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WELCOME TO THE PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT (PSD)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the Preschool Services Department. The Preschool Services Department (PSD) has proudly administered child and family development programs in San Bernardino County since 1965. These programs include the Federal Head Start and Early Head Start programs, the State of California Department of Education California (CDE) State Preschool Program (CSPP), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

PSD has over 700 employees who serve more than 6,000 Head Start, Early Head Start, and State Preschool, children and their families annually at 73 locations countywide. We recognize that excellent staff forms the core of a quality program. For that reason, we're committed to focusing considerable time and attention in hiring the best and giving them the support to do their work well.

We thank you for sharing your children and families with us. We value the rich cultural and ethnic diversity that each of you brings to our program.

This handbook provides information on our history, mission, vision, philosophy, and core values. In addition, information about services, policies, procedures, hours of operation, fees, enrollment and attendance procedures, transition services, health & safety, parent participation, emergency procedures, clothing, discipline, confidentiality, and other important information are included for your convenience and easy reference.

Please read the entire handbook carefully.

Phalos Haire,
Executive Director

Program Background

Our Mission

To Improve the Well-Being of Children, Empower Families and Strengthen Communities.

Our Vision

- Our children will excel in whatever setting they go to next.
- Our families' quality of life is measurably better after participating in our programs.
- Our efforts increase the quantity and quality of sustainable resources and services countywide.

Our Philosophy

Our central premise is that family is the most fundamental factor influencing the lives of children. Aside from children's educational needs, they also need a supportive, healthy home environment combined with stable and reliable relationships with adults and caregivers. In short, if you strengthen families, you strengthen children.

Program Goals

For these reasons, our primary goals are to ensure that every child in San Bernardino County has access to a quality preschool experience, to increase the self-sufficiency of our families and improve the quality of child development and community assets countywide.

Type of Classes

Center Base:

Part Day Classes

- 3 ½ hours (morning session or afternoon sessions)
- State Preschool classes open Monday through Friday
- Head Start Preschool Classes open Monday through Thursday

Full Day Classes

- Open Monday through Friday.
- Require that the parent is working, looking for a job, participating in training, attending school, or has a verified incapacity.

PSD centers are generally open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Head Start - Home Base Provides:

- Services to children in the child's home, through work with the child and family.
- One 90-minute session per week and 2 socialization days per month.
- Home Base families receive the same Head Start services offered to center base families.

- Delivery of wide-ranging Health, Education, Nutrition, and other services
- Services to children with disabilities.

Funding Sources:

Head Start

- Serves children 3 to 5 years of age.
- Provides children and their families with services to meet their educational, social, health, nutritional, and emotional needs.

State Preschool

- Serves children from 3 to 5 years in a classroom setting
- PSD combines State Preschool with Head Start to provide wide-ranging services to families.

Non Discrimination Policy

The Preschool Services Department (PSD) program does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, color, or mental or physical disability, in determining which children are served. ¹ Additionally, PSD refrains from all forms of religious instruction or worship.

Parent's/Guardian's Rights

Parents/guardians have guaranteed rights. You will receive a copy of the Parent's Rights at enrollment and a copy is posted at each center.

Cross Cultural Diversity Policy

Great effort is made to offer children a wide variety of multicultural and diverse experiences to promote friendship, caring, tolerance and peace.

1. PSD's Administrative, classroom, and support service staff receives training annually on cultural diversity to be aware of the various cultures of the families we serve.
2. Cultures are represented in the classrooms by pictures, posters, stories, books, and dolls. Parents are asked to share traditions, stories, clothing and preparations of special foods specific to their cultures.
3. It is important to recognize, acknowledge and celebrate your own culture and other cultures around you, but it is also important to provide opportunities in the classrooms and in parent meetings to experience cultures not represented locally. Parents are invited to share cultural history with other parents and staff during the monthly Parent Advisory Committee Meetings.

¹ EC 231.5 (a), (b)

Enrollment Procedures

To begin enrollment, a parent/guardian must complete and return an application.

The following documentation is required prior to enrollment:

- Income Verification
- Record of Birth
- Immunization Records (Immunizations must be current or up to date)

Immunizations:

All children are required to complete or be currently up to date with all vaccination required by California care and school Immunization requirements, before enrolling in the Center Base programs.

If at any time during the program year a child does not maintain all required vaccines the child is temporary excluded from the classroom until the child has all required vaccinations.

It is required for each child enrolled in the program will have:

- 3 doses of Polio Vaccine
- 4 doses of DTP
- 1 dose of MMR (after 1st birthday)
- 1 HIB (after 1st birthday)
- TB Clearance
- 1 Hepatitis B (after the 1st Birthday)
- 1 Varicella

If your child needs to be exempted from immunizations due to a medical condition, obtain a Medical Waiver from a licensed medical professional.

Suggested immunizations:

- Hepatitis A
- Influenza

Information for your child's "medical and dental home", (i.e. doctor, dentist and/or health care agency that is keeping health records of the child) must be kept on file. PSD staff helps families who do not have medical or dental insurance.

Legal Issues:

In order to maintain a safe learning environment for all children, copies of Court orders relating to custody suits or restraining orders, whether settled or in progress, must be given to PSD to enroll your child.

Confidentiality Of Services

The use or release of information is limited to:

- PSD staff who have a need to know
- Individuals authorized by the parent/guardian through a written and signed "Release of Information" form
- Authorized personnel of agencies which provide funding to PSD and require coordination with city, state and county services.

In addition, PSD may release information to:

- Appropriate authorities in order to comply with a subpoena or other court-order without prior written consent from the parent;
- The child's parent or the parent's representative who has submitted a prior written request to review their family file.

Holidays

Our centers are closed on these holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King's Day
- Presidents' Day
- Spring Recess - 1 Week (part day classes only)
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving -2 Days
- Winter Recess - 2 Weeks (part day classes only)
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

Dropping Off And Picking Up Children

For your child's protection and in compliance with state law, you must sign-in your child when they arrive and sign-out your child when they are picked up. Your full signature is required. Please do not initial.

Please make sure teaching staff and providers are aware that your child is at the school. **Never** leave the child alone under any circumstances. It is important that the teacher is aware of all arrivals and departures. Please write a note for staff for any special instructions that are needed for that day.

Please wait to talk about issues after drop off and pick up transitions. Discussions during drop off and pick up creates a distraction for the teacher and poses a potential safety concern.

Other safety notes are:

- Do not group together with other parents in the classroom
- Create space to allow observation
- Line up outdoors in a safe, practical space to avoid confusion and groups that are unable to be supervised

Please DO NOT Park in “Loading or Fire Zones.”

For the safety and security of the children:

- When picking up children, parents must come into the centers through the selected entrance to the classroom.
- If your child is outside on the playground, let your child's teacher know you are picking up your child.
- Children may not be picked up from an outside entrance or over the fence.
- Hold your child’s hand and keep your child with you when you are in the parking lot.

Parents may arrange to meet with their child’s teacher between the hours of:

- 7:30 - 8:00
- 11:30 - 12:00
- 4:00 - 5:00

Other ways to communicate with your child’s teacher are:

- Exchange notes
- Leave a message through the Center Clerk, Site Supervisor or Lead Teacher
- Make use of:
 - Learning Genie messaging
 - ChildPlus text message or email
 - Phone call

Please make sure emergency information is kept current. At the time of enrollment, parents/guardians must fully complete an emergency information card that provides the names of people who are authorized to pick up your child, and who may be called in case of an emergency. Report any changes on the Emergency Card as soon as possible.

All changes must be made in person (not by phone) by the authorized parent/guardian.

Only a parent, or people listed on the child’s emergency card, who are at least 18 years old can sign-out the child. It does not matter that they are a sibling or relative if they are not on the card. A photo ID is required of anyone who comes to pick up a child. Please notify

people that you have listed them on the emergency form and they are required to provide a photo ID to pick up your child.

Children will not be released to anyone who appears to be intoxicated. If a parent/guardian or designated adult arrives to pick up a child while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the police are called immediately to handle the situation, as necessary.

Late / Drop Policy

It is important that children are picked up from the center at the end of class time.

We Ask That You:

- Contact the center if you are going to be late.
- Arrange with someone, who is listed on the emergency card, to pick up your child.

If you are late without contacting the center, the following actions are taken:

- We will call the telephone numbers for all people currently listed on the emergency card.
- If we do not get a response from any of the people listed on the card within a reasonable time (30 minutes), we may notify the authorities and they will transport your child to the nearest police station.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance in preschool teaches a child to be on time, be school ready, and can give a child a better chance at:

- Reading at grade level in Elementary School
- Improving how they feel about school by giving them a routine
- Attending school regularly through High School
- Attaining a High School Diploma

Sign-in/out sheets:

1. For emergency and legal purposes, parents/guardians are required to, sign-in/out with their full signature for each child. Enter the correct arrival and departure time on the sign-in/out.
2. Accurate sign-in/out sheets are used for roll call in the event of an emergency.
3. Children not properly signed-in/out may be considered absent "without excuse".
4. The parent/guardian must contact center staff on the day before or the morning of an absence and give a reason for the absence. When the center staff is not contacted, they call the parent/guardian one hour after the child's scheduled start time.
5. Doctor's excuses are required in the case of communicable diseases, serious illnesses/injuries including fractured bones.
6. Before a child is allowed to use bus services, a parent/guardian is required to complete and sign bus consent forms. Only people listed on

the bus consent form/emergency card are allowed to drop-off/pick-up the child.

7. With permission from the parent/guardian, the child's teacher will sign-in/sign-out children who are transported by bus.

Excused absences can include:

- Illness of a Child
- Illness of an Adult
- Court Ordered Visit

Unexcused absences are absences which are not one of the excused absence listed above. A maximum of 4 unexcused absences are allowed for a program year.

An example of an unexcused absences include:

- deciding not to go to school without an excused reason
- not attending because it is raining
- a need to go shopping

Incorrect or missing Sign-in/out

If you fail to sign-in/out for your child correctly, it may be considered absent "without excuse".

For the CSPP Program only

The combined total of Family Emergency and Best Interest Days are limited to 10 total except for children who receive protective services or are at risk of abuse or neglect.

- **Best interest days** family vacation or parent day off, family visits (non-court ordered), program temporarily removes child from program.
- **Family emergencies** unplanned crisis or life threatening situations, car troubles, medical appointments for sibling(s).

Child Emergencies

If a child is injured or becomes ill at school (non-emergency), the parent/guardian is called. If you cannot be reached, our staff calls your emergency contacts. PSD staff makes the child comfortable and remains with your child until you arrive.

It is extremely important that our staff is aware of your daily schedule and any changes in emergency contact information.

Illness

The goal of the illness policy is to ensure the health and safety of all children and adults. If your child is sick, please keep your child home until they are well. If your child becomes ill at the center and/or requires attention from a medical professional, you or your emergency contact is notified immediately. Some illnesses may require a doctor's note to return back to school.

Children with the following symptoms or illnesses must stay home or be picked up within one hour of notification. This list is not all-inclusive:

- ❑ **Fever**
 - Temperature 2½ degrees over body temperature (102° or higher rectally, 100° under the armpit, 101° orally).
 - Return when child is free of fever for 24 hours.
- ❑ **Rapid or labored breathing**
- ❑ **Runny nose**
 - Yellow or green mucous unrelated to allergies
 - Return when mucous is clear
- ❑ **Persistent cough or congestion**
 - Accompanied by yellow or green phlegm or is persistent and interferes with child's comfort or ability to drink, talk or sleep.
 - Return when symptoms are no longer present
 - A clearance from doctor may be required to return
- ❑ **Rashes** except diaper rash or poison ivy may lead to exclusion until a doctor provides clearance to return.
- ❑ **Diarrhea**
 - Three or more diarrhea stools within an eight hour period
 - May return 24 hours after last diarrhea stool
- ❑ **Vomiting**
 - Two or more episodes of vomiting
 - Return 24 hours after the last vomiting episode or when a health care provider determines that the child's illness is not communicable and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- ❑ **Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)**
 - May return 24 hours after treatment has started.
 - A doctor's clearance including the diagnosis and prescribed treatment is required upon return.
- ❑ **Impetigo**
 - May return 24 hours after treatment has started.
 - A doctor's clearance including diagnosis and prescribed treatment is required upon return.
- ❑ **Strep Throat**
 - May return 48 hours after treatment has started and child is free of fever for 24 hours.
 - A doctor's clearance is needed before returning to school.

- **Lice**
 - May return when child is free of live lice.
- **Ringworm**
 - Ringworm of the scalp - return after treatment is started and with doctor's clearance
 - Ringworm on the body does not require exclusion under the following circumstances:
 1. The affected area is covered at all times
 2. Treatment has started
 3. If condition does not improve, a doctor's clearance may be required.
- **Mouth sores and drooling**
 - Return with doctor's clearance.
- **For all contagious illnesses**
 - Doctor's clearance with diagnosis and prescribed treatment is required to return to the center.
 - Additional medical information, tests or examinations may be required prior to return.
 - Our centers are required to report communicable diseases to the Public Health Department.

Allergies

Notify staff, in writing, of any food, medication, or environmental allergies that require treatment. This written note is placed on the two emergency cards and on the Medical History Profile.

Toothbrushing

As part of their learning, children brush their teeth after breakfast and lunch meals. Toothbrushes and toothpaste are provided. The toothbrushes are stored in racks that meet health and safety standards.

Medication Administration

If your child requires medication at the Center, please contact the Site Supervisor for the Medication Packet.

Medication is administered to children **only** under the following conditions:

- With written parental permission and direction from your child's physician (this applies to both prescription and non-prescription medicines).
- Prescription medication must be in its original container and labeled with your child's name, physician's name, pharmacy, and name of medication, dosage and how often to take it.

- Non-prescription (over the counter) medication must be in the original container and labeled with your child's name, accompanied by written instruction for administering the medication from your child's physician.
- The medication must be current and not expired.
- Some medication taken intravenously, taken intermuscularly, or inhaled, require the nurse to give training to staff and the parent before administering to the child.

PSD staff maintains a record of medication administration for children on prescribed and non-prescribed medicines.

The record contains:

- the name of the child,
- time medicine was given,
- dosage and
- name of staff person giving the medicine.

In the event of any atypical reaction, staff immediately notifies the parents, and calls the child's physician and/or 911 for emergency assistance.

Because of possible allergic reactions, PSD staff does not give the first time dose of any medication. The first dose must be given before the medication is brought to the center.

Consent For Emergency Medical Treatment/Release

Community Care Licensing requires all children to have a signed Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment form on file. Please fill out this form with specific procedures you want to be followed in case of an emergency. Please work with the center to keep your child's consent forms up-to-date.

Bus Transportation

Your child must be designated as either a bus rider or dropped off (your child cannot be both, i.e., dropped off at school, and then takes the bus home).

All bus riders must wear a nametag provided by the school each day they ride the bus.

If your child rides the bus, they must be with an authorized person 18 years of age or older. A valid photo I.D is required at the time of pickup/drop off. You must sign your child onto the bus at the time of drop off. You must sign your child back into your care at the time pickup every day. If no one is at the bus stop to pick up your child, they are returned to school and you pick them up at school.

Transition From Home To Preschool

Separation can be difficult for young children and parents. Parent/guardians should plan to spend a little extra time with their child the first few days of preschool. Parents/guardians and children need time to become familiar with the center, the staff and routines. This is typical and expected by staff.

To increase your child's sense of security, please tell your child when you are leaving. Do not sneak out or "ask their permission" to leave. Tell them you are leaving and when you will return using words that your child will understand. Feelings about separation are normal, and trying to distract your child with a toy while sneaking out does not build the trust needed for your child to feel secure.

Making a successful separation from parents is an important challenge for children, and one that takes time to complete. Please discuss any concerns you may have about your child's or your own feelings with your child's teacher or the center director. We are here to assist you and your child through the separation process.

Clothing

Children do well in school when they are comfortable. We believe that children should be as self-sufficient as possible, so please dress children in clothing that will help them experience success as they learn to do for themselves. Children's clothing should be comfortable, washable play clothes that are easily managed by the child for toileting and comfort.

Please choose clothes that allow children to participate in all the classroom activities (painting, playdough, sand and water play) without worrying about getting dirty. Providing an extra set of clothing in case of accidents is required. Sturdy shoes with closed heel and toes, or strap in the back and rubber soles are recommended. Shoes must be worn with socks.

Dress children in clothing for the current weather. We play outside everyday (unless too wet or windy), so children need sweaters, coats, etc. when the weather is cool and your choice of sun protection on hot, sunny days. All coats, jackets, sweaters and hats must be marked with your child's name.

Personal belongings:

It is difficult for young children to share and they can become very disappointed if their special items are lost or broken. To eliminate feelings of ownership and envy, and to prevent lost or broken personal items, please keep toys and personal items at home

Procedures For Guidance And Positive Discipline

The goal of any "discipline" or guidance in our program is to promote life-long self-control, self-esteem, and self-discipline in children. We want children to learn to make appropriate choices by themselves and not to rely on adults to control their behavior.

PSD uses supportive and fair discipline methods that help children recognize the behavior, make choices about the solution, and be responsible for what happens.

The children are taught to use a problem solving approach when conflicts happen. They are taught to show respect for themselves, others, and their classroom. We do this with positive attention and by setting limits for inappropriate behavior.

At no time will any adult in our program hit, ridicule, humiliate, threaten a child, or use food or isolation as a means of controlling behavior or as discipline. The discipline and guidance techniques used by PSD staff are made to help children develop self-control. We do not use 'time out' because it is not effective in helping children develop self-discipline.

The interactive style, teacher expectations, classroom environment and schedule of planned activities reduce conflict, and support positive behavior among the children. Constructive methods are used in maintaining group control and handling individual behavior. Examples of constructive methods are:

1. Establishing rules with children in the beginning of each new school year. Rules are established in the classroom and the playground by the teaching staff.
2. Giving verbal instructions to children that are brief, specific, and clear.
3. Praising children for appropriate behavior.

If a child has a pattern of disruptive or hurtful behavior, teachers and parents may use some or all of the following steps to resolve the situation:

1. Offer appropriate choices to the child, including re-direction and support for problem solving in the classroom.
2. Review completed screenings and assessments and conduct additional observations in writing to help clarify what, where and when behavior is occurring.
3. Schedule a meeting to share information with the child's parent/guardian. Parents/guardians may be asked to observe their child in the classroom.
4. Develop a plan, with the child's parent/guardian, with steps for in the home and in the classroom to help support the child in gaining and using appropriate behaviors.
5. Identify and discuss with the parent/guardian any resources or referrals that may be helpful.

Confidentiality is maintained throughout the process. Teachers do not discuss children with anyone other than their parents/guardians and appropriate staff.

Television

PSD believes that children learn best through active interaction and involvement with their environment. Watching television is not interactive. PSD does not provide open television viewing. A wide variety of other activities are available for your child when they need quiet or restful time.

On rare occasions the site will use a video that has been carefully selected for its appropriate educational value.

Child Abuse Reporting

In accordance with the California Department of Children and Family Services all employees of the Preschool Services Department are mandated reporters. This means that staff **must report** suspicion or knowledge of child abuse or neglect. The proper authorities are notified if there is any evidence such as:

- Physical or psychological abuse.
- Child neglect, i.e. failure to provide food, clothing, and shelter even if no physical injury is evident.
- Sexual abuse, assault or child molestation.

Car Safety Law

California State law requires that all children under the age of 8 and under 4 feet 9 inches must be properly secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint system (safety or booster seat) in the car's rear seat. If children are left unattended in a vehicle in the parking lot, the police are called immediately.

Staff Qualifications

Center based Head Start / State Preschool teachers hold a current Child Development Teacher Permit or higher from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and a minimum of an Associate's Degree or higher. We strive to ensure our staff reflects the diverse languages and cultural makeup of the children and families in our program. The use of intergenerational staff is encouraged.²

Early Childhood Development

This service area focuses on serving children 3 - 5 in quality, comprehensive programs in a variety of locations and types of settings. The major emphasis is to serve the 4-year-old child, who is preparing to enter school in order to ensure school readiness and success.

PSD uses the Creative Curriculum, which is a supportive curriculum that organizes the children's and teacher's environment, daily routine and interactions. The curriculum gives the teaching team a method for planning, organizing and carrying out their daily activities. For the children, the curriculum provides a consistent and secure daily experience that promises interesting things to do, attention by their teachers to their interests and needs, and a sense of control over themselves and their environment.

The curriculum provides experienced teachers' a plan for children that supports independent thinking, initiative and creativity. Children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical abilities develop quickly when they can use materials and their imaginations freely in an environment that promotes investigation, decision-making, cooperation, persistence and problem-solving. The skills that children develop in this open framework are broad abilities that children can use daily in the classroom as well as at home.

² EC 8203(g)

This research based and developmentally appropriate curriculum is presented in either a half-day or a full-day format. An attractive, clean learning environment is arranged with frequently changing activities, toys and experiences in order to reach each child's preferred way of learning by encouraging and allowing for success for all children.

A safe environment is assured through constant health checks, safety checks and monitoring. An emergency preparedness plan is reviewed and updated frequently including staff trained in First Aid and CPR.

Introduction To Desired Results

Desired Results for Children and Families is a system that tracks child and family progress and provides information to help our agency improve our service to you.

A *desired result* is well-being for children and families. Desired results reflect the positive effects of our program on the functioning of children and families.

We use these results to determine how much children and families are benefiting from our activities and make changes as a result.

The 6 Domains of the desired results system for children (Fundamental View) are as follows:.

1. Approaches to Learning –Self- Regulation
2. Social and Emotional Development
3. Language and Literacy Development
4. English Language Development
5. Cognition, Including Math and Science
6. Physical Development –Health

The seven Desired Outcomes for families are as follows:

1. Family Well Being
2. Parent – Child Relationships
3. Families as Lifelong Educators
4. Families as Learners
5. Family Engagement in Transitions
6. Family Connection to Peers and the Community
7. Families as Advocates and Leaders

Health Services

The Generalist provides help to families who do not have medical and health resources. Free physical exams may be available to eligible children through the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program.

Other health related services offered are:

- Health Education workshops for parents.
- Tooth brushing for children.
- Dental, vision, and hearing screenings.

Nutrition

For the children to gain maximum benefits from the program, they must bring healthy bodies and minds, sustained by nutritious food, to the learning process.

Meals and Snacks

All children receive a nutritious, free lunch each day, and either breakfast (morning and full day classes) or a snack (afternoon and full day classes). Children are encouraged to try unfamiliar foods and familiar foods prepared in different ways. Meal times are used as part of the learning process, with adults and children sharing the meal, discussing color, texture, and food groups. Meals are served family style (in bowls/pitchers on table) to allow children to gain independence in serving and eating and to work on fine motor skills. Food is served in a relaxed atmosphere that allows for social interactions with peers and adults.

A child arriving at the center after breakfast has been served, but between 8:45 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., and who has not had breakfast, is offered breakfast. For supervision purposes, the parent is encouraged to sit with the child until the meal is complete.

A child arriving between 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and has not had breakfast, is offered a nourishing breakfast. Lunch is served between 11:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

Menus are posted in each classroom. All meals and snacks conform to the nutritional requirements of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Food Allergies

If your child has any food allergies or special dietary needs, please inform the teacher, Site Supervisor, and the Generalist. Arrangements are made to meet special needs. Meal changes are made with a physician's statement for medically based diets or with parents' statement for religious/cultural based diets.

Nutritious Foods for Children

Healthy foods and age appropriate nutritious meals and snacks are provided to the children. Refined sugars, salt and foods high in fats are discouraged when planning menus. Menus are reviewed by a registered dietician nutritionist on a regular basis. Workshops on child nutrition, menu planning, and healthy low fat cooking are available for parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians are requested not to send candy, peanuts, chips, popcorn, gum, carbonated drinks or other alternative snacks to school with your child.

Other Nutrition related services offered:

- Weighing and measuring the children twice a year.
- Nutrition counseling for families of children at nutrition risk that include anemia and any growth related concerns per parents' request.
- Nutrition Education workshops for parents.

Head Start Services To Children With Special Needs

Head Start program regulations require that at least 10% of our available slots be made available to families with children who are diagnosed with a disability, such as hearing, vision or speech impairment, or serious health or emotional problems. Additionally, PSD provides mental health referral services to children or families. The program ensures that all children with special needs receive all the benefits to which they are entitled.

Parents are involved in the planning of services for their children. Staff coordinates the services offered to the children by resource agencies and the public schools. Staff will attend IEP or IFSP meetings with the parent at parent's request.

Services to children, families and staff include:

- Identifying the special needs of children through observation, screening and assessment.
- Workshops on behavior management.
- Working with speech, language or hearing impaired children.
- Identifying possible problems.
- Referring children to a mental health professional when necessary.

Parent Participation And Involvement

Parent involvement is an important part of the PSD programs. Parents are considered to be the first and primary teachers of their children. PSD supports and encourages parents to actively participate in their child's early education, growth and development.

Teaching Staff are your resource in providing valuable "School to Home Activities" that you and your child can do at home to improve educational skills. Your input, suggestions and observations are valuable to us. All parents are encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom and at the center on a regular basis however you feel is appropriate for you.

All volunteer time is maintained and recorded by each preschool site.

All parent volunteers **who exceed 15 hours per week at the facility** are referred to the PSD Volunteer Coordinator to schedule an appointment to be fingerprinted and background checked, in accordance with Community Care Licensing Regulations. Volunteers are required to pay for fingerprinting and background clearance. Once the volunteer's fingerprints have cleared, they are notified that they may resume their volunteer service.

Volunteers must have a current TB test performed not more than one year prior to or seven days after initial presence in the center. If you do not have a current TB test, or

health insurance, a Generalist will provide low cost local resources. Volunteers need required immunizations Pertusis, Measles, Flu, or Flu waiver.

Parents can participate in many ways including:

- Participating in classroom activities (reading or telling stories, singing, playing games)
- Kitchen and food preparation duties (Food handlers card required)
- Participating in our job training/apprenticeship program³
- Attending parent workshops provided by the program.
- Increasing your knowledge of age-appropriate behavior
- Supervising children on the playground
- Teaching a child or small group of children
- Helping the teachers prepare materials
- Helping staff with maintenance and repair of the classroom or play equipment
- Typing in the center or at home
- Participating on the Parent Advisory Committee
- Assisting with the nutrition program
- Serving on the Health Services Advisory Committee
- School to Home Activities

Parent Orientation

Parent orientations are at the beginning of each school year. These orientation meetings provide new parents an opportunity to get to know the teacher, the classroom, and our policies and procedures. Orientation is a valuable opportunity for all parents, new and returning, to network with other parents. We strongly recommend that all parents attend.

Family Support Services

PSD is committed to providing support services to families in order to strengthen the family and assist them improve the quality of their lives.

Often, parents may want or need assistance that the individual center can't provide. PSD has partnerships with community agencies that are helpful to our families. Referrals are available for health care, child development and behavior, and support services such as job training, educational opportunities, housing, legal counsel and family difficulties. Additionally, there are 7 Family Learning Centers (FLC) where workshops, trainings, resource fairs, referral information, and literacy programs are held in regions throughout the county.

Parent Conferences

Teachers observe children carefully and design program activities with educational goals for each child. Teachers meet with parents to share insights and to learn more about each

³ EC 8202(c)

child. The California Department of Education and the Head Start program require that teachers and parents meet at least four times per year, this includes two home visits and two center conferences. Teachers notify Parents and both will schedule a convenient time for these meetings to take place. During the conference, parents are informed of the child's progress, identify areas for improvement, and work together with the teacher in developing goals towards school readiness.

Conferences are typically at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of the year; however, you may request a conference with your child's teacher at any time. These conferences are a time for parent/teacher communication and an opportunity for teachers to provide parents with specific information about their child's growth and development.

Parent Advisory Committee Meetings

Parents/guardians are also invited to participate on the Parent Advisory Committee. This is a parent run committee that meets once a month and is open to all parents to plan and discuss program activities. It is designed to offer parents a place where questions can be answered, suggestions can be made, and problems solved. Another purpose of the committee is to have effective, two-way, communication between staff and parents on a regular basis.

Head Start Policy Council

An important feature of Head Start parent involvement is the parent's role in establishing the policies for the organization. The Policy Council (PC) is comprised of one parent representative elected from each center (including Delegate Agencies) and community representatives. Meetings are held monthly. The PC helps to plan activities and make decisions about the program. The Policy Council term begins in October and continues through September 30th of each year. Membership on the PC must be limited to no more than three (3) one-year terms.

Parent Education & Training

Parent education and training opportunities are offered to parents/guardians at the center and through partner agencies on a regular basis. Parents/guardians are encouraged to suggest topics for workshops, seminars and other education and training activities. PSD staff, partnership agency staff and independent consultants are used to address some of the parents' topics of interest.

Communication With Parents

Parents have the right to be informed about issues and events at the center. Parents can expect a variety of communications which include:

Bulletin Board

Each classroom has a bulletin board with information for parents. A bulletin board is located in the center containing community and center information.

Newsletter

All of our centers distribute a newsletter. The newsletter includes tips for addressing certain situations and behaviors and information about activities taking place at your child's school. The newsletter includes information on such topics as separation anxiety, the importance of play, the benefits of inclusion and other relevant issues in the field of Child Development and Early Childhood Studies.

Monthly Calendar

Parents receive a calendar containing important dates and center events for the month.

Compliment/Complaint Forms

Compliment/Complaint forms are located in the center's office. Parents are encouraged to submit written comments, suggestions, or concerns.

End Of The Year Event

Each classroom teacher plans end of the year activities. Some examples of activities include, a day at the park, parent/child make and take crafts, parent/child tea. All children receive a certificate at the end of the year. Traditional cap and gown (graduation) ceremonies are not allowed due to staffing, licensing, and building capacity concerns.

Non-Federal Share For The Head Start Program

The Head Start program funding requires that twenty (20) percent of the Head Start grant is matched with contributions/donations. These are called "Non-Federal Share" and consist of volunteer time, participating in Head Start activities, donating materials, serving on Policy Council, and many other ways. You are asked to fill out "Non-Federal Share" forms when you donate services, materials, complete school to home activities, or volunteer time to the Head Start program.

Use Of Parent Activity Funds

Parent activity funds are used for training activities or projects which are educational/skill building in nature. Activities are designed for adults, not for children. Examples of activities include: how to advocate for your child during their school years, becoming more organized, communication skills, team building, community awareness, building positive self-esteem, and personal goal setting/development. Parent committees submit a plan and budget for the year within 60 days of the start of the program year. All parent groups must follow the PSD procedures for activities.

Fund Raising

On April 15, 2002, the Head Start Parent Policy Council voted to end fundraising permanently. The Head Start Parent Policy Council's action was based on the recommendation from the Administration for Children and Families when they conducted their tri-annual audit of Preschool Services Department in January 2002.

- According to the Federal audit team, no activity such as fundraising could be done on behalf or in the name of Head Start because the funds would become the property of Head Start.

Harassment

Agency policy prohibits intimidation or harassment of any student by any employee, other student or other person. Staff is alert and immediately responsive to conduct which may interfere with students' ability to participate in or benefit from program services, activities or privileges. Civil Rights guarantees and Equal Access Laws is adhered to in all educational and personnel/employment practices. All Staff and Parents are asked to refrain from harassing behavior, including inappropriate language, intimidating behavior, and physical contact. PSD staff has the right to contact the authorities if needed.

Notification: Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the Preschool Services Department that all persons, regardless of their sex, be afforded equal rights and opportunities and freedom from discrimination of any kind in PSD programs and settings.⁴

Sexual Harassment is a violation of federal and state law and can cause physical, emotional and economic problems for its victims. Sexual Harassment is defined as unsolicited or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal, physical or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

The Preschool Services Department takes prompt and appropriate action if an incident of discrimination or harassment occurs to avoid or minimize the impact of any incident of discrimination or harassment. The PSD and the County will pursue all reasonable preventive measures to ensure that programs and services are free of discrimination or harassment.

⁴ Education Code 231.5[a],[b],[c]

Agency Grievance Policy

PSD strives to be the best in the services we provide to children and families. PSD encourages open communication between our staff and parents, community partners, and the communities we serve.

To assist our parents to have a voice in the daily operations of the program, we provide parents and the community an avenue for submitting their concerns, feedback and/or compliments.

If you have concerns, we ask that all attempts are made to resolve them through direct feedback and problem solving with the staff and supervisors involved.

- If, attempts to resolve your concerns have been unsuccessful at this level, the following procedure is a guide to address your concerns.
- This procedure may also be used to submit feedback and or compliments.

Procedure

1. Complete the Concern / Feedback / Compliment Form available at every site.
2. Written concern should include:
 - Name and address of the person filing the concern
 - A description of the problem
 - Date of occurrence
 - Names of people involved
 - Possible solutions
 - Parents should consult with their Generalist or Site Supervisor for advice and assistance.
3. The form should be completed by the individual(s) involved and submitted to:
Preschool Services Department
Attn: Human Resources
662 South Tippecanoe Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0630
(909) 383-2078
4. Upon receipt of a concern:
 - A meeting is scheduled to discuss the situation;
 - The Program Manager may invite those concerned to attempt to resolve the concern;

- The Program Manager will issue a written decision in response to the concern no later than 30 days from date of filing.

Notice Of Action Appeal Information

If you disagree with an official decision you learn about through a “Notice of Action” (NOA) form, you may appeal the intended action. To protect your appeal rights, you must follow the instructions described on the back of the Notice of Action form. If you do not respond by the required due dates or fail to submit the required appeal information with your appeal request, your appeal may be considered abandoned.

STEP 1: Complete the appeal information to request a local hearing:

STEP 2: Mail or deliver your local hearing request within 14 days of receipt of the notice to:

Preschool Services Department
Attn: Disabilities & Family Community Engagement Program Manager
662 South Tippecanoe Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0630
(909) 383-2078

STEP 3: Within ten (10) calendar days following the agency’s receipt of your appeal request, the agency will notify you of the time and place of the hearing. You or your authorized representatives are required to attend the hearing. If you or your representative does not attend the hearing, you abandon your rights to an appeal, and the action of the agency will be implemented.

STEP 4: Within ten (10) calendar days following the hearing, the agency shall mail or deliver to you a written decision.

STEP 5: If you disagree with the written decision of the agency, you have 14 days from your receipt of the written decision to file an appeal with the California Department of Education (CDE). Your appeal to CDE must include the following documents and information: (1) a written statement specifying the reasons you believe the agency’s decision was incorrect, (2) a copy of the agency’s decision letter, and (3) a copy of both sides of this notice. Mail your appeal to the following address:

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Appeals Coordinator

STEP 6: Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of your appeal, CDD will issue a written decision to you and the agency. *If your appeal is denied, the agency will stop*

providing child care and development services immediately upon receipt of CDE's decision letter.

Uniform Complaint Procedures

It is the intent of the PSD to fully comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Individuals, agencies, organizations, students and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding alleged violation of federal and/or state laws. This includes allegations of unlawful discrimination (Ed Code sections 200 and 220 and Government Code section 11135) in any program or activity funded directly by the State or receiving federal or state financial assistance.

For State Preschool programs, complaints must be signed and filed in writing with the State Department of Education.

Child Development Division
Complaint Coordinator
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814

If the complainant is not satisfied with the final written decision of the California Department of Education, remedies may be available in federal or state court. The complainant should seek the advice of an attorney of their choosing in this event.

A complainant filing a written complaint alleging violations of prohibited discrimination may also pursue civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders. ⁵

Disaster Preparedness

PSD has a written Disaster Plan of Action in case of an earthquake or other disaster. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. You can help to make a potentially traumatic occurrence less stressful by keeping your child's emergency form updated.

To ensure that the center is prepared for emergencies, PSD practices earthquake, fire and lock down drills monthly. In addition, the center maintains a permanent supply of food, water, blankets, flashlights, radios, and first aid supplies. It is estimated that these supplies are sufficient for two days. Teachers and all staff on duty during an emergency will work together to account for the welfare of all the children.

In the event of an emergency or disaster:

- Come as quickly as you can to pick up your child.
- When you reach the center, come in as calmly as you can so as not to upset the children.

⁵ EC 231.5 (c)

Visitation And Security

The center has an open door policy and parents are welcome and encouraged to visit their children during the day. All visitors must sign in at the center's front desk each time they visit the site. Visitors accompanying a parent are asked to wait in the lobby while parents drop off or pick up their child.

Visitors, observers and program support staff who spend short periods of time at the center are required to wear nametags.

Visitors and parents are asked to refrain from use of cellphones when picking up and dropping off their children.

Locations Of Head Start / State Preschool Centers In San Bernardino County

For more information about the program, please call (909) 383-2078, or the phone number listed below for the center near you.

For site maps visit: www.sbcountry.gov/psd - preschool locations

Adelanto (760) 246 - 5073	Parks and Rec (909)887-3349
Apple Valley (760) 247 - 6955	Redlands (909) 798-2690
Arrowhead Grove (909) 421-7041	Redlands Valencia 125 Horizon Ave
Baker Family Learning Ctr (909) 887-8780	Rialto Eucalyptus (909) 421 - 7180
Barstow (760) 253 - 2956	Rialto Renaissance (909) 875 - 6863
Bloomington (909) 876 - 6342	Rialto Willow (909) 421-7042
Boy's & Girl's Club (909) 381 - 4294	Twenty-Nine Palms (760) 367 - 5150
Chino (909) 627 - 0206	Upland (909) 931 - 0147
Colton (909) 876 - 4240	Victor Valley College (760) 952-1215
Crestline (909) 338 - 1567	Victorville (760) 245 - 9147
Cucamonga (909) 948 - 6979	Waterman Gardens (909) 889 - 3807
Del Rosa (909) 883 - 0103	Westminster (909) 983 - 0600
Easter Seals Montclair (909) 626-1700	Yucaipa (909) 797 - 3585
Easter Seals Ontario (909) 923 - 3352	Yucca Valley (760) 369 - 7424
Easter Seals Upland (909) 981 - 4668	
Fontana Citrus (909) 428 - 8496	
Fontana USD (909) 357-5000 X7080	
Hesperia (760) 948 - 4411	FAMILY LEARNING CENTERS (FLC)
Highland (909) 425 - 0785	Apple Valley (760) 240 - 5353
Mill Child Dev. Ctr. (909) 885 - 0789	Barstow (760) 253-2336
Needles (760) 326 - 5221	Del Rosa (909) 881 - 7544
Newberry Springs (760) 254 - 2141	Ontario (909) 983 - 2039 / 7008
Northgate (760) 951-1425	Renaissance (909) 875 - 5913 / 7953
Ontario Maple (909) 984 - 4117	Victorville (760) 951 - 3430
Ontario Montclair USD (909) 917-5081	Twenty-Nine Palms (760) 367 - 5150

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Child's Name

I acknowledge that I received, read and understand the contents of the Preschool Services Department Parent Handbook. As a parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the center, I will follow the policies and procedures of the center, as detailed in the Parent Handbook. I will also work collaboratively and in partnership with the center staff to ensure compliance with local, state and federal regulations as required in the daily operation of the center and programs offered for young children.

I have received:

An orientation for parents which includes program philosophy, program goals and objectives, program activities, eligibility requirements, and

Due process procedures

Parent rights

Personal rights

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

Please place in child's folder.

Shared Files/Parents/PARENT HANDBOOK