff. **NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO ANYONE WITHOUT AUTHORIZED PARENT CONSENT.** Parents and AUTHORIZED adults must sign the Attendance Book with a legal signature and the **precise time** of arrival and departure (approximate time is not allowed; time must be legible). Photo identification will be required for any unfamiliar parent or adult. A written request to release your child to a person not on the authorized list will be verified by phone, with your telephone authorization code, before your child will be released. If an older sibling (13 or older) will be signing your child in or out of class, we require a written statement from the parent or guardian. School staff will abide by all legally served court orders. If there are court restrictions, the school MUST have a copy of any certified court order on file.

When dropping off and picking up your child, please be mindful of parking restrictions/regulations at the school site. There may also be street parking restrictions or turning restrictions per city law.

In order to maintain an appropriate level of supervision, please do not arrive more than five minutes prior to the start of class. In addition, classroom staff asks that you are timely in picking up your child from preschool. It is important that your child knows he or she will be picked up promptly at the end of the day and children can become upset if parents are late. Punctuality is a critical life skill. Please call the classroom if you will be unavoidably delayed.

**Late pick up will result in a late fee.** A fee of \$5.00 will be charged for the first 10 minutes you are late in picking up your child. An additional \$1.00 per minute is charged after the first 10 minutes. You will be given a late fee coupon and the fee will be added to your ELEYO account. The late fee must be paid within ten days or your child will not be able to attend until the fee is paid.

## **Fees (If Applicable)**

General Education Classrooms Preschool fees are \$345 per month for part day Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday programs. Glendale Community College (GCC) Learning Lab is a Monday through Friday program. We currently accept enrollment only for full time students. The fee for Toddlers is \$910 per month and for Preschoolers is \$690 per month.

Scholarships to assist with fees are available through First Things First's signature program, Quality First. Please contact the Registration Office at 623-773-6675 for information on criteria for this funding. In order to continue to receive scholarship funding your child's account must be current and your child must maintain 85% attendance. Fees for days not reimbursed by the scholarship will be your responsibility. Scholarships will be withdrawn for failure to meet these obligations.

Peer Models in Special Education Classrooms – Preschool fees are \$185 per month for part-day Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday programs. As part of the continuum of special education services provision within PUSD, preschool programs facilitated through a special education teacher are primarily designed to meet individually determined IEP needs for students eligible for special education services. Research and teaching have established that children learn best through interaction with peers in a naturalistic learning environment. In keeping with this philosophy, peer model participation is essential. Special education teachers provide differentiated instruction to meet the social, academic, and emotional needs of ALL students within the classroom.

**Special Note:** *The special education classroom is an excellent program for all children; however, the program is specifically designed to remediate the needs of children identified with special needs. The peer model program is a vital and important component to the success of the program and the children serviced. Should any concerns arise about your child's development, further evaluation may be recommended, or the classroom teacher may discuss proposed withdrawal from the program for your child. You will be notified in advance of any discussion regarding these changes or recommendations.*

A 20% discount applies for siblings attending preschool (paying for 2 or more) **or** for children of PUSD employees.

**Payment Information** Fees are due the **1st of each month**, August through May. Payments should be made through your Eleyo account, however cash, check or money order payments are accepted at the ECCEL Preschool Registration Office (8624 W. Sweetwater), the KidZone Office at Desert Valley Elementary (12901 N. 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue) or the Peoria District Office (6330 W. Thunderbird). Non-sufficient funds checks will be turned over to the district's collection agency and will be assessed fees in addition to those charged by your bank. Non-sufficient funds checks may only be repaid through [www.nexcheck.com](http://www.nexcheck.com). Two non-sufficient funds checks will require all future payments by cash or money order. The total cost of the program for the year has been divided into ten equal monthly installments. **Fees will be the same whether or not your child attends class and regardless of the number of school days during the month. There are no refunds or credits for absences or illness.** No fees have been calculated into the intstallments for the two-week Winter Break or the one-week Fall and Spring Break. Accounts that fall **60 days past due** will be turned over to a collection agency and your child may be removed from the program. **Please save your receipts, statements, or canceled checks.** Tax Statements for payments made through ELEYO can be downloaded from your ELEYO account. The district's tax ID number is 86-6000-488.

## **Parent Involvement**

We encourage you to find a way to become involved with your child's preschool experience. Your interest and involvement convey a message to your child that he/she is important and that school is important. Volunteer opportunities in classrooms may be limited due to Arizona Department of Health Services licensing regulations and COVID19 precautions. Due to the needs of individual classrooms, each site may set forth specific dates or times for volunteers. In addition, site administration may also establish specific guidelines for the frequency in which volunteers can participate in classroom activities. If you are interested in volunteering to help in the classroom or on a field trip you MUST attend a District Volunteer Training Session PRIOR to volunteering. Sessions are offered throughout the school year at each school site or a training video is available on the Peoria School District web site at <https://www.peoriaunified.org/>. If you come to spend a day at school, we require that you not bring siblings due to Arizona Department of Health Services Licensing Regulations. In order to work directly with any student other than your child, you will need to complete a licensing file in accordance with Arizona Department of Health Services. Please contact the preschool office to complete the necessary documents.

We realize that many parents will be unable to help in the classroom on a regular basis because of work schedules or other commitments, but we encourage you to be involved in other ways. Perhaps you would be interested in making a batch of play dough, cutting things out, sewing, etc. We invite you to share a special talent or interest not only with the children, but also with other adults as you feel comfortable. Preschoolers enjoy learning about family traditions, customs, and cultures of different people. You are encouraged to share tools of your trade or become a guest reader. Children and teachers appreciate your involvement in the preschool program.

Confidentiality of your child's and their peers' privacy is a priority in the classroom environment. Classroom staff is always available to privately answer parent's questions about their specific child; however, staff CANNOT answer questions about other children's developmental needs, health, family, or specific situations. Should parents have specific concerns they should feel free to privately talk to the classroom teacher or building administrator. Cell phone usage is prohibited on campus during instructional time unless authorized by administration. The use of cell phones for video/audio recording of other students or district employees is prohibited.

## **Communication of Student Progress**

It is our desire to keep parents well informed of their child's progress in preschool; therefore, teachers and therapists are available to answer questions. The classroom teacher will make every effort to schedule a classroom visit at the beginning of the school year. Twice each year, in October and February, or more often if deemed necessary by parents or teachers, parents may make an appointment for a Parent-Teacher Conference. This is an opportunity for parents and teachers to share ideas, impressions and information about the child's total environment---both home and school. For students receiving IEP services within the preschool program, parents will obtain IEP progress reports four times per year, consistent with district report card distribution. The preschool staff uses email, written notes, phone calls, and pre-established conference times to communicate with parents. Newsletters will be sent home at least twice monthly to keep parents informed of preschool activities and provide a good opportunity to discuss your child's classroom experiences. We ask that parents never hesitate to contact us at any time about concerns or questions they may have and we will do the same. We want you to know that your child is in a safe, loving, and nurturing environment that is full of engaging and exciting things to do.

## Health, Medical, and Medication Needs

Parents are strongly encouraged to discuss ANY medical or health care needs with the classroom teacher and, if necessary, the school nurse PRIOR to beginning school. Depending on the specific needs of a child, a separate meeting to establish an Individual Health Care Plan may be needed prior to preschool participation to ensure a child's safety.

The preschool classroom staff and the school nurse need to be aware of chronic illness (i.e. asthma), allergies (i.e. food, insect or seasonal) as well as any medication needs. The school nurse is prohibited by law from dispensing medications of any kind without permission from the parent. Prescription medication to be given at preschool must be brought to school by the parent in the original container with the child's name and dosage information on it. Students are NOT ALLOWED to carry any medication. All medicine will be stored in a locked cabinet in the nurse's office and will be dispensed by the nurse. Should an epi-pen be needed it will be stored in the classroom or with the teacher.

All students will be required to have emergency medical release forms before they will be allowed to participate in the program. When a school nurse is on campus, she assumes responsibility for medical emergencies. A staff member trained in CPR and first aid is on duty at all times. Parents will be called as needed. Parents will be notified if their child is ill or injured and will need to pick up their child immediately if the child has:

1. Symptoms of a contagious disease.
2. Elevated temperature (100° or above).
3. Vomiting or diarrhea.
4. An accident requiring medical attention.

Controlling communicable illness within the preschool classroom can be challenging. Although all ECCEL classrooms consistently utilize a routine of hand washing and disinfecting materials, illness cannot be completely prevented. In the interest of maintaining a healthy school environment, please keep children at home if they are ill. The following symptoms indicate the need to be kept out of school: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, elevated temperature (100° or above without medication), chills, red or inflamed eyes, coughing, continuous runny nose, skin rash, headaches, swelling of face or glands or other serious pains within the previous 24 hours. **If there is any change in work or emergency phone numbers, please notify your child's teacher immediately. It is critical that we are able to reach you should the need arise.**

## Safety and Nutrition

Important components of our program are health, safety, nutrition, and hygiene. One of the most important routines at preschool is helping the children learn to wash hands with soap after using the bathroom, blowing noses, and/or before eating. Having a hand-washing routine not only helps in limiting the spread of germs but helps build an important life-long habit. We appreciate our parents' help in reinforcing this routine at all times. Snack menus will be posted and will be sent home upon request. All meals and snacks meet USDA requirements. Because our meals and snacks are nutritionally balanced, we discourage food items brought from home. If your child has food allergies you will need to have your medical provider complete a Special Diet Medical Form so that we are fully aware of how to provide meals or snacks for your child.

The ECCEL Preschool Program is dedicated to providing a safe and nurturing environment to enable each child to learn and developmentally grow. Although each classroom has numerous adults actively

involved, accidents and “owies” are part of preschool discovery and learning. Each classroom has established a specific and consistent method for documenting both minor and serious incidents. The following guidelines are used:

- Any injury sustained by a child during the school day will be recorded in an “Owie Log”. In addition, written parent notice needs to be provided.
- For more serious incidents:
  - A phone call to parents will be made within 30-minutes.
  - Written notification of the specific incident needs to be made within 24-hours of the incident.

Please let us know of any changes in the family such as death, illness, divorce, separation, company in the home or if the child is on any medication. This helps us deal with sudden changes in behavior.

If you have any concerns about these areas, please contact our Early Childhood Specialist at 623-773-6675.

## **Classroom Celebrations**

Celebrating milestones is an important part of a child’s life. However, due to health concerns and special needs these events cannot be celebrated with anything edible brought by parents. Alternative suggestions to bring into the classroom are items such as bubbles, stickers, or donating the child’s favorite book to the classroom library. Our first priority is the health and safety of every child in our program.

## **Clothing and Supplies**

Your child will be active both indoors and outdoors. It is important for your child to be dressed in comfortable, washable play clothes that will adapt to food spills, paint, sand, and water. To allow for self-dressing it is suggested that difficult belts, bows, and fasteners be avoided. Shirts or jackets with drawstrings should not be worn due to the danger of strangulation. Please provide your child with an extra set of clothes including shirt, pants or shorts, underwear, and socks. It is wise to label the inside of your child's belongings with his or her full name.

Shoes must be worn at all times. We suggest that shoes stay securely on the foot with laces or straps and are closed-toed and worn with socks. **For safety reasons we ask that children DO NOT wear sandals, flip-flops, jellies, or shoes with heels.**

Although not required, it would be helpful if your child has a full-sized backpack or other carrying device so important information and your child's work can be sent home.

## **Toileting**

During this important phase of childhood, it is helpful if home and school work together. All children need a complete set of extra clothing in case of toileting accidents. Should toileting assistance be needed for your child, please discuss your child’s needs with the classroom teacher. If your child is typically developing, they should be fully toilet trained before starting preschool. Fully toilet trained means that they can self-toilet, rarely have a toileting related accident and do not wear diapers or pull ups.

## **Personal Items**

Personal items should not be brought to school. Weapons, toy guns or knives, and other items that promote violence are against district policy and are not allowed under any circumstances. In order to ensure the safety of all individuals, dangerous items such as matches, lighters, or objects with sharp edges or small pieces will be confiscated. The preschool will not be responsible for lost or damaged items.

## **Field Trips**

Although scheduling is often difficult within the parameters of class times and transportation schedules, many teachers arrange field trips to stimulate interest in the world around us, to facilitate the development of language, motor, and cognitive skills, and to provide opportunities for social interactions and independence. You will receive advanced notice of any field trips and will be given an opportunity to accompany the class whenever possible. Written permission from parents or guardians is required for a child to participate on a field trip. We encourage parent helpers; however, chaperone numbers may be limited for some field trips. No siblings are allowed on field trips and we ask that you share this time with your preschooler. Smoking is not allowed on district sponsored field trips or on district property and we request that you do not use your cell phone while on preschool field trips. Any photos taken on field trips may be of your child only due to special circumstances regarding some students.

## **Discipline**

The ECCEL Preschool Program uses a positive approach for discipline. We strive to establish positive behavior, showing appreciation for each child and his/her uniqueness. The purpose of discipline is to help children learn appropriate behavior and develop self-control. Teachers, therapists, and instructional assistants help the child to understand predictable limits and the consequences of their actions. Preschool staff model appropriate behavior and foster an atmosphere of mutual respect.

By anticipating potential problems, appropriate behavior is encouraged and many problems are eliminated. The classrooms are designed to facilitate the development of acceptable behavior through room arrangement, toy/material selection and quantity, daily routines and schedules, and developmentally appropriate activities implemented by our trained and caring staff members. Consideration is given to each child's developmental level, experiences, and needs. When positive and/or appropriate behavior is praised, the children quickly learn what is and what is not acceptable. The children are encouraged to express themselves through words. They are frequently given choices, which helps them to take the responsibility for making decisions. Class rules are set with regard for health and safety issues. Through helpful guidance, the following are a few of the strategies used by staff:

- Encourage the child to verbalize thoughts and feelings.
- The focus should be on the act, not the child. "Hitting hurts. Use your words to tell her what you want."
- Provide choices as a way to redirect the child. "You may play with puzzles or paint at the easel."
- Ignore inappropriate behavior, if possible, while giving attention to desirable behavior.
- Employ natural consequences. A child who spills her milk is encouraged to clean it up.
- If a child is having difficulty acting in an acceptable manner, separation from the group may be necessary. The length of time that a child may be removed from an activity will not exceed one minute per each year of the child's age.
- Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden and against Peoria School District Policy.



## **Facility Inspection Reports**

Preschool facilities are licensed through the Arizona Department of Health Services at 150 N. 18th Avenue, 4th Floor, Phoenix, Arizona 85007. Facility Inspection reports are available upon request in the ECCEL Preschool Registration Office or by calling 602-364-2539.

## **Liability Insurance**

Liability insurance is carried by Peoria Unified School District for each of our preschool sites, and documentation of the liability insurance coverage is available for review at each of these preschool locations.

## **Parent Access**

As per R9-5-301.D of the Arizona Administrative Code a parent of an enrolled child is allowed immediate access to areas of the school where his/her child is located during regular hours of operation. However, in order to provide a safe school environment, parents must sign in at the front office before proceeding on campus.

## **Notification of Pesticide Application**

The School District's yearly pesticide application schedule can be found on the parent information board, located near the entrance of each preschool classroom.



## Special Education Transportation Information for Parents

Transportation is an educationally relevant special education related service based on student need and/or program location. The need for transportation is to be discussed at each IEP meeting. In addition, parents of students with an identified IEP can request transportation at any time through the classroom teacher and/or therapist.

Once the need for special education transportation has been determined, the classroom teacher and/or therapist will complete an IEP Special Transportation Form. In addition, should any change in pick up or drop off location, address/phone, emergency contact, and/or AM/PM placement be requested, a new IEP Special Transportation Form must be completed. It typically takes approximately 5-7 days for transportation to be initiated and/or changed. The Peoria Unified School District will not pick up or drop off a child outside of district boundaries. **Parents of children who attend the preschool as a general education student are responsible for transporting their child to and from school.**

Please have your child ready 5 minutes prior to the pick-up time. It is the parent's responsibility to bring their child to the bus and meet them at the bus when they arrive home. The bus driver is not allowed to honk or go to your door.

Your child's teacher will place a nametag on your child to wear to and from school. Please attach this to the upper back of their clothing. This identification will be helpful for a substitute driver.

If you have a change in your child's transportation pick up or drop off location, please contact their teacher or therapist to have a new transportation form filled out. Allow 5–7 days for this change to take place.

### Attendance Line 623-773-6625

Please call this number should your child not need transportation on a particular day.

### Dispatch 623-773-6601 or 6602

If the bus is late, please feel free to contact this number. Due to the number of children involved, transportation cannot contact parents if a bus is running late. If you reach voice mail, please leave a message. The messages are checked frequently.

### Special Needs Routers 623-773-6606 or 6614

Kirsten Bauman, Special Needs Router, or Julie Ashford, Routing Supervisor, can answer your routing questions. However, should you need to change your child's transportation pick-up or drop-off location, please contact your child's IEP case manager.

### Special Needs Transportation Supervisor 623-773-6612

Sarah Dame can be contacted if you have any comments or concerns. If you do not need an immediate response, please email at: [sdame@pusd11.net](mailto:sdame@pusd11.net).

**ECCEL Preschool Calendar**  
**Peoria Unified School District**  
**2022-2023 School Year**

**Bold Print** means **No** Preschool Classes

Preschool payments are due the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month August - May. See page 12 for more information about fees.

August 11	Preschool Classes Begin
<b>September 5</b>	<b>Labor Day</b>
<b>October 10</b>	<b>Columbus Day</b>
<b>October 13-14</b>	<b>Parent Teacher Conferences</b>
<b>November 11</b>	<b>Veteran's Day</b>
<b>November 21-25</b>	<b>Fall Break (Thanksgiving)</b>
December 20	Last Day of Preschool Classes before Winter Break
<b>December 22 - January 8</b>	<b>Winter Recess</b>
January 9	Classes Resume
<b>January 16</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Day</b>
<b>February 16-17</b>	<b>Parent Teacher Conferences</b>
<b>February 20</b>	<b>Presidents' Day</b>
<b>March 13-17</b>	<b>Spring Break – GCC Campus ONLY (PUSD Sites in Session)</b>
<b>March 20-24</b>	<b>Spring Break – PUSD School Sites (GCC in Session)</b>
<b>April 21</b>	<b>April Break</b>
May 23	Last Day of Preschool Classes