



APPS
Early
Childhood
Program

2019-2020

Allen Park Public Schools Early Childhood Program

Arno Elementary School

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ECP at a Glance

I am very excited to welcome all of our families to our ECP classroom! As we begin a new school year, I wanted to share information with you about some of our classroom and school routines.

*You may want to keep this as a reference to use throughout the school year!

Arrival/Dismissal – The ECP staff will greet students every day at door 4 on Thomas Avenue. It is important that you have your child to school on time so we are able to get as much learning into our day as possible. Students will be dismissed to parents/guardians waiting at the door at dismissal time. Please be sure to pick up your child on time. If someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up your child, their name needs to be on the emergency card or prior arrangements with me are required and they will need to have their ID on them for me to check. Students riding a bus will be accompanied to and from the bus by ECP staff.

Attendance – It is important that your child is at school as much as possible. In the case that your child needs to miss school, please call the Arno office at (313) 827-1050 to notify them of an absence. When calling, please give your child's name, teacher, and reason for the absence.

Backpacks – It is very important that your child bring his/her backpack to school **every day**. Backpacks should be large enough to hold a standard folder without having to fold it (standard size backpack, not the small ones please!).

Behavior Management Approach – We will be using PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions Support) in our classroom in the form of a clip chart. There are different behavior categories that students will move their clips to based on their behavior in the classroom. Students will start the day with their clip in the “Keep it going” (middle) section. Students will have the opportunity to move their clips up for positive behavior choices or down in the case of poor behavior choices. Positive behavior choices will be acknowledged and celebrated. Poor behavior choices will be redirected. If needed, students will take a break in order to regroup and reflect on their choices. We will consistently use positive reinforcement in the classroom throughout the day to ensure a very positive and supportive environment for the students.

Birthdays – Birthdays are a fun time for us all. Each child will be recognized on his or her birthday. However, we are only able to pass out **non-edible birthday treats** on birthdays. If your child wishes to bring in something, a “trinket” to pass out would be wonderful. Examples of things to bring in are, pencils, stickers, playdough, bubbles, etc. This helps tremendously with food allergies that others in the classroom may have. Another idea to celebrate your child's birthday is to send in their favorite book for us to read with the class.

Bus Transportation – Families will be responsible for requesting bus transportation if needed or for canceling bus transportation if their child will be absent or is using a different form of

transportation. The APPS Transportation phone number is (313) 827-2050. If you live outside of Allen Park, please contact your resident school district in regards to transportation.

Clothing – We will be playing at school! This means we will do art projects, play outside, and do other activities that may result in clothes becoming dirty. Please send your child to school in comfortable play clothes that they can easily work with during toileting times. Please mark **ALL** clothing that comes to school (including outdoor gear) with your child's name. Also, we request that an extra set of clothes is kept in your child's backpack in a sealed "zip-lock" type bag. We will send home any dirty clothing with a note explaining what happened.

Code of Conduct – The Allen Park Code of Conduct can be reviewed on the district's website (www.apps.k12.mi.us). If you are unable to obtain internet access you can receive a copy from the office.

Email – A great way to get in touch with me is through school email. My email address is bleau@appublicschools.com. I typically check my email in the morning, during lunch, and after school. I try my best to respond to emails within 24 hours.

Holidays – Holidays are exciting times for children! As these come closer, I will be sending home information regarding related activities and events.

Home to School Communication Folders: Each student has been given a communication folder with their name on the front. On the inside, the left (front) pocket is labeled "Left at Home" and the right (back) pocket is labeled "Right Back to School". Everything that I send home will be placed in the left (front) pocket. If anything needs to come back to school, please place it in the right (back) pocket. Please check your child's folder **daily**; this is something you can do with your child, as they will experience this type of organizational tool throughout their school years. ECP staff will check each child's folder upon arrival every day for any notes/forms/money. Each week, a piece of paper will be attached to the center of the folder. On the front side of the paper will be the weekly calendar, which will contain reminders of events occurring during that week. There will be enough space to write notes back and forth as well. On the backside of the paper will be a weekly classroom report for your child. The report will be filled out every day so that we can be in constant communication regarding your child's experience in the classroom. Be sure to check the report every day and talk with your child about their day! Please leave the paper in the folder for the whole week and sign the bottom at the end of the week-I will remove them and file them.

IEPs – We will have an IEP meeting for your child shortly after school begins (typically in mid October). Once we get closer to the IEP dates, I will schedule a day/time that works for you (within the allotted meeting dates) and send out a formal meeting invitation. Meetings are scheduled to last around 45 minutes. During the IEP meeting we will discuss our observations of your child and the goals we have developed for them to work on for the school year. We will also get your input about your child and answer any questions you have.

Illness – When your child is ill, he/she will benefit most from rest at home. If you are aware that your child is sick before you send him/her to school, please keep him/her at home.

Medications – Allen Park Public Schools require an authorization form signed by both a physician and a parent/guardian before school personnel may give any medication to a student. If you need an authorization form, I can provide one for you. Any medications sent

to school need to be in the original container/packaging with the student's name and dispensing information attached.

Newsletters – I will send home monthly newsletters. I will include what we are working on in the classroom, any announcements, reminders, etc. The calendar will have upcoming classroom/school events and dates to remember that you need to know as well. Also, I will be using Remind to communicate announcements and reminders and will communicate frequently through email.

****If you do not have access to the internet, please let me know****

Outdoor Recess/Play: We will be going outside to play throughout the week (weather permitting). Please dress your child according to the weather conditions. Children should wear closed-toed shoes that secure around the ankle (please no flip-flops!).

Progress Reports – You will receive three progress reports this school year: one in December, one in March, and one at the end of the school year in June. These will report the progress your child is making in the classroom toward their IEP goals.

Remind – Remind is a free and safe program that provides a simple and quick way to communicate with each other via cell phone without seeing each other's phone numbers. You can choose to either receive text messages or download the app and get notifications. There is also a messaging option through the app where we can essentially "text". I strongly encourage all families to sign up for Remind! Instructions for signing up will be sent home at the beginning of the school year.

Safety – To maintain a safe environment, all district school buildings are locked. Please use the main school doors on Fox and check in to the office if you are dropping off/picking up other than the normal times.

Scholastic Reading Club Orders – Each month, your child will bring home Scholastic book orders in his/her Home to School Folder. If you wish to purchase books from Scholastic, please place your order online (directions for this will be provided) or return it by the designated date in a sealed envelope with your child's name on the outside.

Sending in Notes or Money – When sending confidential information or money to school with your child please put it in a sealed envelope or bag labeled with your child's name as well as what/who the money/note is intended for.

Session Times – Both sessions run Monday through Friday. Morning session: 9:00 am-11:45 am. Afternoon session: 12:35 pm-3:20 pm.

Shutterfly – I have created a Shutterfly site where I can upload pictures I take of your children while they are in school (it is secure and requires a password in order to have access to it and see the pictures). I will send home a paper asking for written permission to take and upload your child's picture. Besides Shutterfly, we will use the pictures in the classroom and possibly the school (hallway). After I have everyone's email addresses, I will invite you to become a member of the site. All you need to do is follow the directions to sign up and you will be able to see the pictures I take in the classroom!

Snack – Snack time will be a daily activity in both class sessions. This is a very important time during the day as it allows the students to develop many wonderful skills. **Snack is not funded**

by the school's budget. For this reason, we ask for a \$5 per month contribution for each student. We will use the money to purchase snack supplies for both classes. Typical snack foods could be: crackers, pretzels, dry cereal, fruit cups, applesauce, etc. We will serve water to drink. ***If your child has any food allergies or a specific diet, please let me know in writing immediately***

Speech/Language Services – All students in ECP will receive speech and language support from our speech and language therapist/teacher. She will come into our classroom to work with students one-on-one and in small groups during normal classroom activities. She will also take individual students and small groups into her room for more focused work (when the students are ready to do so).

Volunteering – If you interested in coming into the classroom to help we would love to have you! Different things volunteers might do include: coming in during our work time to lend an extra set of hands, coming to help out with a craft project, or coming to help at holiday parties. There is a background check process that you will need to complete before you are allowed to volunteer in the school. If you would like to volunteer please let me know and I will give you more information and get you the appropriate paperwork to fill out.

Website – Our class website can be found at: allenparkecp.weebly.com
Our website will be a very useful tool throughout the school year! It includes direct links to our Scholastic Reading Clubs site, Shutterfly site, and an up-to-date feed of Remind messages from me. It also has a Google school calendar for the whole year, uploaded newsletters, classroom documents (such as this one), a blog where I will post updates about the classroom, and a page that has resources for you to use at home.

YOU are your child's most important teacher! Encourage your child's education by working at home and reinforcing skills that are being taught at school. If you need ideas and/or suggestions, please ask, I will be more than willing to help!

If you have any questions for me, please feel free to ask, I am more than happy to talk with you!

*** Information is subject to change. If a change occurs, the appropriate information will be provided in a timely fashion***

Daily Schedule Outline

(Order of activities may vary)

- **Arrival**
 - Greeting/social interaction (saying "hello")
 - Self-care and independent, responsible behaviors (putting backpack and jackets in their proper place)
- **Warm-up**
 - Hands-on activity to transition children to school and get their bodies ready for learning
 - Typically puzzles, Legos, coloring, or other fine motor activity
- **Calendar**
 - Establishing routine and daily sequence
 - Social interaction, name activities, turn taking
 - Cover concepts including: counting, alphabet, colors, shapes, weather, the days of the week, months of the year
- **Music and Movement**
 - Listening to music and following directions in songs
 - Sensory motor activities such as yoga, bean bags, "simon says"
- **Story**
 - Teacher read-aloud, interactive stories
 - Cognitive activities, concept introduction/reinforcement
- **Work Time/Centers**
 - Individual (bin work) or small group learning activities based on IEP goals and developmentally appropriate academic concepts
 - Activities chosen will be at a functional level for each individual student
 - Art/craft projects-typically done in small groups or one-on-one with a teacher
- **Choice time/structured play**
 - Exploratory play
 - Social interaction
 - Self-regulation
- **Snack**
 - Daily living skills – toileting, hand washing, eating skills
 - Social interaction – communication, making choices, requesting
- **Reading**
 - Self-selected book viewing and interaction
 - Individual and small group readings
 - Independent, responsible behaviors (taking care of books and putting them away properly)
- **Gross Motor**
 - Outside play or, if weather prohibits, indoor large muscle activities (balance beam, tumble mat, etc.)
- **Group Time and Dismissal**
 - Reflection/review of day
 - Songs
 - Self-care and independent, responsible behaviors (gathering personal items, putting backpack and jackets on)

- Greeting/social interaction (saying “good-bye”)

What is the Early Childhood Program?

Federal and State public laws provide preschool education and early intervention services for children with special needs via the public school system. Children, birth through the fifth year, qualify for early intervention services if they are identified with having a significant delay in one or more areas of development.

Early intervention services are available for:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Cognitive Impairment (CI)
- Early Childhood Developmental Delay (ECDD)
- Emotional Impairment (EI)
- Hearing Impairment (HI)
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Physical Impairment (PI)
- Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI)
- Speech and Language Impairment (SLI)
- Specific Learning Disability (LD)
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Visual Impairment (VI)

Allen Park Public Schools operates an Early Childhood Program, servicing children from three years through the fifth year of age. This is a cross-categorical class, providing intervention for a variety of disabilities. It is made up of two classes (morning and afternoon), each operating for two hours and 45 minutes (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours) per day, typically five days per week.

The Early Childhood Program staff include:

- ECP teacher, certified in early childhood and special education
- Paraprofessional class aides/individual student aides
- Speech and Language teacher
- School Social Worker
- Occupational Therapist
- School Principal
- School Secretary
- Special Education Director
- Special Education Secretary
- School Psychologist
- Teacher Consultant

We look forward to working together with families to meet the needs of our students.

Philosophy

The teaching philosophy of the Allen Park Early Childhood Program is based on the following beliefs:

- All individuals have value. They are to be respected and treated with dignity in a safe, caring environment.
- All children are learners.
- Learning is a life-long process.
- Each learner possesses individual strengths and weaknesses and develops at his/her own rate.
- Learning styles vary among individuals.
- Learning is an active, integrated process. All areas of development: social, emotional, cognitive (thinking), and physical (motor) skills will be focused upon when planning curriculum and developing lessons to address each Individual Education Plan.
- Consistency and predictability promote understanding and security.
- The families are the child's **first** teachers and the primary influence of the child's development during their early years. Building a partnership between the family and school is the most effective way to enhance a child's learning potential. Developing mutual goals and communication will promote growth and success for our students.
- Play-based experiences are an effective and developmentally appropriate means to promote learning. Meaning and understanding grow from experience. **Play is children's work.**
- Behavior is communication – a person's actions or reactions express a message. An individual engages in behavior for a reason, which may or may not be immediately apparent. Typical functions of behavior are to gain a wanted item/activity, to escape/avoid, attention, or sensory regulation.

Core Goals of the Early Childhood Program

Communication, both expressive and receptive, is the central component of our program. Speech and language are supported with sign language, picture icons, physical prompts, and objects. To focus on the “whole child”, four areas of child development will be addressed.

Social Development: Developing knowledge of home, school, and community

- Self-help/daily living skills
- Eating
- Dressing
- Toileting
- Personal hygiene
- Making choices
- Expanding social interaction
 - Play skills
 - Developing relationships with children and adults outside the family
 - Increase attending skills by providing integrated sensory experiences – using language, visual, auditory, tactile, and motor cues.

Emotional Development: Building a positive self-concept and positive concept of others

- Provide choice and decision-making opportunities to develop responsible/independent behaviors
- Pride in accomplishment
- Recognition of consequences (positive and negative)
- Regulation of emotions

Physical Development: Motor skills

- Fine or small motor – controlling the details, generally with fingers, toes, and oral skills. The ability to manipulate small objects.
- Gross or large motor – The development of large muscle movement, coordination, and awareness of self in space.
- Sensory regulation – developing an awareness and tolerance of sensory stimuli (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, balance and body position)

Cognitive Development: Thinking Skills

- Communication skills
- Perceptual discrimination
- Memory
- Problem solving and logic
- Concept awareness/recognition (associating symbols to ideas)