**EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

**Purpose**
Welcome to the Early Learning Center! Our primary goal is to create an environment in which children may develop to their fullest potential at their own individual rates. By providing carefully planned experiences and by utilizing successful teaching methods, the Early Learning Center is able to guide a child's self-concept and to stimulate growth.

**Objectives**
1. To further the development of a positive self-concept through an emotionally supported cognitive program.
2. To sharpen perceptual skills by helping develop and improve observation and thinking processes through sensory stimulation.
3. To extend the development of gross and fine motor skills, i.e.: coordination and flexibility.
4. To foster the expansion of communication skills.
5. To further social development by encouraging progress from a parallel to a cooperative mode of play and behavior.
6. To encourage an appreciation of nature and an understanding of man's place within the world.
7. To bring about within each child an appreciation and awareness of individual differences, interests, and abilities.

**Philosophy**
The philosophy of the Early Learning Center is based on the child development theory. The emphasis is on the growth and development of the whole child; that is, physical, emotional, social and intellectual development. Activities, materials, equipment, scheduling, and discipline are all planned with the four areas of growth in mind. Our curriculum is based on the philosophy that young children learn best by doing. Learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn about the world we live in. When your child plays, curiosity, self-esteem, language, problem-solving, and cooperation are developed. Through the planned activities these areas of growth help to foster readiness skills necessary for kindergarten.

We want to encourage a sense of responsibility in each child for himself or herself. One way we do this is by allowing children to choose what they want to do from a variety of options. Also, we will use a problem solving technique that will help the children learn to deal with their problems in a competent way. Of course, the development of a positive self-concept is of supreme importance. We try to communicate and relate to children only in ways that will promote and enhance a positive self image.

Last, we believe strongly in open communication with the parents of our preschool children. This dialogue increases our understanding of your child and your understanding of the experiences at the Early Learning Center.
Format
The Plano Senior High Early Learning Center is designed to provide an enriching experience for 3, 4, and 5 year old children in the Plano community. The Early Learning Center is a lab school for the high school Education and Training I and II classes. Education and Training is a two hour a day, year long, elective class of junior and senior students. Most of the students taking this class are interested in working with children in future careers. Approximately one half of their time is spent in classroom study of child development theory and the other half is spent working with children. Therefore the Early Learning Center is a laboratory preschool operating as a crucial component of this career education class.

Parent Involvement—Observation
Development and learning occur throughout every day. Because the home environment and the school account for much of the child’s experiences, it is important that cooperation and communication exist between the home and the school. The Early Learning Center urges all parents to become actively involved in the school. After an initial adjustment time, parents will have many opportunities to participate in the program.

We encourage parents to use our observation room where you may watch unnoticed by the children. Other people will come by to watch our children in action from the observation room, such as psychology and other high school classes, junior college child development classes, visiting teachers and administrators, and more. After observing, parents often have comments or questions about their child's behavior, other children's behavior, and/or student's activities. The teacher is available to talk with parents about their child's progress and other topics that pertain to the child. A parent conference during the spring or a scheduled appointment with the teacher will provide some time to discuss your perceptions.

Weekly lesson plans are posted for parents and a monthly newsletter provides an outline of the activities planned for the children.

Forms
There are several forms due on or before the first day of school. These include the emergency release form, the immunization record, and a physician’s release statement. These are required and must be on file in our office.

Schedule/Holidays
Preschool classes will be held Monday through Thursday. There will be no preschool on Friday. Our school schedule will follow the Plano ISD calendar for holidays, record's days, snow days, etc. An Early Learning Center calendar will be available for easy reference.

Pick-up Authorization
Children will be allowed to leave school only with his or her parents or with those whom you have authorized. If there is ever a change in the procedure, please give the necessary information to the teacher in written form.

Parking
If you plan to stay and observe or work with us during school, please park in the visitors’ parking spaces or in the places “not numbered” in the parking lot north of our classroom. Each registered parent will receive a parking permit at the beginning of the school year.
Safety

Children must always be escorted in and out of the building by an adult. We ask all parents to walk with their children into the building to our room and to pick them up the same way, or feel free to use our pick-up and drop-off system with the high school students. If you are late please walk in and pick up your child because the high school students will not be available.

Health

Each child’s health is of major importance to the Early Learning Center. For effective participation, each child must be healthy.

Please notify the school if your child will be absent. Please keep your child at home if there is any sign of illness. Also, please report if the child has a communicable disease or has been exposed to one, so other parents can be notified.

Emergency Care Procedure

In case of illness or injury during school hours, the following procedure will be used. The teacher will attempt to contact one or both parents. If parents cannot be reached, the two emergency friends given will be contacted. If parents or emergency friends cannot be reached and it is decided that the child needs immediate medical attention or examination, the child will be taken to the emergency room.

If for any reason the building needs to be evacuated, our emergency pick-up location will be Haggard Middle School, 2401 Westside Drive. The phone number is 469-752-5400.

Clothing

Play clothes are great! Children should be dressed suitable for active play. Smocks are provided for art projects, but are not foolproof. Also, as a safety consideration, rubber or similar soled shoes are necessary for school. Slick, hard soled shoes or flimsy sandals are dangerous to active children.

We try to play outside if weather permits, please send your child in appropriate clothing.

Birthdays

We think birthdays are important! Please let us know in advance of your child’s birthday so we can plan together something special for that day at school. Summer birthdays may be celebrated during the school year. A birthday snack may be sent to school along with paper goods. In our study of healthy foods, the children learn how food affects them and what “good” foods are. The following are suggested BIRTHDAY treats: muffins, cheese, crackers, apple slices, orange wedges, popcorn, raisins, bananas, graham crackers, rice krispie treats, pudding, or trail mix. Please no cupcakes or cookies.

Enrollment

Enrollment will be taken from submitted applications from the Plano community. The staff will consider age and sex in balancing the preschool classes. One preschool teacher and 3 to 9 high school students will be working with each class. Children who are 3, 4, and 5 year olds who are not enrolled in a public kindergarten may be considered.

If it is necessary to withdraw a child, the parents should inform the Director of the program at least two weeks before the date of withdrawal. Tuition refunds will not be made for absences or withdrawals.