



**LOWELL JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

"Come Grow With Us"

**PARENT HANDBOOK  
2023-2024**

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## **Welcome!**

Welcome to the Lowell Joint School District Child Development Services Department! We are proud that you have chosen our program to support your child's learning to prepare for success in kindergarten readiness skills and beyond. This handbook is intended to be a resource for you and to answer many of the questions you may have throughout the school year. Our teachers, office staff and administrators are also available to assist you with any questions that may arise.

We provide a variety of programs to fit the needs of our families that live within the Lowell Joint School District community. We are committed to staff and parents working together to support each child's love of learning and long-term school success. We value your input as we continually strive to tailor our program to meet the needs of our children and families. Together, we will create life-long learners!

## **Lowell Joint School District Mission Statement**

The Lowell Joint School District is committed to providing a strong academic foundation of 21st Century Skills with a well-rounded program of diverse and innovative subject offerings. All schools within the district emphasize the importance of education, the family, and traditional values. We stress the value of personal integrity, social responsibility, and a respect for our national heritage. The Lowell Joint School District envisions a culture where technology empowers all members of the school community to achieve success and expand learning beyond the walls of the classroom. All stakeholders will utilize technology to become highly competent in a technological world through continuous improvement in academics, career, and life.

## **Child Development Services Vision for Student Success**

Our preschool children will enter the TK-12 system ready to meet or exceed grade-level standards while engaging in high-quality learning experiences in a positive and caring environment in which diversity (cultural, linguistic, individual interests and abilities) is respected. Meaningful parent involvement is actively fostered as parents play an integral role in their child's educational experience. Preschool children and families will build positive relationships and develop skills that will enable them to successfully transition to Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten with confidence.

## Program Description

Our school readiness programs are integrated with art, music, dramatic play and creative movement aligned with the California Department of Education Preschool Foundations and Curriculum Frameworks. More information can be found here:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psframework.asp>

Our comprehensive approach includes the following research based, developmental and academically appropriate curriculum and a positive learning environment based on the following:

National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale - [www.ersi.inof.ecers.html](http://www.ersi.inof.ecers.html)

Desired Results Developmental Profile - [www.desiredresults.us](http://www.desiredresults.us)

Classroom Assessment Scoring System - <http://teachstone.com/the-class-system/>

The program provides children with an opportunity for individual development through learning activities that focus on creative expression, independence, social interaction, and self awareness. The program includes an academic curriculum with an emphasis on oral language development, pre-reading, pre-writing skills and pre-math skills. The program has been intentionally designed to flow directly into the Lowell Joint School District Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten curriculum, allowing for ease of transition to the elementary school program. All classes are designed to nurture and enrich a child's total development. A separate enrollment process is required for school aged programs in Lowell Joint School District.

Our program is made available to all qualified persons without regard to sex, sexual orientation, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability. In order to respect each child's individual rights to freedom of religious practice, religious indoctrination is clearly forbidden in the public schools and preschool. The program welcomes the enrollment of children with disabilities and other special needs as allowed by the facility/program limitations and in compliance with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## Program Goals and Objectives

It is our goal to provide developmentally appropriate activities and curriculum that encourage optimum development of language, literacy, cognitive skills, social-emotional development, and motor skills for every child. Each aspect of the program provides learning experiences for your children. We plan the schedule, transitions, and activities very carefully. Integrated into the program is a balance between quiet and active play as well as child-initiated and teacher-directed activities. Listed below are examples of how we accomplish our goals and objectives.

- ❖ Inside and outside environments are designed to meet the developmental needs of the children; these environments are inviting and promote creativity, exploration, and growth for the whole child.
- ❖ Language development is continually enhanced as students are exposed to increasingly complex grammatical structures and expanded vocabulary through language rich interactions with teachers, staff, and students.
- ❖ English language and dual language learners are provided immersion into the English language throughout our daily activities, routines, and interactions with English speakers who serve as language role models. The goal of English Language Development instruction is to help the children achieve proficiency in English.
- ❖ Beginning literacy skills are developed through a variety of activities focusing on the development of phonological awareness, phonemic awareness and alphabet knowledge. These activities include: rhymes, finger plays, read alouds and beginning writing activities.
- ❖ Classroom curriculum includes literature, music, science, math, art and sensory activities reflecting the various cultures of the children in our program and the developmental stages of preschoolers.
- ❖ Development of self-help skills (dressing self, taking care of toilet needs, communicating needs, likes/dislikes and independence at meal times) are integrated throughout the school day.
- ❖ Social and emotional proficiency is fostered through activities which develop increased attention to tasks, communicating in ways that are socially acceptable to peers and adults, sharing toys, and following school rules and routines.
- ❖ Fine and gross motor skills are developed through a variety of activities including: running, jumping, riding tricycles, hopping, throwing a ball, dancing, holding and using pencils, crayons, scissors, paint, brushes, and pouring liquids from containers.

## **Lowell Joint School District Preschool Staff**

Program leadership, teachers, and staff are employees of the Lowell Joint School District. Our staff is highly qualified and is selected because of their skills, training, and experience. All staff members who work in the Lowell Joint School District undergo an extensive background check as part of the hiring process. Our teachers hold a child development teaching permit, the teaching credential required for working with preschool aged children by the State of California's Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The Lowell Joint School District provides on-going training for all staff members in early childhood development, teaching strategies, and in health, safety and emergency procedures. All child development services employees participate in a yearly orientation meeting and are evaluated based on the district evaluation schedule.

Every staff member is dedicated to the success of each and every student in the program. We work hard to provide developmentally appropriate activities that address the academic skills that are necessary for success in elementary school. Teachers and staff continually observe each child's development and provide feedback to parents. We welcome information from parents about their child's learning style, development, and interests.

*All employees working in the Lowell Joint School District are mandated by law to report all incidents of suspected child abuse.*

## **Curriculum**

The primary goal of preschool is to develop language, socialization, and pre-academic readiness in all children. Our staff uses developmentally appropriate practices and instructional strategies to assist children in learning the skills to support a smooth transition to elementary school. Developmentally appropriate practice is an approach to teaching grounded in the research on how young children develop and learn and in what is known about effective early education instruction. The framework is designed to promote young children's optimal learning and development. The child development services instructional staff strive to meet young children where they are developmentally, both as individuals and as part of a group and to help each child meet challenging and achievable learning goals.

### ***\* Social Emotional Skills***

Our staff believe building positive relationships with children, families and colleagues is the foundation of all other practices and the universal conditions that are necessary for the promotion of social competence and behavior. They strive to develop nurturing and responsive relationships with all children, to create and maintain high quality supportive environments, and to provide targeted social-emotional support and intensive interventions as appropriate to meet children's needs.

### **\* *Language Skills***

Language learning is dependent on children's functioning in all areas of development. An underlying assumption for language development is that children experience positive interactions and relationships, along with opportunities for enriched activities and play.

### **\* *Motor Skills***

Children are provided a wide variety of materials, activities, music and outdoor play to encourage and support fine and gross motor development.

### **\* *Pre-academic Skills***

Pre-academic skill development is integrated into all areas of the instructional day. Children continually build their foundational understanding of concepts through their interactions, play, experiences, discoveries, and challenges. Because preschool is considered to be a developmental period of growth, expectations for academic skill mastery begin at the end of the Kindergarten year. A specific pre-academic skill set is NOT required for TK/Kindergarten entry.

## **Program Activities**

Our program is designed to meet the developmental and academic needs of young learners. The classrooms are set up according to criteria established for the highest (excellent) score on Early Child Environment Rating Scale as well as according to the developmental and special needs of the children. Integrated into the program is a balance between quiet and active play, as well as child-initiated and teacher-directed activities. Each classroom will participate in the following learning activities and centers.

- Literacy: Pre-reading, listening, fine motor development, critical thinking and talking. Story time/reading aloud to children forms the foundations for literacy. Through story book reading, children learn to love stories and reading, respond to pictures and text, increase vocabulary and learn comprehension strategies.
- Math, Science and Technology: Everyday math counting, math vocabulary and numbers, biology and earth science, simple cooking, problem solving skills.
- Art, Music and Drama: Driven thematically and developed through student interest.
- Social Development: Caring, sharing, honesty, taking turns, respect, responsibility and self respect.
- Conflict Resolution: Strategies to deal with conflict, positive interactions and socialization.
- Health, Wellness and Fitness: Active games, developmentally appropriate sport games, and nutrition.
- Outdoor Play: Increase physical activity, be adventurous, expand their creativity, sand and water play.
- Independent Exploration: Build on past experiences, discover and problem solve, and interact with each other.



Children will have the opportunity to choose from the following classroom centers:

|                  |                  |                |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Dramatic Play    | Construction     | Quiet Corner   |
| Creativity (Art) | Science          | Music          |
| Library          | Sand/Water Table | Block Building |
| Writing          | Math             | Manipulatives  |

## **Toys and Games**

Toys and games are provided by the preschool. Toys brought from home often cause conflict and or get broken or lost. We ask that children leave these personal items at home unless it is show and tell at school. The teacher will send communication requesting an item be brought to school on those scheduled special days.

## **Student Assessment - Preschool Programs**

In our preschool programs, the students are assessed twice a year, once in the fall (within 60 days of enrollment) and once in the spring (six months after the initial assessment). Assessments are used to determine your child's growth and development and to assist our staff in guiding our daily instruction. The DRDP (*Desired Results Developmental Profile – Preschool 2015*) is a naturalistic, observation-based assessment instrument used to determine how each child is developing towards achieving the skills children need to develop before they reach kindergarten. We welcome parents to complete the DRDP for your child based on your observations of your child at home and share your observations with the teacher.

## **Ages and Stages Questionnaire**

All parents will be asked to complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) when their child enters preschool. The ASQ is a developmental screening tool that is used to look at a child's development as a "snapshot in time." It provides scores for a child's development of Communication, Problem Solving, Social-Emotional, Fine Motor, and Large Motor skills. The ASQ is scored by the preschool nurse and other trained staff. You will be provided a summary of your child's results. Most children score within a typical range. If your child does not score within a typical range, you will be contacted and asked to complete the ASQ-SE designed to provide a more thorough view of your child's social emotional development. You will be provided recommended classroom/home activities to help your child in areas of identified need. Referrals for additional support may also be discussed with you.

## **Student Success Team**

If your child is having difficulties experiencing success in the classroom, we will work together with you and your child's teacher to create a plan of action to help support your child's learning. When appropriate, referrals for special services, either within the District or with Community partners, will be made.

## Annual Program Evaluation

We continually strive to improve our program to meet the needs of our students and families. Each year we conduct an annual self-evaluation that consists of three main components, which are listed below. After completion of all three components, results are tabulated and goals for improvement are created.

1. Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale - Revised (ECERS –R): a nationally recognized rating tool to evaluate the classroom environment.
2. Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) – student assessment used to identify areas in which we need to add or modify learning activities, materials and/or instructional strategies.
3. Parent Surveys – parents complete a survey that gives us information about how the program is meeting the needs of the child and family.

## Attendance, Absences and Tardies

In order to gain the maximum benefit from the program, children are expected to attend preschool every day. For this reason, it is necessary that parents arrange their schedules so their child can be in class *every* day. Children who have more than three (3) *unexcused* absences may be dismissed from the program. Please email or call the site supervisor on or before the day your child will be absent from school to let us know the reason for the absence.

- ❖ Consistent attendance is highly recommended for participation in all Child Development programs. Consistent and on-time attendance is vital to your child’s future success in public school and preschool is a critical time to establish habits that support regular and on-time participation.
- ❖ Frequent absences, even in preschool, can cause children to fall behind in school. Research has found, missing a day or two every month makes it harder to learn to read by the third grade.
- ❖ It is expected that all children will attend school according to their regular scheduled class times. Frequent absences, bringing a child late to school or picking a child up late from school have a negative impact on the child’s education and social/emotional development. Please have your child here each school day, and on-time for drop off and pick up.
- ❖ It is essential for optimal learning that your child starts class on time. Attendance will be monitored to ensure each child has access to an optimal preschool experience.

### Excused Absences

- ❖ Illness/quarantine of the child – after three (3) consecutive days, a doctor’s note may be required
- ❖ Illness/quarantine of the parent
- ❖ Family emergency – defined as a serious illness of an immediate family member, death in the family, catastrophe or severe weather conditions that prohibit travel to

and from school, no transportation and/or transportation problems that are beyond your control (mechanical failure, car accident, bus didn't come)

- ❖ Court ordered visitations – documentation of the Court Order must be provided for the student file
- ❖ Best Interest Days (up to 10 per school year)

**Unexcused Absences (best defined as, but not limited to):**

- ❖ Rainy day
- ❖ Couldn't find belongings (backpack, shoes, etc.)
- ❖ Child didn't want to go to school / was crying
- ❖ Woke up late
- ❖ Absence for any reason other than those listed as excused

It is very important for your child to arrive on time each day. Late arrivals interrupt the classroom and interfere with learning. After three (3) tardies, you will receive a letter from the office manager regarding tardiness/truancy. Five (5) or more tardies will result in a meeting with the Coordinator of Child Development Services and may be grounds for termination with continuous tardies.

## **Late Pick-Up Policy**

Please be respectful of the staff's time by picking up your child on time at the end of his or her session. The teachers utilize the time before and after each session to set up learning activities, plan lessons, attend staff meetings, and tidy the classroom.

Children must be signed out by the close of the state licensed program day. In the event a parent/guardian should pick up a child late, the parent/guardian agrees to notify the Site Supervisor and or Teacher in advance. Parents/guardians who are late will be responsible for paying a late fee (see late pick-up fees). If a child is continually picked up late from the program actions for dismissal from the program may be necessary. Parents/guardians that pick up their child late continuously will receive a "Notice of Late Pick Up". Should you receive three late notices you will be dropped from the program. There is no exception to this policy.

Parents who have not notified the Site Supervisor/Teacher they will be late can expect the following to occur.

1. Our first attempt will be to contact all authorized guardians and pick-up persons on the child's medical release.
2. In the event that no authorized guardians or pick up persons can be reached within 30 minutes the local police and or Child Protective Services will be notified. Your child will be taken into their custody.

## **Late Pick-Up Fees**

If your child is picked up past the five minute grace, a late charge of \$1.00 per minute will be calculated. Fees must be paid within (5) business days of late pick-up. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the Preschool program. Fees may be paid by cash, check or money order. Checks payable to Lowell Joint School District. Checks returned for (NSF) Non-Sufficient Funds, cannot be re-submitted. Cash or Money Order must replace them and a \$25.00 fee will be charged. Please note, notification of tardiness does not excuse a late pick-up.

## **Withdrawing a Child from Preschool**

Before withdrawing a child from the program, a parent/guardian must notify the site supervisor and or Child Development Services Coordinator in writing. A 30-day notice is required for all withdrawals. Parents will be responsible for paying tuition for 30 days after notice is given.

## **Sign-In and Sign-Out**

A parent or authorized adult (18 years or older) must use Learning Genie to electronically sign students in at arrival and at departure in the preschool programs. For the safety of your child, only those adults listed on the emergency card will be permitted to sign children in and out from school. Students will not be released to a person whose name is not on the emergency card. Adults other than the parents may be required to present a picture I.D. when picking up a child. Parents may add or delete names on their child's emergency card at any time, by notifying us in writing or verbally. Every person authorized to sign a child in or out must use our electronic communication system called Learning Genie. A Learning Genie personal access code and instructions will be given with confirmed enrollment. All students must be dropped-off and picked-up in a timely manner.

## **Licensing Requirements & Authority**

All of the preschool classrooms are licensed by California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division. The preschool programs must comply with Title 22 regulations. These regulations can be found at: [www.cdss.ca.gov](http://www.cdss.ca.gov) According to Health and Safety Code Sections 1596.852, 1596.853 and 1596.8535, the California Department of Social Services has the authority to inspect facilities, interview children or staff, and audit child care records without prior consent.

## **Personal Storage Cubby**

Each child will have a cubby for storing their personal belongings. To avoid having to call you in the case of a bathroom accident, we request a zip lock bag filled with a change of clothes to keep in the classroom be provided on the first day of school.. Our program provides a variety of toys for the children's use, so please do not allow your child to bring toys from home unless requested by staff for you to do so.

## Health & Illness

In your child’s best interest and as a courtesy to other parents, please keep your child at home if he or she appears to be ill. The following chart is a tool to help guide you in the event your child becomes ill:

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Colds</b>                   | Student needs to remain home if he/she has an excessive runny nose, excessive coughing, temperature at or above 100° F, or is too uncomfortable to function at school.  |
| <b>Chicken Pox</b>             | Students may return to school when all blisters are dried and crusted over. <b>Notify the school nurse if your child has chickenpox.</b>  |
| <b>Diarrhea</b>                | If a student has diarrhea within 24 of the start of the school day, he/she needs to remain at home. The student may return to school when he/she is free from symptoms for 24 hours and no other signs of illness exist.  |
| <b>Ear Infections</b>          | Student does not need to stay home from school, but should be evaluated by his/her physician if he/she complains of ear pain.   |
| <b>Eye Infections</b>          | Redness, drainage or watery eyes require assessment to determine the cause (i.e. conjunctivitis (pink eye) or possible eye injury). Eyes need to be clear, treatment has started or the student has been cleared by the physician before returning to school.   |
| <b>Fever</b>                   | If the fever is over 100° F, the student should remain home. He/she may return to school when fever free, without medication, for 24 hours.   |
| <b>Fractures and Surgeries</b> | Parents need to contact the nurse when a child has a serious injury or surgery. Modifications to physical activity and mode of travel throughout the building need to be evaluated. Please provide written information from your physician as to your child's level of activity at school. State limitations and special needs. |
| <b>School Injuries</b>         | The nurse or trained staff member will assess the injury, administer first aid and notify parents as soon as possible by phone and/or note as to the type and status of injury.   |
| <b>Head Lice</b>               | Students need to stay home from school and be treated with shampoo or rinse as recommended by your doctor or pharmacy. Children may return to school when the hair is <i>lice-free</i> and show proof of treatment. <b>Notify the school if your child has head lice.</b>   |
| <b>Rashes</b>                  | Students are to remain at home with any undiagnosed skin rash. Students may return to school when the rash disappears or with a doctor's note stating diagnosis and clearing him/her to return to school.   |
| <b>Strep Throat</b>            | Students need to be treated with antibiotics for 48 hours and be without fever before returning to school.  |
| <b>Vomiting</b>                | The student needs to be free from vomiting for at least 24 hours before coming to school. A student may vomit one time and remain in school if there are no other symptoms of illness present.  |

When students arrive at school, the preschool staff will observe each child to determine whether they are healthy enough to attend classes. At the discretion of the preschool staff, you may be asked to take your child home if any health symptoms appear during the school session. If your child is fussy, cranky, or generally not feeling well, it is recommended that your child stay home. Parents will be contacted by staff should we notice any change in the health status of your child.

The staff will work hard to assure that every child is safe at school. However, accidents and emergencies may occur. If your child gets a minor scrape or bump in the classroom or on the playground, we will administer minor treatment. Parents will receive a written notice in the form of an “ Accident Parent

Communication Form.” We will call you immediately if your child bumps his/her head in any way or if the injury needs more than a simple band-aid. Paramedics (911) will be called for critical emergencies. Staff are trained in basic first aid and pediatric CPR.

Each child will be assessed, with parent input, using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). As indicated, children may also be assessed on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire – Social/Emotional (ASQ-SE). Results of all screenings will be sent home. Parents will receive referrals and/or interventions when a student does not meet developmental milestones indicated on any of the screenings.

If you do not want your child to receive the free health screenings, you must notify the child development services office in writing by October 1 or within the first two (2) weeks of starting classes. Our office staff is available to any family needing assistance with referrals for other health services, special education services, or social services.

## Medication

- We encourage parents to arrange your child’s medication schedule so that doses are given before or after school hours, as much as practicable.
- If your child needs to take medication during the preschool day, it will be stored in a locked cabinet in the classroom. It must be in the original container with the child’s name and printed directions on the label with a doctor’s prescription. Over-the-counter medicines will not be administered (including cold medicines) without a prescription. Only authorized personnel will be allowed to administer medication with the parent’s/guardian’s written permission indicated on the release form in the enrollment packet. Please contact our main office for the proper forms and procedures.
- We ask families to sign a sunscreen waiver and provide sunscreen for application during the day at school. Staff will teach children how to apply and will use as needed on sunny days with extended exposure to the sun.

## Nutrition

Time is set aside each day for the children to eat together. Snacks are planned to meet the nutritional needs of the children served and state nutrition guidelines. If you choose to send your child’s snack, please send healthy foods such as sandwiches (one-half will usually do), fruits, vegetables, cheese & crackers, 100% fruit juice, milk, etc. Soda and candy are not allowed. Menus are posted in the classroom and will be sent home for your information. A medical statement is required for any food allergy or restriction your child may have and accommodations will be made to your child’s menu. *We ask all parents to complete a school district application for meals: [LJSD Nutrition Services & Application](#)*

## **Dress Code**

- ❖ Please dress your child in clothing appropriate to the weather conditions and sturdy shoes suitable for outdoor play.
- ❖ Flip flops, crocs, and open toe sandals are not permitted at school due to safety concerns. Athletic shoes are strongly recommended. Please select clothing and shoes that are easy for your child to manage alone.
- ❖ Your children will be participating in activities that could get messy; please dress them in clothing that is easily washable, durable and easy to move in.
- ❖ Please clearly mark all outerwear and backpacks with your child's name. LJSD Preschool is not responsible for any personal belongings, including clothes, brought to the classroom.
- ❖ Although some preschool children may already be toilet trained, sometimes accidents happen. An extra change of clothes must be provided for each child. These items will be left in the classroom and must be labeled with each child's name. Clean clothes to change into allow children to continue to participate in preschool activities. Soiled clothing will be sent home. Please promptly replace the items.
- ❖ NOTE: If your child has an accident, you may be called to bring a change of clothing or to take your child home.

## **Guidance and Discipline**

Our goal is to provide a safe environment that promotes learning, independence and self-control. Classroom expectations are posted and reviewed daily in each classroom. The Three Personal Standards are: 1. Be respectful. 2. Be responsible 3. Be safe at all times. Children are expected to respect the adults at school and to follow directions. Positive discipline is used to guide children to resolve conflicts and solve problems. To ensure a safe, nurturing and positive learning environment, unacceptable behavior will be handled firmly by staff, in a manner appropriate for preschool children. A child who is disruptive may be redirected to another activity or removed from a group situation to regain self-control. If the disruptive behaviors persist, the parent will be contacted to meet with preschool staff to discuss the behavior and agree upon appropriate intervention strategies and/or help with referrals for necessary services. If the interventions do not improve the behaviors or when the health and safety of the child, staff or other children is in jeopardy, the coordinator may dismiss the child from the program.

It is important to remember that individual children differ in how they learn to control their behavior. We are committed to working with parents to help them learn strategies to minimize aggressive behaviors. We have an abundance of information and resources we can provide to help you respond to your child's behavior. The LJSD Preschool staff and parents work collaboratively to ensure what is best for the child.

**\*\*This process differs for students receiving special education services. The parent and teacher will work collaboratively with the District Special Education staff to implement strategies to help the child improve his or her behavior. The IEP team will be convened, if necessary, to modify IEP goals and support services to accommodate the child.**

## **Biting Policy**

We know that young children sometimes bite as a means of frustration, lack of communication, or teething. Fortunately, they often outgrow this behavior. It is a safety concern to the other children in our program. To ensure that we provide a safe and nurturing environment, we must have a policy to minimize biting behaviors. If a child bites, the following steps will take place:

1. First bite, warning in writing and phone call to parent
2. Second bite, parent conference & biting contract
3. Third bite, immediate pick up child from preschool
4. Fourth bite, temporary disenrollment from preschool for two weeks
5. Fifth bite, final disenrollment from preschool

## **Rest Period (Full-Day Program Only)**

As a state licensed facility we are required to provide the children with the opportunity for rest and quiet time daily. Due to limited storage space, we are not able to accommodate large blankets, pillows or other sleep items.

- Each child will be provided with a napping cot or mat.
- No children will be forced to stay awake or stay in the napping area longer than the normal scheduled nap time.
- Napping cots will be disinfected daily.
- Blankets will be sent home to be washed weekly.

## **Restroom/Toileting**

Children will be expected to manage their toileting needs with minimal adult assistance. To ensure safety and comply with state law, children will be supervised at all times; this includes when they are using the restroom facility.

- ❖ All children and adults will wash their hands before exiting the restroom.
- ❖ To ensure proper hygiene, children will be assisted with hand washing.
- ❖ It is recommended that a change of clothing be kept in the classroom in the event of a bathroom accident. If it is not provided, parents will be called to bring a change of clothing. In order to keep children safe and healthy, parents are expected to return to school to change their child within 30 minutes.



## **Birthdays**

Although birthdays are a special day in your child's life, we do not have birthday parties at school. However, should you choose to celebrate, we ask that you bring a small treat and or goodie bag as these items will go home with students at parent/guardian pick-up. Please do not send gifts to celebrate with the class. The classroom teacher will celebrate your child's special day by singing, giving them a special crown to wear, and highlighting them as the special helper for the day.

## **Emergency/Disaster Procedures**

The LJSD Preschool staff and children will practice emergency procedures with the elementary school staff at their site. In the event of an earthquake, fire or other disaster, children will remain at school until signed out by a parent/guardian or other adult designated on the child's emergency card. All adults other than parents may be required to present identification.

## **Court Orders and Custody**

The preschool program will restrict parents' access to their child ONLY if a current copy of a court decree has been provided to the school. The preschool staff will not become involved in any child custody disputes unless required by law. Our records are not available unless required by a current court subpoena.

## **Transportation**

Transportation to and from the preschool program is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian. There will be no daily bus service for the preschool program.

## **Grievance Procedures**

If you have any concerns, complaints or questions about the child development program, we encourage parents to inform the program immediately. The following procedures will apply:

1. Make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher first to see if the issue can be resolved in the classroom.
2. If you are not satisfied after meeting with your child's teacher, please contact the Lowell Joint School District office to set up a meeting with the Program Coordinator.
3. In the event the Program Coordinator is unable to resolve your issue, parents are encouraged to speak to the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services at the Lowell Joint School District office.

## **Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of Lowell Joint School District to provide an educational, employment and business environment free of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct or communications constituting sexual harassment, as defined and

otherwise prohibited by State and Federal law. The Lowell Joint School District Board of Education prohibits sexual harassment in the working environment of District employees or applicants by any person in any form. Prompt disciplinary action will be taken against any student or employee engaging in sexual harassment. If you feel that you have been the victim of sexual harassment, please contact the Personnel department at (562) 902-0211, ext. 4280.

## **Resources for Parents**

One of our goals as a preschool is to be a resource to our families. At the beginning of the school year (or upon enrollment if a child enrolls later in the school year), you will receive a *Family Needs Assessment* or similar form. After you complete the form, we will send you information on the many resources in our community for families of young children and valuable information about child development. Parents are always welcome to speak with the Site Supervisor/Lead Teacher to get referrals to health and social agencies within the community.

## **Community Involvement**

We work closely with Community Partners in the City of La Habra and the City of Whittier. Many community agencies, such as the La Habra and Whittier Police Department and Orange County Fire Authority provide student assemblies throughout the year for our preschool students. Other partners, such as Assistance League, Help Me Grow, 211 and Gary Center provide resources/services to families in the preschool program. Our program is also available to give information regarding available services in the surrounding area.

## **Parent Participation & Involvement**

Our program believes in building strong partnerships with families. Research has proven that children make greater gains in their education when families participate in school activities. We maintain an open door policy, and encourage parents of currently enrolled children to get involved with the PTA, attend parent education classes, and share in their child's learning. When parents are involved, children do better in school! The most accurate predictor of a child's school success is the extent to which the family is able to create a home environment that encourages learning, expresses realistic expectations for their child's achievements and become involved in their child's education at school and in the community.

### **❖ Classroom Volunteer Guidelines**

Parent volunteers are an important part of our educational program. We value the assistance provided by parents and depend on the adult/child interactions our children gain from this experience. By volunteering in your child's classroom, you will learn first-hand how he/she is progressing, socializing with peers and learning. Parents are encouraged to volunteer at least once a month. If this is not possible due to work schedules, parents should make arrangements with their child's teacher to volunteer in another capacity (e.g., helping cut out shapes for a classroom activity, etc.) If you need to reschedule once you have already committed to a date, be sure to arrange for another parent to trade volunteer days and let the teacher know well in

advance. Younger siblings may not come to school with you when you volunteer. We encourage both moms and dads to volunteer. A provided volunteer form must be completed prior classroom volunteering. This form will request proof of current negative TB test/TB assessment, proof of MMR, Influenza, and Dtap immunizations. A volunteer immunization form can be accessed within the Appendix of this handbook and or at the preschool site.

The following guidelines are to be followed when volunteering:

- Licensing regulations state all volunteers must have a TB clearance.
- Due to safety issues and licensing guidelines, siblings (older or younger) may not come to school on volunteer days. If no child care is available for the younger sibling, arrangements can be made with the Preschool site supervisor to volunteer in another capacity.

Volunteering in your child's classroom is a fun and memorable experience your child looks forward to. Your preschooler is entitled to be the classroom helper for the day and take honor in introducing their parent to the class on the day his/her parent volunteers.

### ❖ **Read to your child daily**

Daily reading will support the development of language and stimulate an interest in books and learning. Books may be checked out at the local public library.

### ❖ **Attend Parent Meetings**

Parents are encouraged and expected to attend parent meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to inform parents of school policies, upcoming events, parent responsibilities, preschool curriculum and to provide parent education. The meetings provide parents with valuable information to assist them in preparing their children for success in school. Parents are able to attend the meeting while their preschoolers are in class. Younger siblings are welcome in our parent meetings.

### ❖ **Attend Workshops**

Throughout the year, parent workshops are offered to guide families in working with their preschoolers at home so they are better prepared for kindergarten. These classes address topics such as nutrition, behavior, and literacy, just to name a few. We encourage all families to take advantage of these wonderful education opportunities.

### ❖ **Parent Conferences**

We have two scheduled parent conferences during the year. Results of the DRDP and academic assessments will be shared with parents during parent conferences. Please take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to speak one on one with your child's teacher about his or her progress.

### ❖ **Communication**

We value parent participation and open communication at all of our preschool sites. We believe parents are valuable partners in the learning and development of their child.

### ❖ **Parent Input**

Teachers and the office staff are available to speak with you regarding any questions, concerns, or ideas you have for the preschool program. However, we ask that you not interrupt instructional time to talk with your child's teacher. You may always attach a note to the sign-in sheet or request a meeting date to speak with your child's teacher.

### ❖ **Reporting Changes**

Please be sure to notify the office manager immediately if you have changes in home address, home or work telephone numbers, emergency contacts or emergency phone numbers.

### ❖ **Parent Newsletters**

Each month, a parent newsletter will be sent home with your child. The newsletter will keep you informed about upcoming events, school holidays, curriculum, and share tips for promoting your child's learning at home.

## **Confidentiality**

As a parent volunteer in the program, you will observe the skills and behavior of other children. We ask that you respect the confidentiality of each child participating in the program by not discussing another child's development or behavior. Teachers and other school staff cannot discuss a child's development, behavior or program participation with anyone except the parent or legal guardian. Student records are confidential and are only accessed by authorized program staff, Community Care Licensing, The California State Department of Education, or local police authorities in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect. We cannot release student information to anyone other than the parent without the written consent of the parent.

## STATE FUNDED SUBSIDIZED PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Qualifying families can enroll in the state funded subsidized preschool program. Priority admission is given to children residing within the LJSD attendance boundaries. The office staff or administrators will help families determine if they are income eligible. Fee based children and state subsidized children are co-mingled together in the same classroom.

In addition to the age and/or income qualifications, the following apply:

1. Parents must complete and sign all the required enrollment forms:
  - Proof of family size: birth record (or other reliable documentation) of child & any siblings
  - Proof of Income: check stubs or other reliable documentation of income
  - Immunization form indicating the child has received the required immunizations
  - Parent's Identification
  - Proof of Residency: rental agreement & gas/electric bill OR a letter verifying residence if rental agreement is not in the family's name
  - Emergency Information
  - Child's preadmission health history – parent report
  - Physicians report
  - Consent for Medical Treatment
  - Admission Agreement
  - Notification of Parent's Rights form
  - Personal rights form
  - Parent health statement
  - Parent Volunteer TB test results
  - Criminal Record statement
  - Social Security Consent
  - Proof of total family income
  - Application
  - Notice of Action
- ❖ Children must attend preschool classes regularly. Those with more than 3 days of *unexcused* absences may be dismissed from the program.
- ❖ Children who behave in ways that endanger the physical safety or emotional well-being of themselves or others may be dismissed.

Students may not attend classes until all documents have been received by the office. The only exception will be for the child's health screening which must be received within 30 days of the first day of attendance. If the screening is not received within 30 days of the first day of attendance, the child will be excluded from classes until the document is received.

During the enrollment and certification process, parents and staff will complete the Application for Services, which is signed by the parent. A Notice of Action (NOA) will be issued after the certification paperwork is complete and signed by the parent and staff. An NOA will be issued when certification is completed, changes

to the program occur, or when families are terminated from the program. Parent Right of Appeal procedures are on the back of the NOA.

All children, including students with disabilities and special needs, are welcome. Classroom staff and school specialists work closely together to develop and implement individual goals as stated in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each child with special needs. We understand the requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to make and implement reasonable accommodations for such children.

## **Income Documentation**

Families must provide proof of income for the month preceding certification. Total family income includes, but is not limited to: gross wages, overtime, tips, cash aid, child support payments received, and portions of student grants or scholarships not identified for educational purposes. The LJSD Preschool program reserves the right to ask for additional documentation to verify income.

The following may be accepted for income documentation:

- Payroll check stubs
- Letter from employer stating gross monthly or weekly income and/or rate of pay and hours worked
- Other record of wages issued by your employer

If self-employed, you may need to provide as many of the following types of documentation as necessary to determine income:

- Letter from source of income
- Copy of the most recently signed and completed tax return
- Other business records, such as ledger, receipts or business logs

If the child is under protective services, a written referral dated within six (6) months of the application must be submitted that includes (1) a statement certifying the child is receiving CPS and that child care services are a necessary component of the CPS plan, (2) Probable duration of the CPS plan and (3) Name, address, phone number and signature of the county child welfare staff.

If a parent requests services based on homelessness, a written referral from an emergency shelter or other legal, medical or social service agency OR a written declaration that the parent is homeless with a statement describing the living situation must be submitted for the child's file.

If the child is *at risk*, a written referral dated with six (6) months of the application for services must be submitted, including (1) A statement by a legally qualified professional that the child is at risk of abuse and neglect and that the child care services are needed to reduce that risk, (2) Probable duration of the at risk situation and (3) Name, address, phone number and signature of the legally qualified staff.

## **Documentation of Family Size**

Families must provide supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family.

Documentation for the number of children shall be at least one of the following:

- Birth Certificate
- Child custody court order
- Adoption documents
- Foster care placement records
- School or medical records
- County welfare department records
- Other reliable documentation indication the relationship of the child to the parent

When only one parent has signed the Application for Service and the information provided indicates the child in the family has another parent whose names does not appear on the application, then the presence or absence of that parent shall be documented by:

- Records of marriage, divorce, domestic partnership or legal separation
- Court-ordered child custody arrangement
- Evidence that the parent signing the application receives child support payments
- Rental receipts or agreement contracts, utility bills or other documents for the residence of the family indicating that the parent is the responsible party.
- Any other documentation, excluding a self-declaration to confirm the presence or absence of the parent of the child in the family.

A parent may submit a self-declaration under penalty of perjury explaining the absence of the other parent from the family when the absence is due to the recent departure of that parent from the family. Within six months of applying or reporting the change in family size, the parent must provide documentation of that parent's absence.

## **Eligibility and Enrollment Policies**

In accordance with Federal and State policies, our program prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, handicap or disability, religion or national origin. Reasonable accommodations will be made for children with special needs.

- ❖ Participation is dependent on compliance with program policies, procedures and requirements.
- ❖ For all classrooms, children must be between the ages of 2.9 and 5 years old and may attend until they are Kindergarten or Transitional Kindergarten eligible.

## **Priority for Admission**

Priority for enrollment will be given to children who:

- ❖ are referred by Child Protective Services (CPS)
- ❖ are At Risk of Abuse, Neglect and/or Exploitation

- ❖ whose parents meet the lowest rank by income and family size, as set by the California State Department of Education

Our program maintains a Wait List when our centers are full. All families are ranked based on gross family income and family size. Guidelines for priority for admission are the same for wait list families.

## Appeals Procedure

If the parent/guardian does not agree with the district decision as stated in the Notice of Action (CD-7617), the parent/guardian may appeal the intended action. To protect the right to appeal, the parent/guardian must follow the instructions as described. If the parent/guardian does not respond by the required due dates or fails to submit the required appeal information with the appeal request, the appeal may be considered abandoned.

**Step 1:** Complete the appeal information as found on the reverse side of the Notice of Action.

**Step 2:** Mail or deliver the written local hearing request within 14 days of receipt to:

Lowell Joint School District  
11019 Valley Home Avenue  
Whittier, CA 990603  
Attn: Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services

**Step 3:** Within 10 calendar days following the agency's receipt of the appeal request, the agency will notify the parent/guardian of the time and place of the hearing. The parent/guardian or an authorized representative is required to attend this hearing. If the parent/guardian or representative does not attend the hearing, the parent/guardian abandons the right to appeal, and the action of the agency will be implemented.

**Step 4:** Within 10 calendar days following the hearing, the agency shall mail or deliver to the parent/guardian a written decision.

**Step 5:** If the parent/guardian disagrees with the agency's written decision, parent/guardian has 14 days from the receipt of the decision to file an appeal with the California Department of Education (CDE). The appeal must include the following documents and information:

- 1) a written statement specifying the reasons you believed the agency's decision was incorrect,
- 2) a copy of the agency's decision letter, and
- 3) a copy of both sides of the Notice of Action.

### Mail the appeal to:

California Department of Education  
Child Development Division  
1430 N Street, Suite 3410  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Attn: Appeals Coordinator



**Step 6:** Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of the appeal CDE will issue a written decision to the parent and the agency. If your appeal is denied, the agency will stop providing child care and development services immediately upon the receipt of the CDE decision letter.

## **Best Interest of Child Days (BIOC)**

Children may be excused from school when the child has an enriching, meaningful experience beyond the scope of the preschool curriculum. BIOC days may include:

- ❖ Visitation with non-custodial parent (non-court ordered)
- ❖ Enriching family outing or vacation
- ❖ Spending the day with visiting relatives
- ❖ Special day with parent
- ❖ Religious/cultural observances
- ❖ Official or legal agency appointments (immigration, court appearance, WIC appointment, etc)
- ❖ Parent's work/school holiday differs from the center's observance of the holiday

No child may have more than 10 BIOC days per school year, with the exception of children in Child Protective Services. Please call the office if your child will be absent from school to let us know the reason for the absence.

## **Termination Policy**

In the event that services are terminated, the family will receive a Notice of Action (NOA) that explains the reason for termination as well as the appeals process. Families may be terminated for the following reasons:

1. Family request
2. Three (3) or more unexcused absences
3. Person whose behavior presents a risk to children and staff (i.e. – parent using profane language, threats, destroying property, aggressive behavior, assault, etc.)
4. Violation of Lowell Joint School District Preschool policies and procedures
5. Knowingly using incorrect or inaccurate information to obtain services they would otherwise not be entitled to receive



LOWELL JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
"Come Grow With Us"

## **Parent/Guardian Handbook Acknowledgement**

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Parent/Guardian Handbook for the Lowell Joint School District Preschools and child development programs. While I understand that the Parent/Guardian Handbook is neither a contract nor a legal document, I recognize that it is my responsibility to read and understand the policies, provisions, and procedures contained in the Parent/Guardian Handbook.

In addition, I understand that the contents of the Parent/Guardian Handbook are subject to change. I acknowledge that the Parent/Guardian Handbook will be revised in accordance with the rules or regulations of state, federal, and accrediting entities, best practices for child care service providers, or at the discretion of the Lowell Joint School District. I recognize that any such revisions will supersede, modify, or eliminate the current contents of the Parent Handbook.

Moreover, I recognize that it is my responsibility to contact the Child Development Services Coordinator for any questions I might have about the contents of the Parent Handbook now and in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# APPENDIX

## **BILLING SCHEDULE**

Child Development Services is a self-sustaining program funded through state and family fees. Monthly payments will follow the fee schedule below. Fees include days that the program is open, which follows the LJSD student attendance calendar for the 2023-2024 school year.

| <b>BILLING PERIOD</b> | <b>PERIOD DATES</b> | <b>NUMBER OF DAYS</b> | <b>PAYMENT DUE</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Period 1              | 8/16/23-9/11/23     | 18 Days               | 8/1/2023           |
| LABOR DAY             | 9/4/23              | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| Period 2              | 9/12/23-10/5/23     | 18 Days               | 9/1/2023           |
| Period 3              | 10/6/23-10/31/23    | 18 Days               | 10/1/2023          |
| Staff Development     | 11/1/23             | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| Period 4              | 11/2/23-12/5/23     | 18 Days               | 11/1/2023          |
| VETERAN'S DAY         | 11/10/23            | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| FALL BREAK            | 11/20/23-11/24/23   | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| Period 5              | 12/6/23-1/12/24     | 18 Days               | 12/1/2023          |
| WINTER BREAK          | 12/25/23-1/5/24     | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| MLK DAY               | 1/15/24             | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| Period 6              | 1/16/24-2/8/24      | 18 Days               | 1/1/2024           |
| Period 7              | 2/9/24-3/7/24       | 18 Days               | 2/1/2024           |
| LINCOLN DAY           | 2/12/24             | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| WASHINGTON DAY        | 2/19/24             | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| Period 8              | 3/8/24-4/10/24      | 18 Days               | 3/1/2024           |
| SPRING BREAK          | 3/18/24-3/22/24     | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| Staff Development     | 3/29/24             | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |
| Period 9              | 4/11/24-5/6/24      | 18 Days               | 4/1/2024           |
| Period 10             | 5/7/24-5/31/24      | 18 Days               | 5/1/2024           |
| MEMORIAL DAY          | 5/27/24             | CLOSED                | CLOSED             |

Our district preschool program is a self-sustaining program funded through state and family fees. No credit will be given for any absences.

**STATE FUNDED PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES**

The following schedule of income ceilings is used to determine income eligibility for families that qualify for free or reduced preschool. This chart is developed by the California Department of Education, Early Education Division. Please see [Management Bulletin 23-06](#) for more information effective through July 1, 2023.

| <b>Family Size</b> | <b>Family Monthly Income</b> | <b>Family Yearly Income</b> |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1-2                | \$7,209                      | \$86,514                    |
| 3                  | \$8,154                      | \$97,843                    |
| 4                  | \$9,441                      | \$113,292                   |
| 5                  | \$10,952                     | \$131,419                   |
| 6                  | \$12,462                     | \$149,546                   |
| 7                  | \$12,745                     | \$152,944                   |
| 8                  | \$13,029                     | \$156,343                   |
| 9                  | \$13,312                     | \$159,742                   |
| 10                 | \$13,595                     | \$163,141                   |

**FEE BASED PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

|   |        |       |
|---|--------|-------|
| PART DAY Preschool Program (3 hours)    | JORDAN | \$550 |
| FULL DAY Preschool Program (8am-3:15pm) | MACY   | \$850 |
| FULL DAY Preschool Program (8am-3:15pm) | OLITA  | \$850 |

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Financial Assistance is provided by the following agencies:

ORANGE COUNTY: Children’s Home Society of California (OLITA PRESCHOOL)

<https://www.chs-ca.org/child-care-payment-program/eligibility-list-questionnaire>

LOS ANGELES: Options for Learning (JORDAN PRESCHOOL)

[https://www.optionsforlearning.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC\\_ID=2100182&type=d&pREC\\_ID=2145172](https://www.optionsforlearning.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=2100182&type=d&pREC_ID=2145172)





**Volunteer Immunization Requirements**

Parent/Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Preschool Campus: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Complete the sections below and bring a **COPY** of your official immunization documentation for verification to the Preschool Site Supervisor. Parent and or volunteer who cannot complete or provide documentation will not be allowed to assist in the Preschool classroom. **Documentation must be submitted to the Preschool Site Supervisor or District office before the first day scheduled to help in the classroom.**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (TDaP): Must show documentation of either:</b> |            |
| <b>A. One time dose of TDaP (includes pertussis) OR</b>                          | Date _____ |
| <b>B. Subsequent Td booster every 10 years following one-time TDaP. OR</b>       | Date _____ |
| <b>C. Serologic test (Titer test) for Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis</b>         | Date _____ |

|   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| <b>Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Must show documentation of either:</b> |                         |
| <b>A. One dose of measles vaccine (or MMR).</b>                         | Date _____              |
| <b>B. Serologic test (Titer test) for measles, mumps and rubella.</b>   | Date _____ Result _____ |

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Tuberculosis Screening: Must show Documentation of either :</b> |                         |
| <b>A. Negative PPD result with in past 2 years. OR</b>             | Date _____ Result _____ |
| <b>B. California TB Risk Assessment form. (Please Attach)</b>      | Date _____              |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Influenza: Must show documentation of either:</b>  |            |
| <b>A. One dose of influenza vaccine annually during the recommended flu season (September through February). OR</b> | Date _____ |
| <b>B. Sign Influenza waiver below (Influenza only).</b>   | Date _____ |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Influenza Waiver</b>   |
| I, _____ choose to decline the influenza vaccination for the year 20____. |
| Signature: _____ Date: _____  |

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| <b>Optional: COVID 19 Vaccine</b>  |                              |
| Have you received the COVID 19 Vaccine? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO | If yes, date received: _____ |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Emergency Contact: Please provide an emergency contact in case of an emergency while volunteering.</b> |
| Full Name: _____ Relation: _____ Phone Number: _____  |