

**Parent Handbook
2024-2025
for**



Serving the Families of

**Elizabeth School
District Childcare**

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Welcome to Elizabeth School Districts' Early Childhood Programs! We are pleased to welcome your family into our quality early childhood programs. Please read through **ALL** the information enclosed in this handbook, as it will provide you with a greater understanding of our programs and our policies and procedures.

Our Mission - *To strive for our Elizabeth School District Mission of providing students with excellent and diverse learning opportunities that inspire passion for learning, develop individual potential and prepare them for a successful future. We put what is best for students at the heart of every decision we make.*

Here at the Elizabeth School District Childcare, we value high quality in the standards of care and education that we provide to families and their children. Our programs will participate in the Colorado Shines rating process. We are so pleased that you are enrolling your child in our excellent school!

Mission and Philosophy: To strive for our Elizabeth School District Mission of providing students with excellent and diverse learning opportunities that inspire passion for learning, develop individual potential and prepare them for a successful future. We put what is best for students at the heart of every decision we make.

Elizabeth School District Childcare is a child-centered program that respects and supports each child's individual needs and actively promotes children's success, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, and veteran's status. We believe that children learn from supportive relational experiences derived from positive community, family, and teacher involvement. We strive to ensure that our learning environment and materials reflect the community of Elizabeth and seek to hire and employ staff whose teaching and philosophy reflects a commitment to equitable and inclusive teaching practices. Our Childcare provide an environment rich in meaningful and unique opportunities that encourage exploration, creativity, and growth in all aspects of child development. These are some of the most important years of your child's development.

We recognize this fact and offer you our support. Quality early childhood education is a fundamental component for building a lifelong love of learning, and we look forward to having you join us as we work together in building a strong foundation for your child's future.

Contact Information

Elizabeth School District Childcare	
<u>Mailing Address</u>	<u>Physical Address</u>
P.O. Box 610	200 E. Maple Street
Elizabeth CO 80107	Elizabeth CO 80107
School Main Number 303-646-6785	

Shared Staff

District Director Of Early Childhood: Karena Dohman kdohman@esdk12.org 303-646-6759
Director of Special Services: Kimberly Seefried kseefried@esdk12.org, 303-646-1845
Early Childhood Special Education Teacher: Sara Bong, sbong@esdk12.org, 303-646-6716

Early Childhood Speech/Language Pathologist: Kate Weidner, kweidner@esdk12.org
District Nurse: Ashley Keith, akeith@esdk12.org, 303-646-6730

Times

- 7:15AM-4:15PM
- The Childcare Center will operate school year with the following closed days:
 - Labor day September 2, 2024
 - Fall Break October 14-18, 2024
 - Staff Development Day October 21, 2024
 - Thanksgiving Break November 25-29, 2024
 - Winter Break December 23, 2024 - January 3, 2025
 - MLK Day January 20, 2025
 - Presidents Day February 17, 2025
 - Spring Break March 17-21, 2025

Admission Procedures – Elizabeth Childcare is licensed for children ages six weeks to three years of age. At no time shall the number of children in attendance exceed the number for which the childcare has been licensed.

Admission procedures must be completed prior to attending childcare and include the following:

- Obtain an enrollment packet from the school office or access the packet on our school website at <https://www.elizabethschooldistrict.org/domain/342>
- Complete and return the packet.
 - A current Health Statement, **signed by an approved health care professional that has seen your child within the last 12 months**, is due prior to the first day of school, and needs to be submitted annually.
 - Parents are also asked to fill out a registration form for each child enrolled which asks the family to provide information about their medical insurance, their child's doctor, their child's dentist, and, among other information, about any special needs a child may have.
 - A record of current immunizations (or exemption form) and a recent physical exam are required for enrollment. These documents are kept in the Director's office and must be updated as required by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment along with the Elbert County Department of Human Services. Children with Immunization Exemptions: In the event of an outbreak, unimmunized children or adults may be subject to exclusion from school and to quarantine.
 - An Emergency Pick Up and Release in case of emergency form will be filled out in registration paperwork.
 - Handbook Acknowledgment

Transportation – Elizabeth School District Childcare will not be transporting any children at any time to or from the program or for any special activities.

If a child has a Family Service Plan (IFSP), Individual Education Program (IEP), School readiness plan, Individual learning plan, we request a copy of that plan (or any updates to an existing plan), so we can better meet the specific individual needs of that child. We are willing to work with any specialists and implement any recommendations to the best of our ability. Additionally, children

identified throughout the school year based upon evidence-based assessments, such as Teaching Strategies Gold, ASQs (Ages and Stages Questionnaires) and DECA's (Devroux Early Childhood Assessment), will receive a referral to their medical provider, Child Find / Developmental Pathways, or the Centennial Mental Health for follow up assessment. Please make sure if any of the information on the forms changes to submit an updated form.

If you need help finding resources, such as a medical home or a dental provider, we can help you connect with those services. Please let us know how we can support you. You can contact us any time by speaking personally to the Director, or you can phone or email us. Also, a flyer with a list of resources, as well as a variety of pamphlets, brochures, and other materials, are located in the Family Resource Center and are accessible any time.

During your enrollment you will also receive a family questionnaire. Although this form is optional, it provides your child's teacher with important developmental history, cultural and family values as well as your child's likes and dislikes. This helps with the child's transition into the new classroom and can make the transition smoother and more pleasant for all.

Class Placement/Waiting List - First priority is given to children with families that work for Elizabeth School District. Open enrollment is determined upon availability of space. When the program is full, children will be put on a waiting list, and we will contact families, as space is available.

Withdrawal/Transfer Policy

- Families are asked to notify their child's teacher and the school office staff if a child is withdrawing.
- If the teacher is notified, she will inform the school office.
- Students may transfer between preschools if an open slot is available.
- If students are being withdrawn from the program by administration, written notices will be sent to parents with the explanation and date of withdrawal.

Tuition

- Full Day Childcare - \$1400 a month

Payment Procedures

- Tuition is based on year-round enrollment and shall be paid in nine (9) equal payments, commencing August through May.
- Tuition will not be credited or refunded for any day your child does not attend the program, including absences due to illness or vacation, school closures such as in-services and holidays, or inclement weather days resulting in delays or closures.
- Tuition is due the first day of each month.
- Tuition may be paid by check, money order or cash. Checks should be made payable to Elizabeth School District Childcare Online credit card payment is available **with My School Bucks**
- Your driver's license number and the name of your child should be indicated on the memo line of each check. The District will not accept out of state checks.

- All questions and concerns regarding tuition and payments should be directed to the school principal.

Late Tuition Payment - If a payment for the program is not received when due, the District may charge a \$25.00 late fee. If found to be in violation of the payment terms for two consecutive months, then the District may terminate your child’s enrollment in the Program and/or deny your child’s enrollment in the program in future program years. The District in its sole discretion may reinstate a child to the childcare program(s) in which he/she is enrolled upon the payment of all outstanding tuition and fees.

Theme Based Curriculum Frog Street

In each classroom a theme-based curriculum is created around Frog Street. These help teachers focus on what matters most for children’s success. In addition, Frog Street allows teachers to monitor student progress, and develop lesson plans around the individual needs of the students in their classrooms.

Instructional Methods

Our Program incorporates a variety of instruction methods such as whole group instruction through circle time, small group instruction through tabletop time, and play based instruction through learning centers.

The Role of the Teacher

- To respect and accept each child as an individual
- To create a caring community of learners
- To plan a program geared to the interests, abilities, and needs of their students
- To give children the opportunity to use the materials available according to their individual interests, abilities, and levels of maturity
- To assess children’s development and learning
- To keep parents informed as to what is going on in the school life of their child
- To make your child’s first school experience positive and rewarding

Language Development Goals

- Vocabulary development through reading and allowing children time to dramatize stories
- Understanding and following directions
- Having fun with language such as rhyming, singing
- Active participation in conversations
- Is able to discriminate sounds of language
- Expresses self, using words and expanded sentences

Math/Cognitive Development Goals

- Sorting, comparing sizes and classifying objects
- Counting objects as well as counting by rote
- Exploring numbers
- Same and different concepts- patterning
- Distinguishing and describing shapes
- Shows awareness of position and space

- Shows persistence in approaching tasks

Motor Skills/Physical Development Goals

- Developing large muscle skills through opportunities to climb, balance, hop, run, ride, throw, catch, skip and creative movement
- Developing small muscle skills through opportunities to draw, paint, build, and design
- Coordinate eye-hand movement
- Develop the muscles needed for writing by working with manipulatives such as play dough and digging in the dirt

Social and Emotional Development Goals

- Making and expressing choices, plans and decisions
- Recognizing and solving interpersonal problems
- Understanding routines and expectations
- Building relationships with adults and children
- shows ability to adjust to new situations

Self-Help Goals

- Taking care of one's own personal needs
- Developing responsibility
- Learning to ask peers for help
- Follows classroom rules and routines

Parent/Teacher Communication - Parents may access information relative to preschool via each schools' website. On the website you will not only find information specific to your child's preschool, but also the quality improvement plan, a plethora of resources for parents, and the results of annual parent surveys. You will also receive emails and newsletters containing timely information. You will receive a Daily Note through Tadpoles with individualized notes on each child's day. Including lessons, photos, diaper changes, potty training, bottles, food, etc.

Video Viewing/Screen Time - Videos are only shown for ages two and older for educational purposes and used only on special occasions. Viewed videos are no longer than a half hour per day. Videos will be related to the theme that is being taught at the time (eg. holidays, fire fighters, etc.). During inclement weather, yoga videos may be used for gross motor activities in the classroom. Parents are always welcome to preview videos.

Walking Field Trips - Walking field trips are a part of the program activities. The walking trip/activity will take place away from District property, such as to the parks, library, fire station or nature walks, and may involve activities beyond the scope of traditional school functions conducted on District property. During these walking field trips supervision and name to face attendance will be done every thirty minutes. Ratio of 1:5 will be maintained. If you arrive late after a walking field trip has departed, you will remain at the program with your children until they return.

Safe Sleep Checks – The infant classroom will utilize a five-minute crib check. The teachers will walk into the crib area and check on sleeping infants every five minute and track the form with their initials. See addendum A.

Licensing - The Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care, licenses all Elizabeth Schools Early Childhood Programs. These licenses indicate that the programs have met the required standards for operation. Each license is posted in the front hallway or the parent board of each building. If you need additional information regarding licensing, or if you have a licensing concern, please contact the school principal, or consult the Colorado Office of Child Care Services at 303-866-5958.

Child Abuse - Any suspicion of child abuse should be reported immediately to the Elbert County Department of Social Services; their phone number is 303-621-3149. In addition, Elizabeth School District preschool strictly complies with Colorado law, which requires that schools report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Insurance - It is your responsibility to have accident or health insurance coverage for your child. Elizabeth School District does not and is not obligated to provide health insurance for your child.

Absences - Please make sure your child’s teacher is aware when your child will not be attending. If you know in advance, a written note to the teacher will be sufficient. You may call the school in the morning in the case of an illness or an emergency. The phone number is listed in the beginning of the handbook. Please remember this is a learning environment and excessive or prolonged absences not due to illness or family emergency could impact your child’s education.

Parking and Building Entrances

- The childcare has a parking area in the gravel area in front of the building. Carefully escort your child across traffic.

Signing in and out- Parents or other responsible parties (ages 16 and older) must sign a child in and out of the classrooms, for safety reasons. Each day, the teacher will keep an attendance list that will record the drop off and pick up time for each child. Children will be released from classrooms only to adults for whom the program has written authorization. **Please let your teacher know immediately if there are any court ordered visitation restrictions or changes in pick-up authorization.**

Late Pick Up - Staff greatly appreciates parent’s efforts to pick up and drop off in a timely manner, failure to do so will result in a charge. **A \$10 charge will be assessed for a late pick up.** If you know that you are going to be late, please contact your child’s classroom as soon as possible. **Notification does not make you exempt from paying a late fee.** If no prior notification was made, we will begin calling emergency contacts to arrange pick up. If a child is left at the center for more than a half hour without notification, Social Services, the Elizabeth Police Department and/or the Elbert County Sheriff’s Office will be contacted.

Personal Belongings - Please do not send money or other valuable belongings with your child to school. A soft toy is allowed for toddlers for rest time. The only time when personal toys are allowed at school is when teachers’ designate a “show and tell” or toys from home day. Items

that are always welcome are those that relate to the current learning theme or special items such as vacation pictures or souvenirs.

List of Items to Bring Infants-

- Family Photo
- Sleep Sack
- Spare Clothes
- Bibs
- Oversized Shirt for Art
- Diaper, Wipes, Topical Ointment
- Pacifier
- Pre-filled bottles for the day
- AM/PM snack and in a lunch box with all containers labeled (no glass)
- Water Bottle

List of Items to Bring Toddlers-

- Family Photo
- Standard Crib Sheet
- Spare clothes
- Oversized Shirt for Art
- Diaper, Wipes, Topical Ointment
- Water Bottle
- AM/PM snack and lunch in a lunch box with all containers labeled (no glass)

School Supplies - A school bag or backpack is recommended. Please have your child's name clearly written on the outside. Your child's teacher will provide a list of necessary school supplies if needed throughout the year.

Lunch/Snacks – Families will provide all AM/PM snacks and lunch for children. These snacks and lunches need to be healthy, with high nutritious value and age appropriate for children. Food needs to be cut in age appropriate non-choke able pieces. Food will be kept in the refrigerator in each classroom. There will no heat ups done.

Clothing

- Please send your child to school in comfortable, sturdy, washable clothing. We will do activities with materials such as paint, markers and clay.
- Keep in mind the simpler the fasteners the easier it is for your child at toilet times.
- Sneakers are the preferred footwear for school. Sandals and cowboy boots make it difficult for children to participate in motor activities and are not safe for the playground.
- On snowy or rainy days, your child must have appropriate clothing, **which is labeled with your child's name.** Children will be provided with outside motor activities daily unless it is too wet or cold to enjoy outside time.
- At times, any child may need to change his or her clothes during the day. **Each child must have an extra set of clothing to keep for emergencies. Please be sure to label all children's belongings with their first and last name.**

Toileting – Families will be responsible for supplying all diapers, pull ups, wipes, and creams for their child. Diaper changes will be every two hours and anything in between for example (BM). For potty training children they will use the toilet in the bathroom and will be asked to try to go to the bathroom every hour. All diaper changes will be track in Tadpoles.

Rest Time - All children who are in the program are required to have a rest period. Pick-ups and drop offs are discouraged during rest time. If you need to pick-up your child early or drop off your child late, please arrange with your child’s teacher an appropriate time to do so. Mats will be provided and parents will need to provide a twin fitted sheet, blanket, and pillow for the toddlers. The sheet and blanket will need to be taken home on Friday and returned clean on Monday. Infant cribs will be provided with a fitted sheet for Infant classroom. No blankets are allowed in cribs; children may wear an open arm sleep sack.

Photographs - From time to time, officials of Elizabeth School District may photograph, videotape, audiotape, interview or create other electronic images or likenesses of your Child about or during an activity. The photographs, video, sound recordings and other electronic images may be used for a variety of educational, institutional, scientific or informational purposes. The permission for photographs, videos, audio and electronic images is included in your registration packet and must be submitted at the time of registration. This program will also use Tadpoles for daily communication which will include daily photos.

Visitors and Volunteers - Visitors and Volunteers are welcome in all the Elizabeth Schools Early Childhood Programs. Please make every effort to inform your child’s teacher at least one day in advance of your visit. Volunteers interested in working with children are required to have a background check prior to their visit. Please obtain a form from the office. Visitors and Volunteers must sign in with the site director.

Quality Improvement Plan

Continuous quality improvement is a process which ensures that an organization and its partners are systematic and intentional about improving services and practices and increasing positive outcomes for families and their children. This process is valued and used here at Elizabeth School District to support the process of continuous quality improvement, we have created a classroom quality assessment that is reviewed twice a year by the Director, and is updated periodically throughout the year. To support the identification of areas of quality improvement, the setting of goals, and the creation of detailed action plans for quality improvement, we annually send out family and staff surveys to obtain staff and family feedback on how well we are doing. Families and staff will receive notification of the results of the family survey and our plan for addressing any issues raised after the family survey has been received, reviewed, and a quality improvement plan has been fully developed.

As part of the continuous quality improvement process, we, also, conduct self-assessments at least annually in various areas, including Business Practices, Family Engagement and Playground Quality, as well as periodic reviews of in the area of Inclusive Teaching and Learning, Health Promotion, Culturally Responsive Practices, Reducing Bias, Trauma Informed Programming, and Classroom Evaluations. If you wish to view the complete Quality Improvement Plan, a hard copy is available for viewing.

Family Community Resources

Resources and Community Service Agencies Families experience well-being when all family members are healthy, safe, and financially secure. When families face challenges in one or more of these areas, their ability to support child outcomes and school readiness can be affected. Elizabeth School District is committed to helping families connect with community based services, training, and information resources that can increase their overall well-being. Community-based services include a variety of supports and services for children and families. Services may focus on children's developmental needs including, for example, Early Intervention services such as screening children for speech, language, or physical delays. Other services may focus on families, such as programs the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or services to help families find affordable housing. Other community-based services we can help families access; include but are not limited to medical and dental care, early childhood mental health consultation, parent education programs, public library services, and job assistance programs. For families and children facing health, safety or financial challenges, this program can be an important link to support a family's access to services that can address their needs. The first step we take to learn about the overall strengths and challenges of families is to ask all families to complete the "Learning about Your Child and Your Family" questionnaire which you will receive at enrollment and at the beginning of every preschool year. This questionnaire will help your teacher and the director better understand your family and your child, as well as gain insight into the needs of your family and your child's development and learning needs. With this knowledge, the director and teacher will be better able to address those needs.

Teacher/family conferences are an example of another time when we will be asking questions about successes and challenges your family may be having and any concerns you may have about your child's social, academic, and physical development. Of course, if your family needs support or you have specific concerns, you can always contact us any time by speaking personally with your child's teacher and/or the Director, or you can call or email us. We provide a list of resources listed below, as well as a variety of pamphlets, brochures, and other materials, which are located in the Family Resource Center. You can also request to have resources or materials emailed or mailed to you. When a teacher has concerns about a child's development from reviewing the child's formal assessment results and informal observations in the classroom, they will bring their findings and concern to the director and then a meeting will be scheduled with the family to review and discuss next steps.

When a family has concerns about a child's development and brings it to the attention of the staff (teacher or director or both) either through in-person discussion/phone conversation/email or through completing our "Learning about Your Child and Your Family" questionnaire, the director will meet with the teacher to discuss the information provided and schedule a meeting with the family to explore their concerns and talk about appropriate next steps to identify any delays in development. One of those steps could include a recommendation that the family speak with the child's pediatrician and early intervention services. Our program can support the family in connecting with Early Intervention services. Support could include completing a referral to Child find or Early Intervention, filling out any questionnaire requested by the agency, and adopting remediation strategies, if recommended, in the classroom. For more detailed

information on how the program works with and supports families with children who have identified or suspected special needs, please refer to “Early Intervention and Special Needs” policy in this handbook. For families with other specific needs, the program can link families to community support, training, and information resources that can increase overall well-being.

For example, if your family is experiencing trauma, such as homelessness, and needs the support of a community-based resource or service, we can help identify a service and connect you with that service. Other available services that focus on family needs include, for example, health care, housing, job, and food assistance. We can also provide you with information on a variety of topics, including child development, nutrition, parenting and, among other topics, discipline. In sum, we at Elizabeth School District are here to support your family and your attending child/children as you need. Elizabeth School District strives to communicate with families and give our best to connect families with outside resources as needed. This can include but not limited to mental health, health, developmental needs, and educational needs.

General Resources

- Connections for Families, <https://www.connections4families.org/>
- Colorado Children’s Health Assistant Program, <https://cchap.org/>

Health

- Centura Medical Group 240 S Elizabeth St unit B, Elizabeth, CO 80107 303-269-2551 Private Insurance, Medicaid (only patients over 17 years old)
- Elizabeth Family Health 34061 Forest Park Dr, Elizabeth, CO 80107 303-646-4071 Private Insurance
- Centennial Mental Health 650 E Walnut St, Elizabeth, CO 80107 303-646-4519 Private Insurance, Medicaid
- Colorado Children’s Health Assistant Program, <https://cchap.org/>
- Public Health Clinic 75 Ute Ave Kiowa, Co 303-621-3170, <https://www.elbertcounty-co.gov/575/Public-Health-Clinic>

Dental

- Elizabeth Family Dental 2340 Legacy Circle, Suite 2, Elizabeth, CO 80107 303-646-6336 Accepts most insurance plans; will work with clients with no insurance
- Krieger Family Dental 187 E Kiowa Ave, Elizabeth, CO 80107 303-646-4678 Delta; No DMO plans
- Parker Orthodontics 210 Elizabeth St Ste H, Elizabeth, CO 80107 303-646-6461 Accepts most insurance plans; will work with clients with no insurance
- Timberline Family Dentistry 796 E Kiowa Ave, Elizabeth, CO 80107 303-646-3940 Accepts most insurance plans

Food

- Elizabeth Food Bank 381 S Banner St, Elizabeth CO 80107 303-646-3232 Operating out of Elizabeth Presbyterian Church
- Harvest Bible Church Food Bank 826 S Elbert St, Elizabeth CO 80107 303-646-3699
- Food Bank of the Rockies 231 Cheyenne St, Kiowa, CO 80117 720-737-4946 Operating out of Kiowa Creek Community Church
- Parker Task Force Food Bank 19105 Longs Way, Parker, CO 80134 303-841-3460 appointment required

Discipline Policy

- Elizabeth School Early Childhood Program believes in a positive approach to discipline. Our goal is for all children to learn appropriate behavior. We use the following guidance methods: redirection, planning ahead to prevent problems, positive reinforcement, encouragement, consistent and clear rules taught and explained to children, and natural consequences.
- We allow each child to access classroom materials. Materials are to be used in an appropriate way relative to their purpose. Children are encouraged to be creative with materials as well. However, the child is not free to hurt him or herself, other people, or destroy property. Parents will be informed of any behavioral problems their child is having at school and, if necessary, a behavior plan will be set up with the family. If a behavior problem includes endangering the safety of the child, other children, or adults, the child may be sent home. If these behaviors persist and are not resolved, students may be dis-enrolled from the program.

Parent Involvement - The Elizabeth Schools Early Childhood Program feels that you and your family are first and foremost in your child's development. We are here to supplement and guide that development with your support. We encourage parent involvement in all programs. There are a number of ways for families to be involved such as attending parent meetings/conferences, volunteering, participating in fundraising activities, providing snacks, and helping with field trips. If you would like to volunteer, please talk to your child's teacher and obtain a Volunteer Background Check form from the office.

Conferences - Parents are expected to attend one pre-conference, as well as two parent teacher conferences throughout the year. Part of the conference time is reserved for you and the teacher to jointly write goals for your child to achieve throughout the year. If there is ever a need to talk with any individual in the program regarding your child, please feel free to call and schedule a time with that person.

Translation and Interpretation Services – The childcare program is responsible for arranging translation and interpretation services for communication with families to include parent/teacher conferences, registration information, school related events, health and academic performance. Please contact the school office if you have any questions regarding our translation and interpretation services. These services are free to families and are contracted through Colorado Language Connections located at 1537 Alton St. Aurora, Co 80110 Phone; 303 923-2945 <https://www.coloradolanguageconnection.org/>
We will ensure there are materials in the classroom which help a child feel represented and will also support the language development of the young dual language learner. Examples of what we do include: we have classroom materials labeled in home language, books representing diversity of culture and displayed photos representing diversity of culture.

Relationships- In the Elizabeth School District, we value relationships and work to create systems to encourage and foster those connections. Oftentimes, childcare is a child's first attempt at building those relationships outside of their home setting. For this reason, we strive to keep students together with the same peers and teachers during their time in our classrooms. Your child will have one consistent lead teacher and teacher assistant. Our staff are known for their

love for children and their desire to pour into them so they can meet their fullest potential. These strong emotional bonds and connections provide the best pathway for learning and growing as individuals.

Equity, Diversity, Trauma- While diversity may include different faiths, gender roles, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity, it is not limited to just these areas. Diversity also includes the different physical, cognitive, and social abilities that one possesses. Elizabeth School District values and welcomes the diversity of the community, families, and children we serve and offers classrooms that are equitable and inclusive of all children and families. We strive to create a developmentally appropriate classroom environment that not only reflects each child’s unique abilities but also encompasses their home culture and experiences as well.

One of the most important things that we do to help ensure that our program reflects the diversity of our community and is responsive to their needs, as well as the needs of the children we serve, is we conduct annual self-assessments in various areas, including Family Engagement, Inclusive Teaching and Learning, Culturally Responsive Practices, Reducing Bias, and Trauma Informed Programming. Other ways we work to ensure that Elizabeth School District remains sensitive to the diversity of our families and children is we ask families to complete the “Learning about Your Child and Your Family” questionnaire, which will give us insights into your family’s traditions and needs.

If you or your family is experiencing trauma or other adversity or challenges and in need of the support of a community-based resource or service, we can help you connect with those supports. Trauma refers to a deeply stressful experience or its short and long-term impacts. Research has shown that children’s exposure to trauma can cause a host of problems with potentially lifelong consequences, which can impact children’s abilities to learn, to create healthy attachments, to form supportive relationships, and, among other effects, to follow classroom expectations. Early screening and intervention is, therefore, significant in that it may produce better outcomes for children and families. It is also important that early childhood settings be safe, trauma-sensitive spaces where teachers support children in creating positive self-identities. It is the policy of this program to create those spaces.

Our teachers have also received training on trauma informed practices, as well as training about anti-bias teaching practices. The diversity of our community and society is also reflected in the teaching that occurs in the classrooms and in the materials, for example, the books, music, and props, that are found in the classrooms. We warmly invite families, staff, and members of our community to share their traditions and customs with the program and the children in the classroom. These stories and experiences will be valued and respected as part of the children’s learning experience.

Teacher/Child Ratios - At a minimum, this center follows the Colorado Department of Human Services Rules and Regulations for Childcare Centers which are found at the link <http://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/GenerateRulePdf.do?ruleVersionId=4073>. The current expectation is the infant classroom six weeks to eighteen months olds, have 1 staff member to 5 children with a capacity of ten and toddler classroom eighteen months through two and a half year olds is 1 staff member to 5 children with a capacity of ten.

The standards set forth by NAEYC for group size and Teacher-Child ratios are widely considered to be best practice. The lower recommended ratios are intended to support one-to-one interactions that build increased knowledge of the individual needs of children and support practices that encourage a child's development. Lower ratios also allow staff to better meet the physical, cognitive, and social/emotional needs of children in their care.

Elizabeth Preschool meets NAEYC's recommendations regarding lower group sizes and improved adult-child ratios. Enrollment policy states that no more than 10 children will be enrolled in classrooms with 2 teachers.

Early Intervention and Special Needs- It is well documented that the beginning years of all children's lives are critical for building the early foundations of learning and wellness needed for success in school and later in life. During these years, children's brains develop rapidly, influenced by the experiences they share with their families, teachers, peers, and in their communities. Like all children, children with disabilities must be exposed to a variety of rich experiences where they can learn in the context of play and everyday interactions and engage with their peers with and without disabilities. In partnership with families, high-quality early childhood programs can facilitate the experiences that foster learning for all children.

Elizabeth School District is committed to providing high-quality inclusive support and care for families and children with special needs. To that end, we are committed to partnering with families and children with special needs to support their inclusion within the classroom and program, as well as meet their learning and development goals. Parents and guardians have a special understanding of their children's unique qualities and characteristics, such as temperament, strengths, and interests. Those insights are valuable and add important information that will help us as teachers and professionals better meet the needs of your child and family. We will also be sharing information we learn about your child during informal check-ins at pick-up and drop-off, during scheduled meetings, or as needed. The goal is to work collaboratively to help your child to be successful.

Identifying developmental issues that may affect a child's success in school and later in their adult life and supporting the family to obtain early intervention is the key to mediating any issues that may arise for a child. If the parent or teacher of an enrolled child has a concern that their child has a developmental delay or other learning concern, (physical, developmental, emotional, social, or behavioral), staff can support the parent in contacting the appropriate agency, for example Child Find, for further observation and evaluation. Child Find is part of Colorado's system for identifying children suspected of having a delay in development. If a young child is not meeting typical developmental milestones, or someone is concerned about the child's growth or learning, Child Find teams evaluate how the child plays, learns, speaks, behaves, and moves. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine if there is a significant delay or if there is a need for early intervention or special education services. Evaluations conducted by Child Find teams are at no cost to parents.

Elizabeth School District is an environment that strives to accommodate the learning and developmental needs and goals of all children. Families with a child who has identified special

needs and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) will be provided a copy of the plan and it will be kept with the special education team.

Sharing the education plan ensures that teachers and staff working with your child are aware of the goals for the child and the strategies used with the child that are both developmentally appropriate and support the child's learning goals. Sharing the plan ensures that the recommendations found in the plan are being followed while the child is in this program. Recommendations for accommodations and modifications that the program will follow include adding visual cues and supports (picture charts/schedules/directions), ensuring ease of handling (adding rubber grips to markers/adding spring loaded scissors) and among other accommodations, supporting the child's social and emotional growth during transitions, for example, by providing visual and verbal cues.

It is important to note, that although Elizabeth School District will work with all children to address a variety of disabilities, our staff does not have specialized degrees or expertise that may be needed to address every disability or health need. In the event the parents or the teachers have a concern regarding any one child's development, the parents and the teachers will meet and discuss all available options that will provide the child with necessary help and interventions. This is a collaborative venture; participation and cooperation of all involved parties is needed to meet the learning and development needs of the child. In some cases, the administrative staff in consultation with the family, the nurse consultant, special education providers and/or other specialists may determine if we are unable to meet the needs of the child and the family. If that happens, we will work closely with specialists to refer the family and the child to a more appropriate placement.

Mental Health Consultant – We will be working with Health Connection's for support for mental health for our faculty to receive support in their classroom. As well as our mental health consultant will help facilitate behavior and mental health needs for all children.

Child Find Services - The Elizabeth School District Child Find Team, will provide all families of children ages birth to five years of age, with free developmental screenings or evaluations. These screenings are confidential and conducted by licensed professionals employed by the Elizabeth School District. For more information, contact the Early Childhood Specialist at 303-646-6716.

Services for Children with Special Needs - Services for children with special needs will be provided in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Preschool services are provided in an inclusive classroom environment where all children attend together.

Special Education and Child Find Procedures - District resident, enrolled (includes students attending public or charter schools in district)

Ideally, in order to identify all students with a disability in the school setting, the special education teams at each building shall meet to review and discuss data from sources including, **(but not limited to)**

- General education teachers (observations, reporting, co-teaching, etc.)
- RTI/MTSS meetings
- Building leadership meetings

to identify students who may be suspected of having an educational disability. At the conclusion of the meeting, the case manager will initiate the referral process for any students identified as being suspected for having an educational disability as described in the Referral for Special Education section of the *Elizabeth School District Special Education Handbook*.

Referrals for special education services may be initiated by:

- School personnel (including general education teachers, special education teachers, counselors, administrators, etc.);
- Child’s parents or legal guardian(s);
- Any other person involved in the education or care of the child.

Referrals will be directed to the special education case manager of the home school. The official referral begins the formal process of determining eligibility for special education services.

Elizabeth School District Referral Process

1. The case manager will send the *Request for Special Education Evaluation* letter and a copy of the [Notice of Procedural Safeguards/Parent and Child Rights in Special Education](#).
2. As described in the *Request for Special Education Evaluation* letter, once a referral is provided, the school must review the request and notify the requestor within 14 days of the decision regarding the request.
 - If the team determines that an evaluation is warranted, the case manager will obtain consent from the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), in a *Prior Written Notice of Consent for Evaluation* and review the document in the parent’s native language to begin the evaluation phase of the process
 - If the team determines the request for an evaluation is not warranted, the case manager will provide a “Prior Written Notice” which explains why the team refuses to conduct an evaluation and the information that was used as the basis to make that decision.
3. Case managers will offer the parent a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards/Parent and Child Rights in Special Education and review the document with them to ensure understanding.
4. Case managers will obtain written parental consent or refusal to consent and attach a signed copy to the student file in Frontline (Enrich) in the Files tab.

If parent provides written consent:

1. Case managers will assemble a multi-disciplinary team to review existing information regarding the student and determine an appropriate assessment plan.
 - a. Multi-disciplinary teams must include:
 - Expert(s) or specialist(s) with knowledge in the area(s) of suspected disability
 - Expert in English Language Acquisition for a student whose primary language is not English
 - Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the child
 - At least one general education teacher of the child
 - Interventionist(s) or members of the school MTSS team as appropriate
 - b. The team shall review all formal and informal information that is available from a variety of sources such as:
 - Information from parent(s) and student

- Interviews with parents and additional school staff, including the general education teacher(s)
 - Current classroom, local and State assessments, and screenings
 - School-based observations
 - Results of vision and hearing screening results
 - School-based problem solving data
 - Results of interventions and supports, accommodations and modifications
 - Anecdotal records
 - Cumulative records (attendance, discipline records, report cards, achievement scores, etc.)
 - Private or independent evaluation information, if available
 - For students from a home where a language other than English is spoken, the student's level of English language proficiency, ELA instruction the student has received and the results of that instruction
2. The team will review the eligibility documents for the suspected disability(ies) to consider whether the body of evidence required is available and to determine what additional formal or informal evaluations, if any, are needed.

If parent refuses to provide written consent:

1. Case manager will select outcome *Consent Not Received* in Enrich and enter the date the parent refused to provide written consent.
2. Case manager will notify all team members of the outcome.
3. Case manager will notify the district office of the outcome and request the Special Education

Transitions:

Early Intervention Services and Transition Needs - Services are provided, free of charge, to families within their homes to children birth to two years 8 months of age. These services are provided by a team of licensed professionals. For more information and/or assistance with transitioning into ESD's preschool programs, please contact Beth Little with Developmental Pathways at 303-360-6600, b.little@dpcolo.org

Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool - The Early Intervention team will meet with licensed professionals from Elizabeth School District in order to get to know you and your child more. An evaluation and a meeting will take place at your child's home school. For more information, contact Child Find at 303-646-6716.

Transition from Class to Class - When a child ages to the next classroom families will be notified and we will schedule a meet and greet with teachers.

Transitions during the day – Will be done on Tadpoles during a name to face transition that is tracked with the location of the children in the building.

Illness - If a child becomes ill or is brought to childcare ill, parents will be called and requested to pick up their child as soon as possible. We realize that many parents work a great distance away. Please have a plan B to pick up your sick child in a timely manner, to reduce the risk of spreading illness. It is important to realize in a group situation illness may spread rapidly in spite

of everyone's best efforts. Our procedures are designed with this in mind. Notifications will be posted when there is a documented case of a contagious illness.

Illness Guidelines for Parents - It is very important for parents to communicate with the school and teachers regarding your student's health. It is helpful to know if your student has a contagious illness or other significant health problem. We also appreciate being informed of any medical or surgical procedures, changes in medication, and results of evaluations done by doctors or agencies. How do you know when to keep your child home from school? Here are the guidelines from the Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment to help you make this decision. Besides obvious injury or disease, children need to **stay home** for the following reasons. **Please report ALL conditions to school personnel when they occur.**

- Fever - keep student home
 - 100.4F or over, orally
 - If your student looks or acts sick and has any fever
 - If your student has any fever along with rash, sore throat, vomiting/diarrhea, stiff neck, breathing difficulties etc.
- Diarrhea - keep student home
 - If your student has other symptoms (vomiting, fever, belly pain etc. along with diarrhea)
 - If diarrhea cannot be contained in toilet or diaper
 - If there is blood or mucus in the stool
- Vomiting (more than 2 times in 24 hours) - keep student home
 - Until vomiting stops
 - If vomit appears bloody
 - If your student has had a recent head injury
 - If your student has other symptoms that accompany vomiting (diarrhea, fever, etc.)
- Cold - keep student home
 - If symptoms are severe (fever, student is not acting normally and/or has trouble breathing, uncontrolled coughing)
- Cough - keep student home
 - For uncontrolled coughing or wheezing
 - Breathing difficulties
 - If student becomes red or blue in the face with coughing
 - If student makes high pitched whooping sounds after coughing
 - If student vomits after coughing
- Strep throat - keep student home
 - your student may return to school 24 hours after the antibiotic is started if she/he feels well enough, and temperature is normal.
- Rash - keep student home
 - If a rash is accompanied by other symptoms like fever, behavior change, pain etc.)
 - For open and/or oozing sores
 - NOTE: Any rash that spreads quickly, has open, weeping wounds and/or is not healing needs to be evaluated by a medical provider

- Flu-like symptoms (fever over 100.4F with cough or sore throat, tiredness, body aches, vomiting and diarrhea) - keep student home for at least 24 hours after fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medications
- Head lice - The student may return to school after treatment has been given
- Impetigo - The student may return to school once treatment has been started
- Pink eye - keep students home if he/she has fever, eye pain or behavioral changes. Seek medical treatment in these instances
- Herpes (cold sores) - keep student home if he/she has open sores that cannot be covered or is drooling excessively

The above conditions are the most common health issues seen in childcare children. Please contact the district nurse for guidelines on other illnesses not addressed above (303-646-6730). **Please note that a child who becomes ill at school must be sent home. School staff will use the same “Sick Child Guidelines” above to make this determination.** While we are concerned about your child’s health, the health office staff cannot diagnose students, nor can they provide care for ill students all day. So please be mindful of the above guidelines and keep your student home when he/she is ill. This also prevents the spread of infection to other students. Please make sure your emergency contact numbers are current and three alternate contact choices are available. Thank you for keeping your student’s health in mind. Please call if you have any questions. Elizabeth School District Health Services Department 303-646-6730.

Injury - Elizabeth Childcare is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services, ensuring that safety guidelines are being followed. **At least one staff member in each classroom is trained in First Aid/CPR.** All staff have been trained in Universal Precautions and Standard Response Protocols. Each classroom is equipped with a First Aid Kit. Parent will be notified, in writing and by phone, of an injury for the following reasons

- Injury to the face or head
- Injury that requires more medical care than a bandage
- Injury that requires immediate attention from a doctor

Medication Administration at School

- Sunscreen and Hand Lotion, Diaper Creams - Teachers may apply sunscreen, diaper cream and hand lotion with written permission from parents including the specific type to be used. Sunscreen, diaper cream and hand lotion is to be provided by parents.
- If your child needs to take prescription medication at school, a **PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER MEDICATION AT SCHOOL** form must be completed and signed by the physician and parent must be provided to your student’s school. This also applies to lotions, mouthwashes and homeopathic treatments. This form expires after 1 year; therefore, it needs to be renewed each school year if your student will continue to need medication at school.
- Procedures for administering medications by school personnel:
 - If, under exceptional circumstances, a student is required to take medication during school hours and the parent cannot be present to administer the medication, the school nurse, health aide/tech, or other staff who are trained and delegated by the district nurse may give medications. Staff will administer

medications in compliance with school policies/regulations and written permission of the physician and the parent or guardian.

- Written instructions from the student's physician should be on file at the school.
The Permission for Medication Administration Form may be found on the district's website under Health Department
- All medication must be brought to school by parent or guardian in the original pharmacy labeled container. Over the counter medications must also be in the original container.
- Students who require an inhaler at school must have an asthma care plan signed and dated by a physician on file with the director.
- Students who require an epi-pen at school must have a severe allergy care plan signed and dated by a physician on file.
- For more information, please visit the district website. Under *Departments*, select *Health* then scroll all the way down and select *Students with Healthcare Needs*.

Medical Treatment - Should an emergency arise, it is understood that a reasonable effort will be made, time and conditions permitting, to locate you and your designated emergency contact(s) before any action will be taken. If, however, it is not possible to locate you or your designated emergency contact(s), then officials of Elizabeth School District will contact directly or indirectly the persons named on the Emergency Information form, to seek emergency medical and surgical treatment in a medical facility by a physician or other licensed health care provider should your child's condition require it in your absence. Further, in the event of an emergency, officials of Elizabeth School District may render treatment for the health and safety of your child.

Safety Procedures

- Per Licensing requirements Elizabeth Early Childhood Programs participates in regular Evacuate, Shelter, Lockdown, Hold, and Secure drills.
- All doors are locked during business hours.
- All visitors must sign in.
- In the case of Safety Procedures put in place such as a Lockdown (when classroom doors are locked and children are positioned out of view) or Secure (when outside doors to the building are locked and classrooms continue to function as usual), parents may be notified by phone numbers provided
- Emergency exit procedures are posted in every classroom.
- Teachers receive in-service training regarding emergency procedures. Each building has a crisis plan.

Location of Children - Teaching staff will be aware of the location of children at all times by adhering to the following procedures:

- Families and/or authorized people (minimum age 16) sign the in/out log when dropping off and picking up students. Teachers check the log at drop off and pick up to ensure they have the proper count of students present/picked up.
- Staff will count children during transitions in and out of the classroom.
- Children do not leave the classroom unless accompanied by an adult staff member or parent/authorized person.

Late Arrivals – Families will need to let teachers and director know if your child will be arriving later than 9:00am. This will allow to time to adapt the schedule based on ratios.

Poor Weather Conditions - Elizabeth School District will make the decision on opening/closing times and days. Please listen carefully to the message. Information will be posted on the district website - <https://www.elizabethschooldistrict.org/page/1>

When inclement weather occurs, whether hot or cold, students will remain indoors for teacher-led gross motor activities. When it feels like 20 degrees or below, or feels like 90+degrees we will stay inside.

Secondhand smoke and third hand smoke – Our faculty will have a spare change of clothes to change into when they arrive that is clean and non-fragranced. Faculty member will not be allowed to smoke during the day during their work hours. This includes cigarettes and e-cigarettes.

Guidelines for Working with Children - Our staff uses the following guidelines for working with children

- Ask questions and provide ideas and feedback at any time. We welcome your input and want you to thoroughly understand our policies and procedures.
- Arrive in class alert and ready to interact with the children.
- Get to know your children.
- Speak positively to children. Avoid “no” and “what not to do”. Tell the children what they need to do and know what they shouldn’t do.
- Try to get down onto the floor or sit in a chair at the child’s level whenever possible.
- When interacting with children, ask open-ended questions. These types of questions allow for imaginative use of individuality. Try not to pressure a child with a “one answer” or “right or wrong” type of question.
- Children need to be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- Give children choices as frequently as possible. Do not give children a choice if one does not exist. For example, all children must try to potty at pre-appointed times, must wash with soap after potty and before eating, must come inside with the group from the playground, must sit at the table during lunch and snack time, and must join the group for group time. Do not say “Do you want to?” or “Let’s do this, okay?” if you don’t intend for the children to say “No!”
- Never let a child be taken from the room by an adult you do not know.
- If you have any questions pertaining to the child, ask the adult privately. We do not discuss children in front of other children and/or adults.
- Please limit socialization with other adults in the room. Tend to the children and/or task at hand.
- All the children need your attention. Do not spend your time with only a few children
- Try to calm a crying child while determining the cause of their tears.
- Avoid talking across the room to children or adults.
- Approach the person at eye level. Position yourself where you can see all of the children in the room.

Elizabeth School District Early Childhood Programs Belief Statements

- We believe that Children require opportunities to actively engage in activities that are relevant, challenging, and designed to promote independent learning. Children, who learn through play, develop inquiry skills naturally. They see themselves as explorers, discoverers, problem solvers and inventors.
- We believe that young children, who are rushed into the pencil and paper instruction of reading and writing, often miss important steps in learning, and may suffer later because they lack the foundation needed for using language.
- We believe our program must be developmentally appropriate and a safe place for children.
- By having a child-centered approach, we are able to develop a plan to help children learn in a way that motivates each individual child.
- We believe that in all activities, the process rather than the product is emphasized. Self-expression, creativity and wonder are highly encouraged.
- **We believe childhood is not a race for information... but a walk of discovery!**