



# Preschool Parent Handbook



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# Welcome!

The Sanilac County ISD would like to welcome you and your child to the exciting world of preschool education. This handbook is designed to explain the policies and operation of the program. Please read this handbook and any other information that you may receive, so you have a clear understanding of the partnership between home and school as it pertains to the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP).

The Sanilac County ISD GSRP programs are a cooperative efforts of the Sanilac ISD, our local school districts, Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency (NEMCSA Head Start), the Great Start Collaborative and other local community organizations. GSRP is a state funded, early childhood development program for children who are 4 or will be 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year and who meet the state's qualifications. The program offers children and their families a variety of services. The program receives funds from the Michigan Department of Education and is licensed by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

## Philosophy

Young children learn by doing! They acquire knowledge of their world through playful interaction with objects and people. Children are motivated to learn by their own desire to make sense of their world.

The Sanilac County ISD GSRP programs are committed to providing a developmentally appropriate preschool program in a safe and nurturing environment, which promotes social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth. Our goals foster a positive self-concept and develop socialization and school readiness skills. This preschool program will provide experiences and relationships that will help develop the whole child. We engage children in an environment that is child-initiated, child-directed and teacher supported. The Creative Curriculum helps guide the Sanilac County ISD GSRP programs. Our goal is for all children to be confident, creative thinkers and problem solvers who have a positive self-concept and developed socialization and school readiness skills.

## Eligibility/Admission

The GSRP Preschool enrollment considers all children who will be 4 years of age on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year. School of Choice does apply to GSRP, however, if the transportation system is unable to pick up/drop off your 4-year-old, then you must be willing to transport your child. Special considerations are looked at regarding children across ISDs.

Eligibility is based on income levels (scaled to an income chart provided by the State of Michigan) and secondly, on certain criteria (risk factors) as charted by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). Programs are required to enroll the neediest families based on reported income and then with consideration of qualifying risk factors. Therefore, the enrollment process is a competitive formula to identify recipients for slots in GSRP classrooms.

A few of the risk factors include: limited English or limited English speaking in the household; delayed motor development; teenage parent; single-parent family; long-term or chronic illness of child, parent, brother or sister; abuse or neglect including substance/alcohol abuse; special needs and other situations.

The program is free to children who are enrolled, with income that is 250% or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). The program is funded by a grant from the Michigan Department of Education. Each district allows 10% of their enrolled families to be over 250% FPL. Any family that becomes eligible for this slot will be required to pay a portion of their program costs, otherwise known as the Sliding Scale Tuition.

### *Requirements Prior to Enrollment*

- Application
- Health Appraisal
- Immunizations or waiver
- Proof of Age
- Program Permission Agreement
- Discipline Policy Form
- Proof of Income
- Proof of Residency
- Child Emergency Card/Child Info. Record
- Meal Application
- Field Trip Permission Form
- Internet/Photograph Release Form
- Housing Form

The school maintains updated immunization records for each child as required by the State of Michigan. A licensed physician must complete the back page of the health appraisal form. For children over 30 months of age, a health appraisal must be completed and updated each year the child is in attendance. Staff will discuss any documented concerns with parents. Additional documentation may need to be provided and accommodations and referrals made as needed. For example: food allergies or speech delays.

## **Program Evaluation**

An Early Childhood Specialist (ECS) evaluates all Sanilac County ISD GSRP programs throughout the year. The ECS utilizes the Program Quality Assessment Revised (PQA-R) tool provided by the State of Michigan to properly evaluate the performance and efficiency of the classroom and staff. The ECS is employed through the Sanilac County Intermediate School District.

## **Special Needs Plan**

In the Sanilac County ISD GSRP programs, our goal is to help all children develop to their full potential. Sanilac County ISD GSRP programs accept children with special needs and will work alongside parents to provide the most appropriate care possible for their child.

Prior to a child's enrollment, parents will complete the application forms and indicate any potential special needs their child may need supported. We will follow up with the parents and complete a developmental screener, when necessary. We value the experience and knowledge the parent has regarding their child. If a child has additional services in place, we allow those services to come in and

work with the child. GSRP teachers and staff individualize instruction, meaning they adapt and adjust activities, materials, and/or routines in order to meet the needs of each individual child. Our programs also complete daily observations of children's overall development and health. They complete annual developmental screenings and assessments three times a year. In the event that potential concerns are noticed, GSRP teachers will reach out to parents to discuss options. The options may include continued follow-up, extra support in the classroom, or referring to Special Education (following school policy). The Sanilac County ISD GSRP staff receive training, information, and resources throughout the year including information from Great Start to Quality.

## Cultural Competence

Young children and their families reflect a great and rapidly increasing diversity of language and culture. In our GSRP classrooms, we follow the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recommendations which emphasize that early childhood programs are responsible for creating a welcoming environment that respects diversity, supports children's ties to their families and community, and promotes both second language acquisition and preservation of children's home languages and cultural identities. Linguistic and cultural diversity is an asset, not a deficit, for young children. The GSRP staff receive Cultural Competency and Special Needs training during in-service time and professional development. Classrooms contain many items and materials such as books, puppets, dolls, play figures, posters/photos, musical instruments, dress-up clothes, etc. to help represent the diversity of the families we serve, as well as community cultures.

In Sanilac County ISD GSRP programs, we want all children and families to feel valued and have a sense of belonging. This begins with our first interactions with families. We visit each family in their home at enrollment to learn more about the child and their family culture. We want to know about each family's beliefs, values, and daily routines and rituals which helps ease the transition from home to school. We want children to see that we care about their family and we value them. We strive to embrace our local community. We do this by having toys, pictures, books, materials and dress-up clothes from local factories, city buildings, and restaurants. We also invite community members to come into our classrooms to share information about our town and their work. In order to maintain an awareness of the many differences we all have, our staff attend annual training on topics relating to diversity and cultural competence. We also seek out information and support from agencies (e.g. DHHS, Community Action Agency, translation services, etc.) to help us better understand and meet the unique needs of the families we serve.

## Policies and Procedures

### Attendance Policy

In order to participate in the GSRP program, your child will be required to attend on a regular basis. Extended or unexplained absences not related to sickness or family emergency can result in dismissal from the program.

## Withdrawal Policy

A parent may withdraw his/her child from the program at any time. If a parent removes a child from the program, please inform the teacher in writing of your child's final day.

## Drop-Off Procedures

Please do not drop your child off at school before school starting times. Teachers may not be in the room, thus creating an unsafe situation for your child.

For safety reasons, please bring your child into school and make a preschool staff member aware of his/her arrival. You will sign your child in at this time. Do not drop your child off at the curb and allow him/her to walk in alone! Older elementary siblings will not be able to bring younger siblings to preschool. Per State law, a sibling must be 16 years of age to accompany a younger sibling and sign them in or out.

## Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedures

Parents or family members are required by law to bring their children to the center, to sign them in upon arrival, and to come into the center to sign them out prior to departure.

## Pick-Up/Bussing Procedures

The only people other than a child's custodial parents/guardians who are authorized to take a child from the center are those people designated in writing on the Child Information Record/Child Emergency Card. You may list as many people as you wish. *Please ensure that the person picking up your child or getting your child off the bus has picture identification with them!* Staff, including bus drivers, may ask for I.D. at any time and will ask if they do not know the person.

In case of emergencies, call the center and let us know that someone other than a listed person can pick up your child, but it is preferred to have such names written and indicated in the file. Persons who are excluded by court order from having contact with and/or picking up the child should also be indicated on enrollment paperwork. It is necessary to give a copy of associated documents in the office and to the director.

## Folders

Your child will be bringing home a folder each week with papers, art projects, and a weekly newsletter. Let your child tell you about the papers they have brought home to share with you. Displaying some of their favorite schoolwork helps to develop their self-esteem and pride in their work. Please check the folder each week and return it the first day they return to school the following week.

## Field Trips

Any off-campus field trips will be announced in advance along with a written permission slip for your signature. Upon enrollment, you must sign a generic Field Trip Permission Form in the event that any

written field trip permission slips are not returned to us. By having this on file, this allows up to still take your child on the field trip by receiving verbal permission.

## Personal Belongings

Children are requested to leave food, gum, candy, money and other valuables at home. Please discourage your child from bringing toys or other “prized” possessions to the center except on special occasions deemed appropriate by the teaching staff. Such highly valued items are often difficult to keep up with and very hard to share. An appropriate social goal for children is the sharing of equipment and materials as a part of the learning experience.

It is understood that many young children do have an object of special attachment, such as a blanket or stuffed toy, that helps to ease the transition from home to school and that a child might not be ready to share. These items will be kept in the children’s cubbies, but are available to comfort in times of need. Teachers will help other children to understand and respect such feelings.

Staff will do their best to keep up with children’s belongings, but cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage of personal possessions. Labeling all personal belongings helps us to avoid loss. Weapons of any type (or toys that look like weapons) are not allowed in school.

## Clothing

Children’s clothing should be comfortable and easy for them to manage. Children will engage in messy and active play inside and out, therefore, play clothes that can be easily laundered are encouraged.

Children should wear sturdy shoes with non-slip soles to help prevent falling from climbing equipment. Open toe shoes, hard heeled boots, and children’s plastic dress-up shoes are strongly discouraged. Sandals should have a strap on the back. In the winter, shoes and/or slippers are requested in addition to boots so that the classroom remains clean and dry.

Please send in an extra set of clothing (shirt, socks, pants, and undergarments) for your child in a Ziploc bag with his/her name on it. Please label each article of clothing! This can be stored in their backpack. This really does come in handy for water play, painting, and bathroom accidents!

Children should be adequately dressed for the season and the weather for outdoor play on each day of attendance. We go outside, weather permitting. A warm jacket with a hood, snow pants and boots, hats and mittens, and a pair of shoes to wear indoors are needed on cold days. Outdoor activities are an important part of our program. Children will be expected to participate in outside play unless we have a written statement from the child’s physician because the staff go outside with the children. **Please label ALL of your child’s clothing!**



# Curriculum and Assessment

## Curriculum

Each of the programs use *The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschoolers. The Creative Curriculum helps early childhood programs create a high-quality learning environment that enables every child to become a creative, confident thinker. *The Creative Curriculum*® highlights the important balance between applying a general knowledge a teacher gains by forming a relationship with each child and family. *The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool is based on five fundamental principles. The five fundamental principles are:

1. Positive interactions and relationships with adults provide a critical foundation for successful learning.
2. Social-Emotional competence is a significant factor in school success.
3. Constructive, purposeful play supports essential learnings.
4. The physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions.
5. Teacher-Family partnerships promote development and learning.

## Assessment

The assessment portion of *The Creative Curriculum*® is called *Teaching Strategies Gold* (TS Gold). TS Gold is an observation based assessment that uses 38 objectives. The first 23 objectives focus on key predictors of school success in the areas of social-emotional, physical, cognitive, oral language, literacy, and math development and learning. The remaining objectives help teachers plan instruction in science and technology, social studies, and the arts, and also enable teachers to assess children's English language acquisition.

## Developmental Screening

In addition, each program will complete a developmental screening on each preschooler. Sanilac County has adopted the Brigance Screening for their developmental screener. GSRP staff are trained annually in the use of the screening. An Ages and Stages Questionnaire may be administered during the enrollment process for those parents who documented on the enrollment application they have a developmental concern for their child. These developmental screenings help to provide information regarding where each child is developmentally. If these screenings show an area of concern, parents will be notified and the child will be referred to the school district special education department for further screening or evaluation. After a referral to special education is made, the child's resident school district will follow up within the state required timelines and accommodations will be made accordingly.

## Guidance and Discipline

It is our goal to create an atmosphere that encourages children to respect each other, and to make positive choices regarding their behavior. In our school environment, teaching proper behavior means teaching children how to deal with those around them. Michigan Licensing Rules require our staff to use "positive methods of discipline which encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation." We will take the following steps until a problem is resolved:

- Staff will listen to children having difficulties to determine if they can work it out on their own and then encourage them to do so.
- Staff will intervene and help mediate a problem with suggestions such as taking turns. Children are taught to use words to express feelings rather than actions.
- Diversion (redirection to another activity)
- Teachers/staff will ask the child if he/she will enact the redirected behavior alone or with adult help.
- Children are comforted and the issue is discussed.
- Time is given for involved parties to remain removed from immediate setting or situation causing the conflict until they feel ready to rejoin the group.

Parents will be informed of any circumstances involving undesirable behavior in an effort to work together towards a successful relationship. A parent meeting will be held when persistent inappropriate behavior requires a specific behavior guidance plan.

- Verbal conversation
- 1<sup>st</sup> discipline note sent home along with a student/teacher conversation.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> discipline note sent home along with a parent/teacher conversation.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> discipline note sent home along with a parent/teacher conference.

## Our Program

Classes are held Monday through Thursday each week. On Friday, the staff utilizes their time for lesson planning, staff meetings, workshops, home visits, parent-teacher conferences and paperwork.

### Home Visits

There will be two home visits scheduled each year, one in the fall and again in the spring. The initial home visit serves as an orientation opportunity for the child and parents and helps us get to know each other. The final home visit will summarize the child's development and transition to Kindergarten.

### Conferences

There will be two parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Conferences are held to discuss overall development, child strengths, areas of concern, review goals, and review results of assessments.

### Special Needs

See: *Special Needs Plan* along with *Eligibility*, *Cultural Competency*, and *Curriculum & Assessment*

### Meals & Nutrition

Children will receive breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack at school free of charge to the parents. Meals and snacks are provided by the program. Accommodations will be made for documented medical allergies. All meals are served family style.

For more information, see: *Nutrition Plan* and *Food Allergies*

## Nap/Rest Time

Full-day preschool children must have a rest period as required by the State of Michigan. Resting is time for sleeping or quiet, solitary, on your own cot play. As each child has different resting needs, the individual needs of children will be attended to during this time. Quiet play could include books, soft music, baby dolls, or fine motor manipulatives.

## Work Time/Free Choice

The children are provided with time for free play (free choice) with materials, spaces and time to learn readiness skills. Some activities are teacher planned and guided, but each child will be able to freely choose which activity, materials, and space he/she wishes to use. We will strive to challenge and stimulate each child at his/her own developmental level and foster a positive self-image by accepting each child as an individual.

## Sample Daily Schedule

8:00-8:45      Arrival/Breakfast/Greeting Time – Children enter the classroom at their own pace. Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay until children are ready for them to leave. Children have choices about whether to eat, spend time with books, or interact with adults and one another. Once all children have arrived, adults share the daily announcements.

8:45-9:00      Large Group Time/Music and Movement – All adults and children participate in activities planned around children's interests, developmental levels, music and movement, cooperative play and projects, and events meaningful to children.

9:00-9:10      Planning Time – Children indicate their plans to adults in a place where intimate conversations can occur and where people and materials are visible. Adults use a range of strategies to support children's planning (e.g., props, area signs, tape recorders, and singing; planning individually, in pairs, or in small groups).

9:10-10:10    Work Time (children's hour of uninterrupted Choice Time) – Children always initiate activities and carry out their intentions. Children make many choices about where and how to use materials. During work time, adults participate as partners in child-initiated play and encourage children's problem solving both with materials and during times of social conflict.

10:10-10:20   Clean-up Time – Children and adults clean up together keeping the spirit of play and problem solving alive. Children make many choices during clean up. Adults accept children's level of involvement and skill while supporting their learning.

10:20-10:30   Recall Time – Gathered in small group settings, children choose work time experiences to reflect on, talk about, and exhibit. Adults provide a variety of materials and strategies to maintain interest as they follow children's lead and encourage children to share (e.g., individual props such as puppets, telephones, group games using a hula hoop, ball or spinner, reenacting, drawing, showing and describing a structure or painting). Adults are unhurried in their approach and may complete recall time with four or five children each day.

10:30-10:45 Small Group Time – An adult-initiated learning experience based on children’s interests and development where children explore, play, work with materials, and talk about what they are doing. Individual children explore and use the same set of materials in their own way.

10:45-11:30 Outside Time – Children have many choices about how they play in the outdoor learning environment, much as they do during work time indoors. Adults supervise children for safety and also join in their active outdoor play, supporting their initiatives and problem solving.

11:30-11:40 Bathroom/Wash Hands/Prepare for Lunch – Children assist in preparation and set up. Children choose where they would like to sit and are encouraged to serve themselves.

11:40-12:25 Lunch – Family-style meals support children doing things for themselves (e.g., serve themselves, pour beverages, distribute napkins, and wipe up spills). Children choose whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat. Adults eat and have meaningful conversations with the children. Children are encouraged to clean their own space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.

12:25-1:25 Quiet/Rest Time – Resting is a time for sleeping or quiet, solitary, on-your-own-cot play. Rest time plans should be individualized to meet the needs of each child. Quiet play could include books, soft music, baby dolls, or fine motor manipulatives.

1:25-1:55 Wake/Bathroom/Snack – As children wake up, adults and children work together to put away cots and set up for snack. Children are encouraged to clean their own space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.

1:55-3:00 Plan/Work/Clean Up/Recall – refer to AM descriptions

3:00-3:30 Outside Time/Dismissal – refer to AM descriptions

## Family Involvement

### Family Involvement Plan

The GSRP program recognizes the vital role that families play in the school life of their children. For this reason, families are considered integral to all phases of the program. We use the term family rather than parents, to identify the range of family structures in which children live. Whether family includes two parents, one parent, grandparent, foster parent, relatives, or any other combination, the child’s family is valued. Our center is a living and learning laboratory where families, teachers and children work together cooperatively for the children’s greatest possible gains.

### Family Responsibilities

Families are responsible for communicating with their child’s teachers and in helping to set goals and expectations for their child. Teachers have joint responsibility for these as well. It is the family’s responsibility to keep your child’s records current to reflect any significant changes as they occur; this includes telephone numbers, work location, emergency contacts, child’s physician, child’s health status, immunization record, family status, and other information relevant to your child’s care.

## Family Communication

Communication is very important when we share in your child's care and education. Most concerns can be handled in daily brief conversation. Phone calls are welcome at school before and after preschool sessions when concerns arise at home or when it is best to talk beyond the ears of our children. Often it is difficult to talk at length when our attention is needed with the children so notes will work well too. (Notes are especially helpful when you need to direct information to a specific person.) Weekly folders will be sent home with newsletters, art projects, etc. Please check daily for messages that may also be of a timely nature. We hope this type of communication helps you feel more a part of your child's time with us. For questions or concerns, please call your child's GSRP classroom.

## Family Participation/Volunteering

Parents and other family members are welcome and encouraged to participate in any activities that interest them. Throughout the year, we will be asking for help with special projects and activities. We do, however, ask that you make other arrangements for younger children. Bringing infants or young children with you to volunteer is distracting to our preschoolers and makes our job more difficult. If this is a problem for you and you would still like to help out, don't worry! We will be happy to send things home with you that need to be traced, cut, stapled, assembled, etc. We ask that you please wait about two weeks to volunteer so that the children can get settled into their preschool routine.

Seasonal celebrations and field trips are great ways to be involved in our classroom too. We also encourage parents, grandparents, and siblings to come in and be guest readers, reading a book of their choice to our class. Please let us know ahead of time so we can plan for it! Young siblings are welcome to attend these activities.

## Committees & Parent Groups

Other ways families can participate is through the *Local Parent Advisory Committee*, the *School Readiness Advisory Committee* and/or become part of our local *Great Start Collaborative Parent Coalition*. Legislation requires GSRP grantees establish or join a multi-district, multi-agency *School Readiness Advisory Committee(s)*, which requires that GSRP programs must provide for the participation of parents or guardians in the planning and implementation of the GSRP.

The mission of the *Parent Advisory Committee* is to advise the GSRP administration on existing and proposed education policies, bring forth issues of concern, and make suggestions about changes that will improve the achievement of students and the effectiveness of the program. The *Local Advisory Committee* must contain a minimum of two parents, with parent representation, at a ratio of one parent for every 18 enrolled GSRP children. An Advisory Committee should be established and comprised of program staff, parents, and community representatives. The GSRP Parent Advisory Committee meets a minimum of twice a year to represent parent perspectives and make recommendations about reaching the GSRP's goals of student achievement, equitable access to opportunity, and accountability.

The *School Readiness Advisory Committee* serves as a workgroup to the Great Start Collaborative of Sanilac County (GSC). The GSC is a collaborative composed of local business community members, parents, educators, professional service providers, faith based representatives, childcare providers, health care professionals, and elected officials. The purpose is to assist all Sanilac families in providing a GREAT START for children.

The *Great Start Parent Coalition* is made up of parents, grandparents, and caregivers of young children in Sanilac County. The goal is to increase parent participation in early childhood planning and decision-making for the county. The Coalition serves as a “voice” for parents in the community, assists in building public support for early childhood as an investment, supports and participates in the assessment and strategic planning work of the Great Start Collaborative, and strengthens the commitment of parents in the community on behalf of the young children.

## Classroom Volunteer Duties

### Arrival:

- Help children take off coats and other outerwear.
- Direct children to activities that have been prepared.

### Large Group/Circle Area:

- Sit with children in a circle.
- Help children follow directions.
- Take directions from teachers: assemble, prepare, cut, staple, etc.

### Free Choice:

- During this time, volunteers are encouraged to participate in appropriate play activities with the children. Let the child choose and lead the activity. Make sure play is safe for all children and volunteers.

### Clean up:

- Encourage everyone to clean up: give children containers that need to be filled with toys.
- As children finish cleaning up, direct them to an adult at the next scheduled activity (i.e., circle, table, line-up).

### Outside:

- Help children walk to the playground in a line. Position yourself in the middle of the line.
- On the playground, participate in child led activities or assist in monitoring children’s play.

### Mealtime:

- Sit at the tables with the students and staff.
- Model good table manners.
- If quantities allow, take a small amount of food to encourage healthy eating habits.

Prepare to go home or outside:

- Help children with coats and other outerwear.
- Collect belongings and pictures
- Send children to line up.

## Hazardous Situations

As a volunteer, you have not been trained in the standards used by the GSRP program when dealing with hazardous situations and material. We do not want to put you in a dangerous situation during an emergency. Immediately alert a teacher or other staff member to any hazardous situation. Universal precautions are used at all times when dealing with blood or body fluids. Emergency evacuation and tornado safety plans are posted in every classroom. Please take a moment to look these over.

## Volunteer Background Check and Policy

All staff and volunteers must have criminal background checks. Volunteers are required to sign a screening form that states they have never been convicted of a crime, have felony charges pending against them, or have been involved in abuse or neglect of children. The school district will run a background check on every volunteer. Persons who have not had a criminal background check will not be allowed to volunteer. In addition, the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Licensing Rules state “any volunteer who has contact with children at least 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks must have a physical signed by a doctor on file.”

## Confidentiality Policy

To protect the privacy of children and their families, we follow strict confidentiality laws. We do not release the names, ages, disabilities, or other personal information without written permission.

GSRP program staff and volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality at all times. When agreeing to be a volunteer, you are also agreeing to maintain confidentiality by never divulging any information or records concerning any of the children or families without proper written authorization. The unauthorized release of confidential information may result in actions that disqualify you from spending time in the classroom. Please respect the privacy of the other families by only discussing and sharing information about your own child.

## Mandated Reporters

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The GSRP Staff are considered mandated reporters under this law. GSRP Staff are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents before reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition before making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

Cause for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, or season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g., car seats, seatbelts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate nutrition for a child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Sending a sick child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child be kept at home until symptoms subside

## Health and Safety Policy

### Health Policy & Plan

Sanilac County ISD GSRP programs believe children learn best when they are physically healthy. Our goal is to promote good health by supporting parents in seeking regular health care for their children. When children are healthy, they are more ready to learn and parents are less likely to miss work due to their children's illnesses. Upon enrollment, a health appraisal completed by the child's physician and immunization record are collected. Parents are provided with information such as *Immunization and Developmental Milestone Tracker from the CDC*, *Recommended EPSDT Schedule*, and the *Sanilac County Family Resource Guide* which provides information on local physicians, dentists, the Health Department and other resources available to families in Sanilac County. Each child's files will be reviewed in the spring prior to parent-teacher conferences and parents will be notified about any upcoming or past due check-ups and immunizations for their child.

All young children get sick at some time. While we cannot guarantee your child will not "catch" something from another child at school, our goal is to ensure a positive, healthy school experience for all children. **Parents will be asked to take home any child arriving at school with signs/symptoms of being ill or who become ill while at school.** The staff has the authority to exclude children from preschool for illness or other health-related reasons.

We fully understand the difficulties parents face when a child is unable to attend school because of an illness. Before your child gets sick, set up a plan with friends or relatives willing to cuddle and care for your sick child. Take a common sense approach and if you do not feel your child feels well enough to fully participate in normal activities, you should keep your child home.

Parents will be notified when children have been exposed to a communicable disease. We will care for a child that has symptoms of a communicable disease until a parent or authorized adult arrives.



## Reporting your child's Illness/Absence

If your child is ill and unable to attend school:

- Please call your school to report the absence and include the following:
  - Name of person calling in for the child (example, "This is Jan Smith")
  - Child's full name (example, "Mark Smith")
  - Name of teacher and session
  - The specific reason for the absence
- If you call after business hours, please leave a message with the above information.
- If you are unable to call, please send a note to your child's teacher as soon as your child returns.

## When to Keep your Child Home

The GSRP program encourages safeguarding the health of young children and staff by requesting families to follow these guidelines when deciding if a child is well enough to attend school.

Weather permitting, we play outside each school day. If your child is not well enough to play outside, he/she is probably not well enough to be in the classroom.

<i>Apparent Health Problem</i>	<i>Keep Child Home Until:</i>
<b>Fever</b>	Temperature registers below 100° for at least 24 hours and child has resumed normal activities
<b>Runny nose</b>	Thick, yellow or green discharge clears up
<b>Earache</b>	A doctor examines the ears, medication if necessary, and recommends the child return to school
<b>Rash</b>	A doctor determined the cause and recommends the child return to school. A doctor's note is required if rash is still present.
<b>Sore throat</b>	A doctor determines no strep infection exists and the child is comfortable
<b>Upset stomach or diarrhea</b>	Child is eating normally and comfortable for at least one day before returning
<b>Draining sore</b>	Sore is dry and healing
<b>Red or watery eyes</b>	Eyes return to normal
<b>Pink eye</b>	Child must see a doctor and be on prescription medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. All redness, draining, and itching must be gone.
<b>Chicken Pox</b>	When sores are scabbed and dry
<b>Head Lice</b>	All nits have been removed from the hair

## Medication

Medications shall be given only with prior written permission from parent and a completed *Medical Release Form*. Medication includes both prescription and non-prescription medicines which are taken by mouth, inhaled, injected, applied as drops to eyes or nose, or applied to the skin. Topical non-prescription medication, including but not limited to, sunscreen and insect repellent, requires written

parental authorization annually. Prescription medication shall have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's name, instructions and strength of the medication, and shall be given according to those instructions.

Staff at school will maintain a record of the time and amount of medication given. All medications shall be in the original container, stored according to the instructions and clearly labeled. Medication shall be kept out of reach of children and will be returned to the parent or destroyed when it is no longer needed. *Due to the possibility of a reaction, staff cannot give the first dose of medication.*

**Special Note:** When filling a prescription for your child, ask the pharmacist to divide the medicine into two containers, one for use at home and the other to be kept at school. No need for trips back to school at night for the forgotten medicine.

## Injuries and Emergency Medical Care

Parents will be contacted immediately if their child is hurt and requires special medical treatment. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the individual(s) listed on your child's emergency card.

Appropriate first aid will be given while we wait for a parent to arrive. If emergency care is required, we will call 911 and a staff member will accompany your child to the nearest appropriate medical facility as indicated on your emergency card.

Parents will also be notified for injuries that are not of an emergency nature (pinched fingers, bumps on head, etc.) that might require a physician's consultation, but are not serious. We believe that each family should make these decisions individually.

Please keep the emergency phone number up-to-date on the Child Information Card!

## Nutrition Plan

The Sanilac County GSRP programs provide all children with balanced nutrition while in our care. Our goal is to create healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime. Materials in classrooms that promote good nutrition include books, recipes, and play foods. Classrooms will invite community members such as local farmers or Michigan State University Extension Program to share information and do activities with the children regarding nutrition, farming or gardening. The Sanilac County GSRP programs believe it is important to support families in having good nutrition at home too. We share nutrition resources, recipes and refer families to programs such as WIC and DHHS to aide families in providing good nutrition at home.

## Food Allergies

Parents **MUST** notify staff of any and all food allergies verbally and in writing on the child's emergency card/Child Information Record! If special dietary changes in food need to be made, we will need a doctor's note stating specific directions and requirements.

## Snow Days/Inclement Weather

The decision to cancel the regular school day program is usually made about 5:30 a.m., and no later than 6:30 a.m. if at all possible. Only in unusually severe weather conditions is a decision made the night before. A fog delay is an unpredictable weather condition that may cause delays to be made after the time indicated above. Occasionally school is dismissed early because of weather. It is very important that all parents talk with their children about the procedure to be followed in the event of an early release. Your school's office must be notified in advance of any special arrangements or transportation. Planning in advance reduces stress and anxiety for your children and saves many last minute phone calls to the school. In the event of tornado or severe thunderstorm watches/warnings, it may be necessary to extend the school day rather than send children home in threatening weather. All students who ride the bus will be returned to school if the bus driver determines that they cannot be left home.

It is important to keep any phone number changes up-to-date so that you will receive these calls. If school is cancelled due to inclement weather, all preschool classes are also cancelled. Please see your school's policy on school delays.

**Decisions about school cancellation or early dismissal are made in the best interest of student safety!**

### Television Stations:

WNEM (Channel 5)

WJRT (Channel 12)

WJBK Fox (Channel 2)

WEYI (Channel 25)

WDIV (Channel 4)

WXYZ (Channel 7)

### Radio Stations:

WPHM (AM 1380)

WMIC/WTGV (FM 97.7 & 92.5)

WIOG (FM 102.5)

WMPC (AM 1230)

WCRZ (FM 107.9)

WQUS (FM 103.1)

WSAQ (FM 98 KCQ)

## Emergency Policies and Procedures

### Fire Drills

We practice drills regularly. In the event of a fire, the children will be evacuated from the building using the nearest exit and be removed to a safe place away from the building. All exits are clearly marked.

### Tornado Drills

During a tornado warning, the children will move to the interior of the building, away from doors and windows. Children and staff will remain there until an all clear has been sounded. We will practice tornado drills at school regularly.

## Emergency/Evacuation Plan

In the event of an emergency or evacuation, parents will be notified by phone or by local radio or television stations that the center and school will be closed and they must pick-up their children. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation from the immediate area of the center, all preschool children and staff will follow the procedures laid out in your school's Safety Response Guide. PARENTS MUST SIGN OUT CHILDREN IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY!

## Miscellaneous Policies and Procedures

### Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy

We strongly believe children and employees are entitled to equal opportunities and freedom from discrimination based on race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin or handicap. The instructional curriculum is both multi-cultural and anti-bias. It complies with federal regulations concerning race, color, religion, and national origin. Children and employees are entitled to work and play in an environment that is non-discriminatory in all aspects and free of any harassment that interferes with an individual's work/play performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work/play atmosphere.

### Background Check of Employees and Volunteers

All employees, volunteers, or interns must complete the DHHS Clearance Check for substantiated child abuse and neglect. Full-time employees are also required to complete a national fingerprint/background check.

### Quality Assurance – Handling of Complaints

The GSRP program is committed to providing a high quality program that meets, to the greatest extent possible, children and family needs. In case of concerns, first discuss the situation with your child's teacher(s). If the problem is not resolved, discuss the situation with the principal or director. Every effort will be made to achieve resolutions that are in the best interest of the child, family and the preschool.

### Civil Rights – Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities

may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) online, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- 1) Mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- 2) Fax: (202) 690-7442
- 3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# Licensing

## PARENT NOTIFICATION OF THE LICENSING NOTEBOOK

Child Care Organization Act, 1973 Public Act 116

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

All child care centers must maintain a licensing notebook which includes all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans (CAP). The notebook must include all reports issued and CAPs developed on and after May 27, 2010 until the license is closed.

- This center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans.
- This notebook will be available to parents for review during regular business hours.
- Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

I have read the above statement issued by \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Child Care Center

I have read and understand all of the policies stated in the Parent Preschool Handbook and agree to all policies stated therein.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please document any discrepancies or disagreements on the bottom of this page.

*Please remove this back page and turn it into your child's teacher after you have read through the handbook. Thank you!*