

EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY PARENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020

The ECC handbook contains important elaborations, refinements, or changes to the NWMS Parent Handbook, Toddler–Upper Elementary Communities. Please find the 2019-2020 TC-UE Parent Handbook on our website. Both manuals are revised as needed.

EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY STAFF

ECC 1

Annie Rebori: Lead Guide (alrrebori@gmail.com)

Miriam Coultas: Assistant

ECC 2

Anna McDonald: Lead Guide (annamcd@ymail.com)

Lauren Corum: Assistant

ECC Support Staff

Emily Sturgeon: Extended Day Guide

Stephanie Kirkman: Extended Day Guide

Kasey Taylor: A.M. Support Staff

OUTDOOR STAFF

Heather Zeiger, Stephanie Kirkman, Kasey Taylor, Emily Sturgeon, Adam Lion

RESOURCE STAFF AND SCHEDULE

Dawn Kunkel, Art

ECC 1: Thursdays 11:00-11:30

ECC 2: Fridays 11:00-11:30

Georgi Schmitt, Music

ECC 1: Fridays 10:30-11:00 (1st and 2nd year students) and 11:00-11:30 (3rd year students)

ECC 2: Thursdays 11:00-11:30 (1st and 2nd year students) and Fridays 11:00-11:30 (3rd year students)

Isabel Zuniga, Spanish

ECC 1: Tuesdays 11:00-11:30 (1st and 2nd year students) and Wednesdays 10:30-11:00 (3rd year students)

ECC 2: Wednesdays 10:30-11:00 (3rd year students) and 11:00-11:30 (1st and 2nd year students)

EARLY MORNING CARE (7:30-8:15)

Children who arrive before 8:15 need to be enrolled in Early Morning Care, which is held in the Extended Day classroom (in the Middle Building) with Chrissy Willard and Amanda Smith (Toddler Community Guides) starting at 7:30am. Please sign your child in on the clipboard located at the external door of the ED classroom. It is the first door on the south side of the Middle Building. Weather permitting, Early Morning Care may be on the playground and the sign-in clipboard will be at the kiosk by the playhouse.

MORNING ARRIVAL (8:15-8:30)

Arrival begins at 8:15 and ends *promptly* at 8:30. **Please do not send your child to the classroom before 8:15.** You may choose to drop your child off in the car line or walk them to the gate of the Lower Building for drop off. Staff will be greeting students the first week and assisting them to their classroom. After that, Upper Elementary Safety Patrol students and staff will be greeting your child and helping them as needed. If you drop your child off in the car line, please be sure he/she is seated in the side closest to the sidewalk and has his/her lunch box and canvas bag ready. If you choose to walk your child to the gate, please park on the left hand side of the drive in a designated space.

Let your child know ahead of time about the ECC drop off procedure (i.e. “In ECC, I say goodbye to you at the gate/sidewalk”). Children feel comfortable when they know the routine in the morning and it doesn’t change. Know that we are experts at tears and at helping a child integrate into their new environment with ease. If you think there is a reason to believe your child will be distraught and exhibit significant separation anxiety please talk to us before the first day and we will create a plan with you.

If your child arrives after 8:30 and a staff member is no longer at the gate, please bring your child to the office. *To limit classroom interruptions during lesson times, do not escort your child to the classroom yourself.* We encourage you to make every effort to arrive *on time*, as it is highly important for your child’s day. He or she can experience the personal greeting by staff members and will not miss early morning transition routines with friends. Most importantly, it relieves anxiety on the part of the child and does not disrupt the normal progress of the classroom. We are not a drop-in facility and we expect students to arrive during our greeting time unless there is a valid excuse such as a doctor’s appointment. **Please contact the school or your child’s teacher if you will be late.**

Our goal is for your child to feel welcomed and cared for. It is normal for a parent to leave school worried about their child’s transition. Please feel free to call the school and ask how your child is doing if you are concerned and let us know about any transition problems you have.

MORNING WORK TIME (8:15-11:15)

During the morning work cycle children will be given lessons individually and in groups. They will move through periods of intense concentration using classroom materials, quietly socializing with their peers, and caring for their classroom.

This will be a three hour uninterrupted work time. For that reason, staff will not be available for parent communication in the mornings. Please leave a note in your child's bag or contact the office if you need to be in touch with the lead guide. Phone calls will be returned in the afternoon. If your child has forgotten something (lunch, bag, pizza money, etc.) bring the forgotten item(s) to the office and they will be delivered to the classroom.

SNACK

Snack is available throughout the morning. Each child prepares his or her own snack, washes his or her own dishes, and prepares the area for the next child.

A snack calendar for each classroom is sent home at the end of each month and it will indicate what the snack is for the month so you will know exactly what to bring when it is your child's snack day. Your child's name will be listed on the day he or she is responsible for providing snack for the entire class. If you have a planned absence let us know ahead of time so that we can accommodate that on the calendar. The child scheduled to bring the snack will bring the designated snack basket home the prior day and return to school with it the next day. He or she will be the snack leader and, along with a friend, will prepare snack for the day.

LUNCH (11:30-12:00)

We eat lunch as a group in the classroom. As this is an important practical life experience, the adults will sit with children at a lunch table to model appropriate eating habits, clean up procedures, and polite conversation. Adults and older children are available to assist those that need help (opening containers, microwaving, cleaning spills, etc.).

The classroom is stocked with all needed tableware (utensils, glasses, etc.). Children may choose to bring an appropriate drink in a thermos, but water is always available in the classroom. Please **label** your child's lunchbox and every container you send, both the top and bottom. On occasion, children may accidentally bring classroom utensils home. Please return any unfamiliar items the next day.

Lunch boxes and food containers should be simple and easy for your child to open and close. Containers should fit in the lunch box with room to spare so your child can successfully repack all items independently. Our cubby spaces where lunch boxes are stored are approximately 12in. x 12in., and each cubby is shared by two people. Please avoid cumbersome lunch boxes and ensure that all containers and thermoses are leak-proof, as lunch boxes may be turned on their side in order to fit.

This school year, both classrooms are nut-free, due to student allergies. Please ensure your child's lunch does not contain any nut products (peanuts, almonds, cashews, coconuts, nut butters, etc.). There are some good nut-free nut butter alternatives available, such as sunbutter.

See p. 9-10 in the *NWMS Parent Handbook Toddler –Upper Elementary Communities* for information about the content of lunches, appropriate containers, etc.

FRIDAY PIZZA DAY

An optional pizza lunch will be offered on Fridays for \$4. Along with pizza we will serve fruit, veggies, grains, and water. You can either pay weekly or for the entire school year. Those students paying weekly should bring pizza money (*in cash only – no checks please*) to class Friday morning in their bag. We use this as a fundraiser for the classroom.

OUTDOOR TIME (12:00-1:00)

Children are dismissed to the outdoor area after restoring their lunch space and dressing for the weather. Outdoor guides will be supervising the ECC community from 12:00-1:00 PM.

We try to get outside every day. Please send your child with appropriate outdoor wear for all types of weather. In the case of inclement weather, we may have an abbreviated outdoor time. The tree canopy provides a nice buffer from the rain and we may go outside during periods of light showers. Please send rubber boots and a raincoat when rain is forecasted. A warm coat, hat, and gloves are essential for winter weather and allow your child to enjoy his/her time outside. Close toed shoes help children to feel comfortable running, hiking the nature trail and doing more active games. We encourage full exploration of our outdoor environment, and your children may come home with dirty clothing. Please send appropriate attire for this.

NAP TIME (12:45-2:15)

Any child needing a nap will rest on a mat in our Extended Day room. They will come in from the playground to rest by 12:45 P.M. and will be up no later than 2:15 P.M. Students will be asked to stay on their nap mats for a sufficient time to achieve sleep. A nap note will be sent home each day letting you know if and for how long your child napped.

Nap mats are provided by the school. Parents provide a fitted crib sheet and light blanket. You may also send a small stuffed animal (no larger than the palm of an adult's hand) if needed for comfort. At the parent meeting, we will provide a bag for transporting nap items. All nap items should be sent in this bag Monday morning and will remain at school during the week. All nap items will be sent home on Friday in the nap bag to be washed and returned Monday morning.

Please notify your child's teacher prior to the first day of school if your child will be napping.

AFTERNOON WORK TIME (1:00-2:30)

All children who do not nap will return to their classroom after their outside time at 1 P.M. for an afternoon work period.

DISMISSAL (2:30-2:45)

Dismissal is from 2:30-2:45 P.M. and children will be dismissed from the seating area in front of the Middle Building. After 2:45 P.M. any children not picked up will be escorted to the

playground and enrolled in Extended Day. You will be billed for this time according to the Extended Day fee schedule.

You may pick your child up in the car line or on the sidewalk. If using the car line, remain in your vehicle and a staff member will place your child in his or her seat. If you wish to pick your child up on the sidewalk, park and wait behind the cones. Your child will be dismissed by a teacher and then walk to you. Please efficiently escort your child from the waiting area.

To ensure safety and efficiency, staff members are not available for conversation at this time. If you would like a check in about your child's day, please let us know.

EXTENDED DAY (2:30-5:30)

Extended Day begins at 2:30 and ends promptly at 5:30. Those enrolled spend time outside, as well as in the Extended Day room, where a variety of materials and lessons are available. Snack will be provided.

If you arrive to pick up your child while students are outside, proceed directly to the playground. Sign out sheets are located on the kiosk near the playhouse. Be sure to write the **exact time** you pick them up and **sign your name**. Ensure that a staff member has acknowledged that you are leaving with your child. Their belongings will be on the hooks outside of the Extended Day room.

If you arrive when students are indoors, enter the Middle Building through the front door and sign your child out on the clipboards. Use the phone in the common area to call the ED room to indicate you are here to pick up your child. Complete instructions are near the phone. A staff member will direct your child to the common area to meet you once they have carefully restored their space and gathered their belongings. To limit interruptions to the classroom, ***please do not enter the room.***

CANVAS BAGS

Each child will have a canvas bag with their name on it provided by the school. The bag should come to school every day. It should contain at least one change of clothes and several pairs of socks in a labeled one-gallon plastic zip lock bag. If your child naps, please send an additional set of clothes in a labeled zip lock bag. This will remain in the nap room in case of accidents. **ALL** of your child's clothing, including what they wear into the classroom, must be labeled so it can be sent home if found outside the bag.

We encourage you to use the clear front pocket for notes to the teacher. We will also use it to send notes home. Please assist your child in checking their bag every night. Help him/her take out work or notes they may have brought home. Make sure toys and other distracting items have not made it into the bag (or their pockets!). **TOYS OF ANY KIND MAY NOT COME TO SCHOOL** (distracting jewelry included). Such items can be highly distracting and children become upset if anything is lost or broken. If toys make it as far the classroom, the teacher will carefully put them away until the end of the day.

Periodically children will bring home a plastic folder containing their completed work. The folder should be emptied and returned to school the next day.

CLOTHING

This is the age of independence. Please send your children in clothing and shoes that they can take on and off on their own. For the youngest students, elastic waistbands, loose fitting shirts, and Velcro shoes are ideal. As their ability to work with fasteners develops, clothing with zippers, buttons, and snaps can be incorporated. Please do not send shoes with laces unless your child can tie. Children take their shoes off upon entering the classroom but are required to have their feet covered. Most students choose to wear socks but simple slippers are also fine. Be sure to send multiple pairs of extra socks, as they often get wet or dirty.

Learning to dress and care for oneself is an exciting process during this developmental stage. Many children will change repeatedly for the sake of mastering these skills. You might find your child's clothes on backwards or shoes on the wrong feet. It is important to be aware of not discouraging them by pointing out "mistakes." This is part of the normal process and they take great pride in being able to dress themselves.

CONFERENCES/COMMUNICATION

We offer conferences in the fall and spring. Conferences are not mandatory but we always enjoy talking with you about your child's growth and progress. It is valuable for us to get to know your family better and learn more about your child. If you would like to talk at any other time, please do not hesitate to request a meeting.

Communication with you about your child is very important to us. We encourage you to communicate with us any questions, concerns, or information that will help us as we work with your child. You are the expert on your child and we value your feedback and collaboration. We can be reached via email, notes, and phone messages left in the office. We will return any messages as soon as we are able. Please know that we will also communicate any questions, concerns, or observations about your child to you as needed.

WALK AROUND THE SUN BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

In ECC, the Walk Around the Sun ceremony is a special way that we celebrate birthdays. Please provide a picture from each year of your child's life. If you want to use multiple pictures for each year, please mount them all onto one sheet. A single poster board can also be used. Provide a short description with any notable information and developmental milestones from each year and/or a brief description of the pictures. If your child has a summer birthday, please let us know if you would like us to celebrate it before the end of the school year.

Your child will be the snack leader on or as close to his or her birthday as possible. The snack calendar will indicate what day their Walk Around the Sun will be. Please provide the regular snack for the day--we maintain our no dessert policy.

PLEASE PRINT, FILL OUT, AND RETURN TO SCHOOL

Child's Name _____ Classroom _____

Please fill out the following form, sign, and return it to your child's class at the beginning of the school year.

_____ I have labeled every item of clothing and have a full change of clothes in a labeled Ziploc bag. If my child naps, I have a second bag with a change of clothes.

_____ I have labeled every lunch box item & the lunch box and containers are simple, easy for my child to open and close, and will fit in the cubby space.

_____ I have read the ECC Parent Handbook & the Nature's Way Parent Handbook.

_____ I understand that toys and distracting jewelry do not come to school.

_____ I understand the policy on nutritious lunches which includes no desserts & an acceptable liquid (water, 90%+ juices, or plain milk).

_____ If my child naps, I have notified his/her teacher and have labeled all nap items.