

## YOUR STAFF HANDBOOK

Dear ECP Employee,

Whether you are a new or returning staff member, we welcome you and are beyond excited to have you as part of our very special family! As an employee of the Charlotte County Early Childhood Programs, we are providing you with this handbook, that we hope you find helpful. It contains information designed to orient you to our program, helpful details about day-to-day operations, as well as any approved policies and procedures that will help inform your work.

As regulatory standards, guidelines, and/or program needs change, we will adapt the information as necessary. Please refer to the handbook often, and let us know if you notice necessary edits or updates, based on your experience in your position. Let's have a fabulous year supporting our children, families and each other.

Thank you,  
The ECP Leadership team

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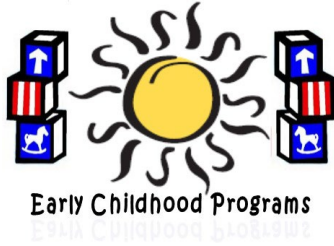
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## **Mission & Vision Statements**

### **DISTRICT VISION**

Student Success!

### **DISTRICT MISSION**

To promote character and competence in a positive learning culture that ensures success and inspires purpose for ALL.

### **DISTRICT VALUES**

Collaboration  
Communication  
Integrity  
Leadership  
Excellence  
Safety

### **PROGRAM MISSION**

The mission of the Early Childhood Programs is to provide children and their families with opportunities to build a foundation for success through quality, comprehensive, community and school based early childhood programs.

## Program History, Philosophy & Mission Statement

Currently, the Charlotte County School Board Head Start and Early Head Start Programs are the flagships of the district's "Early Childhood Programs". The programs are funded for 205 center-based, Head Start enrollment slots, 56 center-based, Early Head Start enrollment slots and four slots for pregnant women, with a priority on expectant teens. With classrooms across the county in two dedicated early childhood buildings and nine elementary schools, the programs are blended and/or partnered with multiple other birth to five programs. Head Start, Early Head Start, Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten, the Teen Parent Program, Pre-Kindergarten Exceptional Student Education and Tuition-based programming all operate under the supervision of the same leadership team, and adhere to the same high-quality standards of care and operations.

As a grantee with a school board that truly values early education and school readiness, the program benefits from a high percentage of non-federal match in the form of comprehensive ancillary services. High dollar, professional services such as fiscal, human resources, facilities maintenance and operations, safety and security, and nutrition and wellness are all provided by a grantee that understands the importance of investing in early education. This advantage allows more federal program dollars to be allocated to quality direct services for children and families. Both Head Start and Early Head Start offer center-based, full day services, with Early Head Start operating all year. Extended day services are available before and after school for families with such need.

Head Start promotes the school readiness of children from birth to age five from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development. Head Start programs provide learning environments that support children's growth in many areas such as language, literacy, and social and emotional development. Head Start emphasizes the role of parents as their child's first and most important teacher. These programs help build relationships with families that support family well-being.

CCPS also provides Early Head Start, which serves infants and toddlers under the age of 3, and pregnant women. EHS programs provide intensive comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their

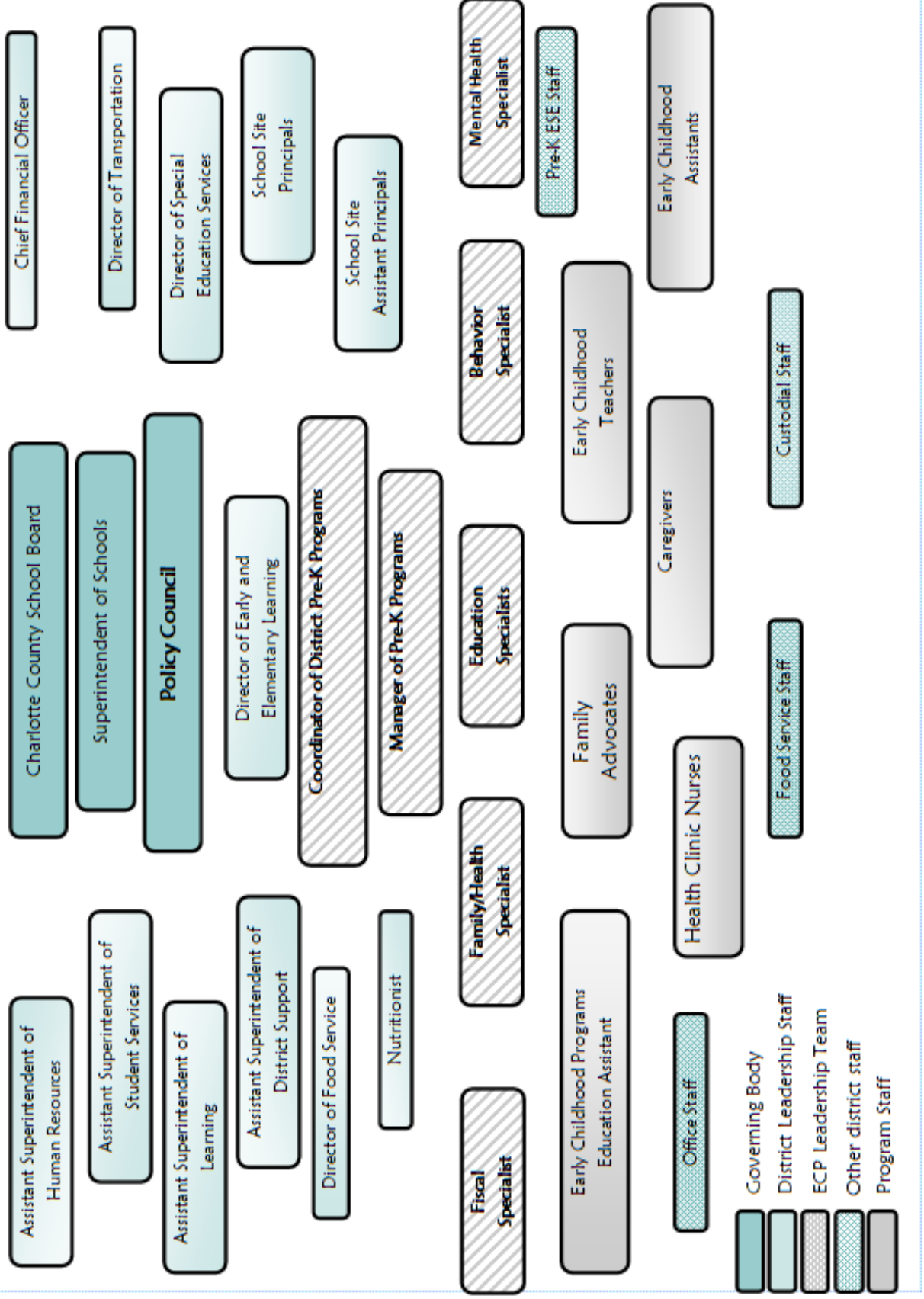
families, and to pregnant women and their families. EHS programs are designed to nurture healthy attachments between parent and child (and child and caregiver). Services encompass the full range of a family's needs from pregnancy through a child's third birthday.

All programs provide a comprehensive service model. By partnering with community agencies or by providing direct services, the program assists families with family support & parenting, accessing nutrition, health & dental services, and with promoting positive mental health outcomes. This is, of course in addition to the high-quality childcare services that are the cornerstone of every Head Start program.

Charlotte County Early Childhood Programs also boast rich, productive relationships with a broad variety of community agencies. Many community partners provide direct services to families at Head Start facilities, making access to resources easier for families. Dental Screenings, GED classes, and crisis intervention are just a few of the services that can be accessed at the centers. The program also serves as a lab school for Early Childhood Education Technical College students and as Harry Chapin Food Bank distribution site, as a start.

As one of the country's original Head Start grantees, the Charlotte County School Board has a long history of providing the highest quality early childhood services to the families of young children in Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda and Englewood, Florida. As a source of pride and joy in the community, the program looks forward in continuation of its mission; "...providing children and families with opportunities to build a foundation for success through quality, comprehensive, community and school-based early childhood programs".

# The ECP Organizational Chart



- Governing Body
- District Leadership Staff
- ECP Leadership Team
- Other district staff
- Program Staff

## WHO'S WHO: ECP Leadership & Administrative Staff\*

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
Nicole Hansen	Coordinator, ECP
Cleo Presley	Manager/Disabilities Specialist
Nicky James	Family/Health Specialist
Marisa Doherty	Fiscal Specialist
Kathy Bubin	Education Specialist (Hope office)
Tracy Hietpas	Education Specialist
Dawn Thompson	Education Specialist
Christy Wakeley	Education Specialist
Monica Miller	Mental Health Specialist
Kelly Monteleone	Confidential Secretary

\*Leadership & administrative staff are usually available to assist countywide.

# The Charlotte County Public Schools Early Childhood Programs District Birth-Five Program Option Overview

## Head Start/VPK

### *Serving the families of 3 and/or 4 year olds*

- Funded by federal grant dollars & state Voluntary PreK dollars for 4 year olds – No charge for qualifying families
- Program offered at Baker Center, Hope Center & District Elementary Schools with the exception of SJES
- Supervision of services provided by ECP Leadership Team & Elementary school based leaders

## Early Head Start

### *Serving pregnant mothers & the families of children from birth - 36 months*

- Funded by federal grant dollars – No charge for qualifying families
- Program offered at Baker Center & Hope Center
- Supervision of services provided by ECP Leadership Team

## Pre-K Exceptional Student Education

- Funded by state FTE dollars – No charge for qualifying families
- Sites: Baker Center & identified elementary schools
- Supervision of services provided by ESE leaders, ECP Leadership Team & school-based leaders

## Childcare for Teen Parents

### *Serving pregnant mothers & the families of children from birth - 5 years*

- Funded by state, FTE dollars – No charge for teen parents enrolled in CCPS as a full time student, working toward a high school diploma
- Program offered at Baker Center & Hope Center
- Supervision of services provided by ECP Leadership Team & the Director of Drop-out Prevention

## Ecc-Based Voluntary Pre-K

### *Serving the families of children from birth - 5 year olds*

- Funded by parent tuition & state Voluntary PreK dollars for 4 year olds
- Program offered at Hope Center & Baker Center
- Supervision of services provided by ECP Leadership Team





## Attendance & Scheduling

### Baker and Hope Center

#### Student Hours

ARRIVAL	8:00 – 8:30
DIMISSAL	2:30 – 3:00
EX DAY AM	7:30-8:00
EX DAY PM	3:00-4:30

#### Staff Hours

3-5 year old Staff	7:15 – 3:45
Zero to Three Staff	7:30 – 3:00
Family Advocates	7:15 – 3:15

**Elementary Locations follow site schedules.**

### Leave

#### Illness & Emergencies

If you need to miss work unexpectedly due to illness or an emergency, please text Kelly Monteleone (941)769-7311 as soon as you know you will be out. Hope staff include Kathy Bubin (501)553-1788 in your communication. Please *also* go on Smartfind to formally request sub coverage. Additionally, work out a communication system with your team member(s) that works for you.

#### Personal Leave

If you would like to take a personal day, the Leave Request form must be submitted at least two days prior, as per the union contract, Personal Leave may not be used the day before or the day following a holiday or vacation period without the express consent of the principal or supervisor. Maintaining quality program operations will be the priority when considering non-emergency leave requests.

**Appointments, Arriving late, Leaving early**

Occasionally, you may want to request a minimal amount of time off for an appointment or school event. When this is the case, please email Nicole, Cleo and Kelly (Hope staff include Kathy). Do not ask anyone to cover. If approved, coverage will be arranged for you. No time will be approved without a corresponding email and leave form.

**Breaks**

Please, please, please be mindful of the time when taking your breaks. Your break begins when coverage arrives in your room, not when you leave the room. Your break ends 15 or 30 minutes later, please be on time. It only takes one person to mess up the schedule for the rest of the day. Please be advised that as per union contract employees may leave campus for their 30-minute unpaid lunch break(s), but must remain on school property for 15-minute paid breaks.

## Workplace Health & Safety

### **Staff Accidents/Injury**

All injuries that occur while you are working for the Charlotte County School District need to be reported to your supervisor immediately.

Workers' comp insurance may not pay the medical bills if you don't report your injury promptly to your employer. *Baker & Hope Center employees report all injuries to Kelly Monteleone.*

The administrative staff at all schools and sites have the appropriate forms for completion and will require your signature. He or she will be able to answer most questions, however if you still have concerns about your claim contact Risk Management at 941-255-0808 Ext. 3046.

**Note:** First Report of Accident Forms are required to be completed even if you choose to not receive medical attention.

### **Building and Site Security**

Each school/site has a district approved Crisis Plan. Each work area/classroom should have a copy of the plan. It is your responsibility to review and become knowledgeable about the contents of the plan and how it relates to you and your professional role. Please follow the following basic safety and security guidelines:

- Do not let anyone into the building. There is a security procedure for visitor entry, please allow the front office staff to handle this task.
- If you see a visitor in the building or on campus without a badge, please refer the person to the front desk to check in.
- IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

### **Mandated Reporter/Suspected Abuse**

All public school employees are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. Details about your responsibilities are outlined in the required,

annual training provided by CCPS. You may also refer to the DCF website for more information.

If you suspect abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to determine whether it warrants reporting the concern. If it does, you must make the report yourself. After making the report, you may let a member of Leadership and/or your Family Advocate know about the situation.

## Needs, Budgets and Purchasing

### **CLASSROOM BUDGETS**

Each classroom receives an allocation of funds to enhance educational experiences. These discretionary funds are dispersed twice per year and are to be used for materials and supplies needed to supplement the curriculum. Our strong preference is that early learning vendors are utilized. The program has the option of considering Amazon and Walmart online orders, but quality assurance is much easier with EC vendors. Leadership Team members must review all orders to ensure that items align with program standards and goals. Program Coordinator or manager will formally approve purchases. Please submit orders as early as possible after funds are released.

Fund amount per classroom: Provided via email Fall/Spring

### **SUPPLEMENTAL REQUESTS**

Larger, more expensive items, such as furniture and technology are usually purchased during the summer months and on a rotating schedule. If there are classroom needs outside of the normal budget/cycle, please speak with your Education Specialist for next steps.

### **SPENDING PROCEDURES**

The authorization, handling and use of credit cards has been established to provide a convenient and efficient means to purchase goods and services from vendors. Credit cards, however, shall not be used in order to circumvent the general purchasing procedures established by State law and Board policy.

Wal-Mart in-store purchases require the completion and approval of the form, *Prior Approval Form for In-store Purchases*. Wal-Mart credit cards are available at each site. Send original receipt to Baker Center attn; Marisa Doherty, Fiscal Specialist. If receipts are being sent from off-site location, please make a copy of the receipt for your records. Off-site locations do not need to provide the bookkeeper with a receipt as all purchases are coded to the program.

## **Professionalism, Training & Leadership**

### **Confidentiality & Professionalism**

Program staff should maintain the ideals of the professional standards of conduct at all times. It is especially important to remain vigilant when interacting with the families served by the program. Speaking negatively about other families or staff members is unacceptable. Without exception, damage is caused to the programs reputation and relationship with the community and families.

### **Training & Conferences**

Ongoing training and professional development will be provided by the program throughout the school year. Staff members who show interest or leadership potential may be asked to participate in specific training, or to attend an early childhood conference. Additional training requests may be submitted to Cleo or Nicole.

### **Professional Development & Leadership Opportunities**

The program supports ongoing professional development for all staff members. A limited number of classroom staff (at any one time) may apply for TEACH Scholarship dollars as they work toward early childhood credentials and/or degrees. Leadership Team members are available to serve as certified advisors and observers. Please check with Cleo or Nicole about scholarship slot availability.

Throughout the school year, the program offers many opportunities for staff to participate in leadership and program planning activities. Events such as Family and Health Advisories, School Readiness Meetings, Goal/Data Review Meetings, etc., are all opportunities to get involved in program decision making. Seeking out and accepting leadership

opportunities are great ways to explore future program roles and responsibilities.

### **Effective Use of Time**

Staff should utilize all available time during the work day; including but not limited to rest time, before and after school, in-service days, etc. to ensure all work requirements are completed. Site staff should utilize time with the second (floating) assistant as well, they are EC Assistants, expected to perform the same duties and responsibilities. Time should be spent inputting documentation, organizing, cleaning, and sanitizing classrooms, planning and prepping with team members. Nap time is not break time, please use this time efficiently.

### **Meal Time**

Lunch is provided by the program for staff who work a full day in any of the Early Childhood Programs; PreK ESE not included. The purpose of providing these meals is for staff to sit and eat with the children to model appropriate table manners, eating habits, and engage in pleasant conversation. Staff will only receive free meals for this to this end. Staff have the option of purchasing/bringing their own meal to be consumed outside of the classroom during breaks. Only infants requiring one-on-one feeding (baby food) need to be fed one-at-a-time, requiring full time and attention. All others, toddler – PreK, lend themselves to family meals where teachers are able to assist while eating.

### **Technology**

#### Social Media

Postings to social media should be done in a manner sensitive to the staff member's professional responsibilities. Staff are not to share photos or



other identifiable information about children enrolled in Charlotte County Pre-K Programs per Charlotte County's Social Media policy (PO7540.04).

#### Cell Phones/Tablets

Cell phones are to remain in a locked cabinet during work hours except for personal breaks outside of the classroom. During an emergency situation or drill, staff are required to use the provided laptops or tablets for our Raptor procedure. Tablets are to be taken outside during playground time in the event that an emergency occurs while outside. Pictures taken of children should only be taken on the tablets provided by Baker Center.

#### Technology in the classroom

Children in zero to three-year-old classrooms are not to have any screen time during the school day – this includes watching songs/videos on iPads. Children in Head Start classrooms screen time should be limited to use of Math & Reading Academy instruction and assessment prep/completion.

## “Don’t do that!”

- NO cell phones during work time. They must be kept on silent and in a teacher cabinet or closet unless on break, this includes during student rest/nap time. Should an emergency arise, staff should use the classroom phones or walkies. Additionally, headphones/earbuds are strictly prohibited during work hours, as they cause safety and supervision issues.
- NO snacking or containers with company logos (Starbucks, Coke, Dunkin’ Donuts, etc.) Only drinks in closed covered cups are permitted when working with children.
- Don’t use technology for personal use during work hours. Homework should be completed AT HOME.
- Limit parent contact to in-person, and program/district sanctioned methods. NO TEXTING. NO (additional) APPS.
- Avoid the use of terms such as “dude”, “girlfriend”, “bro”, etc. when addressing students. While these labels may be considered playful, at school children’s names should be used the great majority of the time.

## “Do this!”

- Love our children and families, and take pride in everything you do for and with them.
- Please dress comfortably, yet professionally.
- Staff may eat their own food outside of classrooms during their breaks or program provided food during student mealtimes.
- Have your classroom set up when the children arrive, and make sure it’s picked up at the end of the day.
- Do remove broken items and make sure you let your Education Specialist know!
- Support one another, form friendships and share ideas. Be someone that you would like to work with.
- Lean on your leadership team. Ask for help when you need it and offer ideas when you have them.
- **Have the best year ever!**

SECTION 7:  
**POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Education Services

Disability Services

# **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

Family Services

Community Engagement

# **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

Health Services

Nutrition Services

# **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

## Mental Health Services

SECTION 8

**PROGRAM GOALS & PLANS**

- BROAD Program Goals/Action Plan
- School Readiness Goals/Action Plan
- Self-assessment/Program Improvement Plan