

**David Douglas**

**Preschool Policy Handbook**

### Child Guidance

Staff will interact frequently with children showing affection, concern, interest, and respect. Staff will be available, responsive, friendly, and courteous. All children, regardless of sex, race, religion, family background, language, and culture will have equal access to classroom activities and be treated with respect by all staff, consultants, and volunteers. Guidance approaches are positive and are treated as learning opportunities to help children develop self-control and pro-social behaviors.

Staff should refrain from being alone with a child, for an extended period of time, whenever possible. If it is necessary to be alone with a child, staff needs to inform another staff person where they are going and when they will return.

This policy is designed to both guide and protect staff in guiding children's behavior. Failure to comply with the Child Guidance Policy will be considered a violation of work rules and subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Guidance methods will include Positive Behavior Supports and be appropriate to the age and developmental level of each child and will include:

#### Building Positive Relationships:

- Helping each child feel accepted in the group.
- Providing a supportive environment.
- Picking up on the cues of preschoolers.
- Following both verbal and non-verbal cues displayed by children.
- Having realistic expectations for the age and developmental level of each child.
- Telling children what you want them to do, as opposed to what they should not do.
- Modeling respect for the rights and feelings of others.
- Connecting with each child, each school day.

#### Designing Supportive Environments:

- Structuring the environment, including the bus, in a way that promotes independence and self-control (e.g. providing the appropriate number of toys, materials to provide varying levels of challenge, environmental cues such as labels and room arrangement, etc.).
- Structuring transitions so that children do not have to spend excessive time waiting with nothing to do.
- Providing opportunities to develop oral sensory skills such as mouthing and biting to prevent inappropriate biting.
- Planning ahead to prevent foreseeable problems.
- Considering the needs of children with physical and sensory disabilities.

Social Emotional Teaching Strategies:

- Redirecting children to a more appropriate or alternate activity.
- Encouraging, praising and/or coaching appropriate behavior.
- Commenting on what the child *can* do, as opposed to what they cannot.
- Developing clear, consistent rules with the children, which are represented visually and in print, and reviewing them frequently with the children.
- Considering individual differences in problem solving (i.e. allowing time alone in a quiet space, not participating in an activity, not forcing a child to discuss their feelings until they are ready, not forcing a child to apologize, etc.).
- Encouraging children to use problem-solving skills. Modeling, coaching and/or suggesting ideas to solve the problem before imposing the adult's solution.
- Applying natural or logical consequences as the situation allows.
- Discussing the consequences of various behaviors and redirecting children without using punitive techniques.
- Helping children identify and verbalize their feelings and providing emotional labels as children experience various feelings.
- Encouraging and teaching children to use words to solve their problems and providing the appropriate words.
- Encouraging and teaching pro-social behaviors such as cooperating, helping, taking turns, making friends and using words to solve problems.
- Direct teaching of social skills.

Individual Interventions:

At times, children's behavior may challenge staff's ability to respond in an appropriate or successful ways. The teaching team should consider all methods to respond. Strategies should be implemented as soon as they identify a concern. These include but are not limited to:

- Focusing on identifying the behavior and its function
  - Use the Behavior Incident Report to identify patterns
  - Contact the parent to keep them informed
  - Discuss the situation with the principal
  - Consult with the behavior specialist or mental health consultant
- Focusing on what new skills need to be taught, to reduce the problem behavior
  - What skills does the child need to learn? What new skills can you teach them?
  - What specific visual cues could be created (ex. schedules, rules, steps to calm down) for this child?
  - Other supports that could be offered through the ECSE provider (behavior consultant), school counselor or mental health consultant.
- Staff will not use any of the following methods:
  - Physical punishment or negative discipline methods that hurt, frighten or humiliate children.
  - Striking a child.
  - Forcing a child to apologize or explain their behavior.

- Withholding food or beverages.
- Using food, stickers prizes or other extrinsic rewards for good behavior unless it's in conjunction with a school wide PBIS program or an individual behavior support plan.
- Placing a child outside the classroom unattended by an adult or in another classroom for discipline purposes.
- Using disparaging phrases (ex. "You are a bad girl/boy").
- Using the term "time out" to punish a child.
- Restraining a child physically without appropriate EC training and parent consent.

**Restraint:**

Restraint is a specific technique used by a trained professional to assist a child, who is out of control, to gain control and prevent him/her from hurting him/herself or others.

Restraint will only be used under the following circumstances:

- A written behavior support plan is developed with the team including the parents, EC behavior specialist, mental health consultant, and principal.
- Alternatives are fully considered before any plan is written containing restraint.
- Documentation is in the child's file after each application of restraint and the team follows all notification requirements specified in the OARs and the Oregon Department of Education.

If a situation arises where a child loses control and presents a danger to him/herself or others, the child will be prevented from doing so in the least restrictive manner possible. Staff will notify the principal and call the parents. The team will then meet to determine next steps, which may include classroom observations or referrals if necessary.

The term "restraint" will not be used when referring to typical early childhood guidance practices- redirection, holding, stopping, guiding with your body.

Teachers are to use resources available through CSEFEL- EC Behavior Support Plan; Action Plan; and Behavior Incident Report.

## **Germ Transmission Prevention**

At the beginning of each school year, teachers are to instruct children on the prevention of germ transmission. Teachers use proactive, positive guidance to instruct children on preventing germ transmission through daily routines. Staff will provide instruction in large group, small group and 1:1 for any children requiring a little extra help. Children are encouraged to learn new skills so they become confident and independent.

### **Hand washing**

Teachers shall instruct children on the importance of hand washing as a way to keep children healthy. Teachers will review the visual system sequence chart for hand-washing during circle time at the beginning of the school year and as needed throughout the year. Teachers and Instructional Assistants (IAs) will model hand washing for children. Hand washing is to be built into routines throughout the day. For example, after messy activities, after outdoor or indoor motor play, and before and after meals and snacks children should be directed to wash their hands. Teachers are to encourage children to use the sink independently and will post a visual sequence card over or near the sink to remind children of the steps in the routine. Teachers and IAs will monitor children to ensure everyone is doing a thorough job (washing with soap and water for 20 seconds) and will provide support for children that may require a little extra help. Classrooms are not to use hand sanitizers as a replacement for hand washing.

### **Coughing, sneezing and runny noses**

Teachers will instruct and model for children how to cough or sneeze into your elbows to avoid spreading germs. Teachers will instruct children on how to wipe their nose independently and dispose of tissues in the wastebasket. The classroom should disperse tissues in centers throughout the classroom and ensure they are within children's reach. Teachers and IAs will talk to children about what they are doing as they model this technique for children.

### **Mealtime**

Teachers will instruct children why it's important during meals or snack time to eat your own food and drink your beverage and not share with others. Teachers and IAs will gently remind children of this during meals and snacks.

### **Disinfecting and sanitizing classroom surfaces**

Teachers and IAs will participate in annual training on how to sanitize and disinfect classroom surfaces (including toys) based on the Oregon Child Care Licensing Rules. Staff will clean surfaces throughout the day and at the end of every day to reduce the risk of illness, by decreasing bacteria, viruses, fungi, and mold.

### **Tooth brushing**

Teachers and IAs instruct children on the importance of tooth brushing as a way to improve children's health. Teachers review the steps and visual system sequence with children at the beginning of every year. Children brush teeth once daily following afternoon snack. Sequence charts are about the sink. Teachers and IAs monitor children and support as needed. Toothbrushes are stored safely to eliminate any germ transmission.

### Screen Time

Computers/SmartBoards and interactive media support and supplement activities in the classroom by facilitating active, creative, and social engagement by young children. Interactive media can include computers, iPads, and videos related to instruction goals. Intentional planning for digital experiences should increase children's digital literacy and use of technology as a tool in their learning. Screen time or electronic media is not used during meal times.

Computers/iPads are one of many materials in the preschool classroom. The total screen time during classroom hours will be no more than 30 minutes each day. Teaching teams do not use technology for their own personal use during instructional time.

#### Classroom Use of Technology:

The teacher's role in supporting children's learning through computers/iPads and interactive media is similar to other areas of the curriculum such as, asking open ended questions, providing encouragement, troubleshooting, describing what children are doing (their interaction with the media or social interactions with friends working (together using technology) reactions to computer/iPad feedback, and accomplishments.

- Interactive media experiences are extended to other areas of the classroom to explore concepts from different perspectives using different materials. Intentional planning is given to the use of technology, with a focus on alignment with the curriculum, lesson plans, and experiences in the classroom.
- Computers/iPads and interactive media are available to supplement activities, not replace them. Teachers support children's initial exploration of concepts through hands-on activities with concrete materials.
- Teachers will provide alternative activities based on children's interests.
- The district policy on "Preschool Screen Time" is shared with parents of children enrolled in the program.
- The use and promotion of digital technologies as a learning tool should be modeled by teachers and is one more way for children to demonstrate their creativity and learning.
- Investigating information for emerging interests or studies using internet searches.
- Exploring digital storytelling with children.
- Co-creating digital books with photos of the children's play or work.
- Capturing photos of block building and artwork that children have created.
- Videotaping dramatic play to replay for children.
- Computer/iPad use is child initiated and child directed.
- Children's computer creations are displayed in the classroom.
- Computers/iPads and IT are viewed and structured as a social activity.
- Computers/iPads or IT can be set up as another learning center in the classroom with children being encouraged to work in pairs, or small groups (facilitating high level language interactions and cooperative play). IT is not used during meals or snack time unless it is an individual child's assistive technology device.

- Teaching staff are provided training and engage in continuous learning on how to integrate IT use in the classroom in a meaningful way.
- Software is age-appropriate and allows children to explore, experiment, and problem solve.
- Software used in the classroom does not include advertisements or brand placement.
- Software promotes positive representation of gender, cultural, and linguistic diversity and abilities. Programs are purchased and balance the interests of all children in the class.

Guidelines for computer set up:

- Place computers/iPads in a relatively quiet area so children can focus and talk with each other.
- Locate the technology away from “messy” areas- art, sensory tables, etc.
- Seating accommodates more than one child. Children sit 18in. from the screen.
- Place against the wall, near wall outlets, to avoid any additional cords.
- Use a surge protector.
- Be sure there is adequate lighting.
- Place screen at child’s eye level and keyboard (if used) at elbow level.
- Adults turn on and off the computers before children arrive.
- Teaching team initially chooses software that will be used for the day. More choice can be provided once children are familiar with using the computer.
- Teaching team makes adaptations so equipment can be accessed by all children in the classroom.
- Access to technology specialist for any assistance required.

### **Healthy eating habits**

Meals and snacks are an important part of the preschool program. A well-balanced nutritional diet is important to build strong bodies and to create the best conditions for learning. In full day programs, children are provided breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. In our half-day program, children attending mornings receive breakfast and lunch and children attending afternoons receive lunch and snack. All meals and snacks are provided through the DDSD Nutrition Department and meet the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Portion sizes meet regulations, which is developmentally appropriate for 3-5 year olds, and children serve themselves family style. Menus are nutritionally balanced containing whole wheat or whole grain rich breads, meat/meat alternative, fruit, vegetables, and milk. The menu allows children to have a chance to taste, feel, smell, and see different foods. Food is served family style so children learn to serve themselves, pour, spoon, and pass dishes. Children are never forced to eat, but are encouraged to try new or unfamiliar food items. Teachers have helpers identified in the classroom and one role is snack and lunch leader. They help set the table and all children are responsible for clearing their table after snacks and meals.

Mealtime is viewed as an instructional time. Staff sit with children and engage in child directed conversations. They also support children to engage peers in conversation. They use scaffolding to encourage higher level cognitive and language skills. Staff may focus on how food helps children grow, stay healthy, and learn. They may encourage children to share stories about meals they enjoy at home. It's also a time for teachers to reflect on what came before and what's coming next.

### **Enrollment Practices**

DDSD preschool classroom staffing ratios are designed to exceed the licensing standard of 1 to every 10 children ages 36-59 months.

Each classroom has a certified preschool teacher and two instructional assistants for up to, but not exceeding 20 children.

- Mixed age groups (including children 3 to 5 years of age) are to have a ratio of 3 staff to 17 children.
- Groups consisting of four year olds (4 to 5 years of age- kinder entry) are to have a ratio of 3 staff to 20 children.

Teaching teams are to identify substitutes that have experience working with preschool children and provide those names to their supervisors to create a pool of substitutes, which can be accessed.

### **Toileting**

Preschoolers use bathrooms located in their classrooms or in the kindergarten section of the building (in closest proximity to the preschools).

DDSD preschool staff serves children three to five years of age, with a wide range of abilities. Most children are potty trained when arriving at preschool and are independent after instruction on using the potty. Staff ensure all instruction on using the toilet and potty training is done showing empathy and concern for the child. Staff use positive approaches and acknowledge all attempts by children to succeed.

Instruction on potty use occurs at the beginning of each year. Teachers should share the visual system (sequence for potty use and washing/drying hands), then show children where the bathrooms are located. The teacher will instruct them on identifying boys or girls room if using the k bathrooms. Once in the bathroom the teacher or staff member will instruct children on how to use the stall door, how to unroll toilet paper, how to flush the toilet, how to turn on the water to wash their hands, how to access the soap dispenser, how to use the paper towel dispenser to dry their hands, and where to throw paper towels away. Teachers will also instruct children about “quiet voices” when walking to and from or when using the bathrooms.

If a child begins preschool and is not fully potty trained, staff will use routines (ex. trip training) to encourage a child’s independence. A visual system is posted in the bathroom, includes each step in the toileting sequence (providing a reminder for children), and ending with washing and drying hands.

Some children may require a little extra help. Since restrooms are in the classroom, a staff member can maintain visual contact of children, observing to provide support as needed. If a child has special needs and requires more help, staff will provide diapering and work with the family to gather information and develop potty training strategies for home and preschool.

### Screening

The preschool program uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) as the approved screening tool. Within 45 days of the start of school, parents and teachers complete an ASQ on each child enrolled in a preschool classroom. Teachers and parents can use the ASQ to determine whether there may be questions or concerns about a child's development. Teacher and parents may consider several options based on the individual child and the results of the ASQ. For example, they may consider the child's experiences or lack of experiences in relationship to the screening items missed. Teachers will share information about the referral process for Multnomah Early Childhood Program (MECP is the Early Childhood Special Education Program in our region) for families interested in pursuing additional support. Teachers will also assist families with the referral if parents request help.

- Earl Boyles is to complete the ASQ within 45 days of a child starting school and annually.
- Mill Park is to complete the ASQ three times throughout the school year-
  - Within 45 days of starting the school year
  - Midyear (parents complete and teachers review and talk with parents at school conferences)
  - End of year (parents complete and teachers review at end of year conferences)

#### **Earl Boyles will complete the following additional screenings based on Head Start Standards:**

- Vision
- Hearing
- Height/weight
- ASQ-SE
- Dental
- Well-child visit

## Assessment

DDSD partners with families to identify each child's strengths, interests, and needs.

DDSD Preschool Program uses the following assessment tools on the approved list provided by QRIS:

- Earl Boyles Preschool uses the Teaching Strategies Gold.
- Mill Park currently uses a teacher created test.

These two assessments are used because they are valid and reliable. They assess young children's strengths, progress, needs, use methods that are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, tied to children's daily activities, supported by professional development, inclusive of families, and connected to specific, beneficial purposes:

- Making sound decisions about teaching,
- Identifying significant concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children, and
- Helping programs improve their educational and developmental interventions.

Assessments lead to improved knowledge about children. This knowledge assists teachers to improve curriculum implementation and teaching practices. Assessment help teaching teams understand the learning of specific children or the group of children. Teaching teams discuss assessment information and develop lesson plans based on individual and groups needs.

DDSD preschool assessment policy adheres to the NAEYC Position Statement: Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation.

Following assessment, individual goals are created with parents, reviewed and updated, and celebrated through Home Visits and Parent-Teacher Conferences. Teachers provide information about child development, ongoing assessment, and appropriate home learning activities that parents can use to support their child's learning.

Child goals are:

- Developed in collaboration with parents.
- Based on the child's strength, interest, and needs.
- Based on observations and ongoing assessment by parents, staff and all screening and evaluation information.
- Developed based on the domains of the Head Start Early Learning Framework and ODE EL Guidelines.
- Developed in coordination with other pre-existing goals (IFSPs, Health, etc.)
- Measurable and observable in the classroom.
- Attainable based on the child's individual rate of development.
- Realistic and developmentally appropriate for the child's age, level of development, language, and culture.
- Incorporated into the curriculum planning process and classroom activities through weekly lesson planning.

Staff and parents conduct ongoing assessment of children's strengths, interests, and needs in all domains- social-emotional, language, physical, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science/technology, social studies, and the arts. Formal and informal assessment methods are used and may include the following:

Written observations

Work samples

Photos documenting skills

Screening and Evaluation reports

Teaching Strategy Gold Checkpoints

Parent input

Creative Curriculum Continuum

Individual goal setting and updates

IFSP reviews

Teachers maintain individual records for each child. Earl Boyles follows the Head Start requirements TS Gold. Mill Park completes and records the Creative Curriculum Continuum. Both sites gather other artifacts to either upload into the electronic system (TS Gold) or collect in a child portfolio. Teachers share these records/artifacts with parents to celebrate their child's learning throughout the year.

### Staff Ethics

#### Conflict of Interest

No district employee will use their district position to obtain personal financial benefit or avoidance of financial detriment or financial gain or avoidance of financial detriment for relatives, household members or for any business with which the employee, household member or relative is associated.

This prohibition does not apply to any part of an official compensation package, honorarium allowed by Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 244.042, reimbursement of expenses, or unsolicited awards of professional achievement. Further, this prohibition does not apply to gifts from one without a legislative or administrative interest. Nor does it apply if the gift is under the \$50 gift limit for one who has a legislative or administrative interest in the district or vote of the district employee.

District employees will not engage in, or have a financial interest in, any activity that raises a reasonable question of conflict of interest with their duties and responsibilities as staff members. This means that:

1. Employees will not use their position to obtain financial gain or avoidance of financial detriment from students, parents or staff;
2. Any device, publication or any other item developed during the employee's paid time shall be district property;
3. Employees will not further personal gain through the use of confidential information gained in the course of or by reason of position or activities in any way;
4. No district employee may serve as a Board or budget committee member in the district.
5. An employee will not perform any duties related to an outside job during their regular working hours or during the additional time that they need to fulfill the position's responsibilities; nor will an employee use any district facilities, equipment or materials in performing outside work.
6. If an employee authorizes a public contract, the employee may not have a direct beneficial financial interest in that public contract for two years after the date the contract was authorized.

If an employee has a potential or actual conflict of interest, the employee must notify their supervisor in writing of the nature of the conflict and request that the supervisor dispose of the matter giving rise to the conflict.

### **Directory Information**

Directory information means those items of personally identifiable information contained in a student education record which are not generally considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The following categories are designated as directory information. The following directory information may be released to the public through appropriate procedures:

1. Student's name;
2. Student's address;
3. Student's photograph;
4. Participation in officially recognized sports and activities;
5. Weight and height of athletic team members;
6. Awards received.

#### Public Notice

The district will give annual public notice to parents of students in attendance and students 18 years of age or emancipated. The notice shall identify the types of information considered to be directory information, the district's option to release such information and the requirement that the district must, by law, release secondary students' names, addresses and telephone numbers to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education, unless parents or eligible students request the district withhold this information. Such notice will be given prior to release of directory information.

#### Exclusions

Exclusions from any or all directory categories named as directory information or release of information to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education must be submitted in writing to the principal by the parent, student 18 years of age or emancipated student within 15 days of annual public notice. A parent or student 18 years of age or an emancipated student may not opt out of directory information to prevent the district from disclosing or requiring a student to disclose their names or from requiring a student to disclose a student ID card or badge that exhibits information that has been properly designated directory information by the district in this policy.

Directory information shall be released only with administrative direction.

The district does not release lists of students to individuals, agencies or companies who intend to use such lists for commercial purposes. Release of directory information for recruitment or solicitation of students into a program or the promotion of goods or services for sale to students is not consistent with this policy. This policy does not prohibit the release of rosters required or desirable for the effective management of the school district. Directory information considered by the district to be detrimental will not be released.

Information will not be given over the telephone except in health and safety emergencies.

At no point will a student's Social Security Number or student identification number be considered directory information.

### **Personally Identifiable Information**

Personally identifiable information includes, but is not limited to:

1. Student's name, if excluded from directory information, as requested by the student/parent in writing;
2. Name of the student's parent(s) or other family member;
3. Address of the student or student's family, if excluded from directory information, as requested by the student/parent in writing;
4. Personal identifier such as the student's social security number or student ID number;
5. A list of personal characteristics that would make the student's identity easily traceable;
6. Other information that would make the student's identity easily traceable.

#### **Prior Consent to Release**

Personally identifiable information will not be released without prior signed and dated consent of the parent, student 18 years of age or older or emancipated.

Notice of and/or request for release of personally identifiable information shall specify the records to be disclosed, the purpose of disclosure and the identification of person(s) to whom the disclosure is to be made. Upon request of the parent or eligible student, the district will provide a copy of the disclosed record.

#### **Exceptions to Prior Consent**

The district may disclose personally identifiable information without prior consent under the following conditions:

1. To personnel within the district who have legitimate educational interests;
2. To personnel of an education service district or state regional program where the student is enrolled or is receiving services;
3. To personnel of another school, another district, state regional program or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll;
4. To personnel connected with an audit or evaluation of federal or state education programs or the enforcement of or compliance with federal or state legal requirements of the district;
5. To personnel determining a financial aid request for the student;
6. To personnel conducting studies for or on behalf of the district;
7. To personnel in accrediting organizations fulfilling accrediting functions;
8. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
9. For health or safety emergency;
10. By request of a parent of a student who is not 18 years of age;
11. By request of a student who is 18 years of age or older or emancipated;
12. Because information has been identified as "directory information;"
13. To the courts when legal action is initiated;
14. To a court and state and local juvenile justice agencies;
15. A judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena when the parent is a party to a court proceeding involving child abuse and neglect or dependency matters;

16. To a caseworker or other representative of a state or local child welfare agency or tribal organization that are legally responsible for the care and protection of the student including educational stability of children in foster care.

### **Cooking and Nutrition Policy**

Preschool staff will plan a minimum of one classroom nutrition activity each week. At least one of the activities each month will be a cooking activity. Nutrition/cooking activities will be documented on the weekly planning form.

Following the *Harvest for Healthy Kids* curriculum meets the requirement for weekly nutrition/monthly cooking activity requirement and connects children with the foods on the monthly menu in the classrooms.

Recipes for cooking activities will be kept on file with the weekly planning form and shared with families whenever possible. Recipes should avoid use of food(s) where documented allergies exist in the room. Classroom staff may work with kitchen staff to assist in preparing foods that are part of the regular menu. Whenever possible, nutrition/cooking activities should be served with meals to enhance the meal, and not deter children from eating the required components of the meal.

Nutrition and cooking activities will provide children the opportunity to:

- Learn about food and nutrition (USDA Guidelines) through hands-on experiences
- Taste unfamiliar foods
- Learn new vocabulary
- Learn about the origins of food
- Relate food to healthy bodies
- Demonstrate a positive attitude toward a variety of nutritious foods
- Increase awareness of similarities and differences in food preferences and preparation techniques

Cooking activities will be:

- Developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant
- Low in fat content
- Low in sugar content
- Adapted to meet special needs

To enhance children's food experiences through exposure to new foods and participation in food-related activities:

- Staff will make every effort to include families in the process of planning nutrition and cooking activities. Family input may be gained through home visits, parent meetings, etc. Every effort will be made to incorporate foods that are reflective of the families in the classroom and the community.
- Cooking and Nutrition activities will be extended to other areas of curriculum including literacy, health, nutrition, science, math, etc. See **Goals** and **Examples** that follow.

## **Incorporating LANGUAGE AND LITERACY into Nutrition/ Cooking Activities-**

### **GOALS:**

- Use words to explain ideas and feelings
- Talk with other children during daily activities
- Participate in group discussions
- Recall a sequence of events
- Recognize patterns and be able to repeat them
- Identify objects and events
- Use words to describe characteristics of an object
- Classify objects by similarities and differences
- Make comparisons
- Demonstrate and interest in using writing for a purpose
- Demonstrate visual discrimination skills
- Ask and respond to questions
- Follow simple directions
- Recognize pictures and text on a page
- Introduce new vocabulary words

### **EXAMPLES:**

- Talk during a cooking activity about how a food looks, tastes, smells, feels and sounds.
- Introduce vocabulary words as they apply to the activity i.e. jumbo, vitamins, blend, whisk, spatula, peel, measure, etc. Write the words on cards and put them in the writing center.
- Introduce foods and ingredients which children may not be familiar with. Add the words to the writing center or computer area.
- Sing songs or rhyming games about food- *I like to eat, Way up high in the apple tree, Old Mac Donald*, etc
- Clap syllables of foods or cooking items i.e. Pop-corn, ba-na-na.
- Use recipe cards to re-tell the sequence of a cooking activity. Make them available in the library, writing or dramatic play area.
- Ask open-ended questions about the project, and write down their predictions- i.e. “what do you think will happen when we put the peanuts in the blender?”
- Include literature about foods and nutrition. Read them while you are waiting for something to cook, eat or at circle time.
- Sign up to take a turn to make the cooking project.
- Write a story about the cooking experience, which the children dictate.
- Use alphabet cookie cutters to cut bread, apple slices etc. Have children identify a letter in their name and cut it out.
- Invite the food service staff into the room to read books/stories. Have him/ her talk about food/nutrition.
- Have children visit the kitchen and talk about ways to cook food, utensils, signs, etc.
- Make something that all the ingredients start with the same letter i.e. make a fruit salad with peaches, plums, persimmons and pomegranates. Talk about the letter P and find other objects that start with P. Search for other P words.
- Provide cookbooks, recipe cards, cooking magazines etc, in the library, writing and dramatic play

areas.

- Have children make a class book about something they have cooked.
- Make a class recipe about, which the children dictate, about something they have made.

### **Incorporating MATH concepts into Nutrition/ Cooking Activities**

#### **GOALS:**

- Comparing- i.e. more/less, larger/smaller, taller/shorter.
- Counting in sequence
- Matching one- to- one (1:1 correspondence)
- Visual discrimination skills
- Find more than one solution to a problem
- Classify objects by similarities and differences
- Put together objects that belong together
- Arrange objects in a series- i.e. smallest to largest
- Recognize patterns and be able to repeat them
- Identify relations of objects in space- i.e. below, inside, under
- Use planning skills
- Measuring/ weighing
- Graphing

#### **EXAMPLES:**

- Use non-standard units to measure- i.e. how many knives long is this table?
- Use an egg timer or kitchen timer to alert children when something has finished cooking
- Talk about measurement terms- cup, teaspoon, weigh, measure, pound, etc.
- Use measurement tools (measuring spoons, cups etc) and ask children to predict how many units it takes to fill a container. Keep track and compare predictions to what actually happened.
- Using terms like before, after, next, today, and tomorrow
- Sort and classify the ingredients for a project
- Compare and graph how things are alike and different- i.e. several colors of apples, several kinds of vegetables, etc.
- Use number cookie cutters to cut shapes in bread, fruit, etc. Have children find the number for how old they are. Search for other numbers around the room.
- Have children count the number of raisins, nuts, etc to put in their project.
- Use recipe cards which have the amount written on them. Make them available in the library, writing, and dramatic play areas.
- Have children taste several foods and graph which is their favorite
- Have children count the number of ingredients for a recipe
- Have children arrange fruits/veggies from largest to smallest, thickest to thinnest, longest to shortest, etc.
- Have children group foods by shapes, color, etc.
- Provide cooking/measuring utensils in various places around the room i.e. dramatic play, sensory, blocks, etc.

### **Incorporating SCIENCE concepts into Nutrition/ Cooking Activities**

#### **GOALS:**

- Observe and make discoveries
- Find more than one solution to a problem
- Put together objects that belong together
- Classify objects by similarities and differences
- Recognize patterns and be able to repeat them
- Increase awareness of cause and effect relationships
- Make comparisons
- Demonstrate visual discrimination skills
- Discriminate by taste, smell, sound, texture
- Making predictions

**EXAMPLES:**

- Explore which vegetables/ fruits might sink/ float
- Plant vegetable seeds and maintain a garden
- Observe the life cycle of a plant and eat it when it is grown.
- Examine different foods- sorting them, comparing textures, shapes, colors, tastes, smells
- Use magnifying glasses to look at foods
- Use a balance scale to compare different foods and discussing concepts of weight- i.e. which is heaviest, lightest
- Use one food to measure another food i.e. how many cherries weight the same as an apple?
- Record different cooking implements with a tape recorder and play them back to see if children can identify them
- Talk about how healthy food helps your body
- Make predictions about how something will change after it is cooked- i.e. What do you think will happen to the cream after we shake it?
- Have a blindfold tasting party with different foods.
- Have a blindfold smelling party
- Have smell canisters for the children to smell and guess
- Use a feely box to have children identify a food- have children predict what they think it is.
- Have children make predictions about what will happen when you pop popcorn without the top on. Do it!
- Grow herbs and use them in cooking activities and meals.
- Have an herb smelling and tasting party- try both fresh and dried herbs.

Resources: *Program menus; Harvest for Healthy Kids*

### Adult-Child Interactions

Children enrolled in DDSD preschools need engaging interactions and environments to support their learning. We know quality teaching and learning occurs within the context of supportive relationships and intentional teaching activities. Quality adult-child interactions are essential for children's social and academic development and learning.

DDSD adheres to the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL) principles on evidence based teaching and learning practices to achieve the best outcomes for our preschoolers. The NCQTL Framework for Effective Everyday Practice: Supporting Readiness for All Children incorporates four components of quality teaching and learning: providing engaging interactions with children; choosing and implementing research based curricula and teaching practices; using assessment of children's skills; and individualizing teaching and learning.

Effective, engaging interactions are the foundation for all learning in early childhood. DDSD preschool teachers will engage in effective practices by providing a well-organized and managed classroom, social and emotional support and instructional interactions and materials that stimulate children's thinking and skills. To ensure positive outcomes, DDSD teachers will use research-based curricula and teaching practices and ongoing assessment.

To ensure the high quality of classroom interactions teachers will:

Provide emotional support by-

- Creating a positive climate demonstrated by the emotional tone of the classroom and the connection between adults and children. Warmth and respect will be demonstrated in the classroom as well as joy and enthusiasm during learning activities.
- Reducing the level of expressed negativity demonstrated by adults or children and instead using positive comments and encouragement with children.
- Responding to children's needs and demonstrating an awareness of each child's academic and emotional functioning. Acknowledging and validating children's emotions and being in close physical proximity.
- Helping children see adults as a resource and creating an environment where children feel safe to explore and learn.
- Emphasizing children's interests, motivations and points of view in interactions and classroom activities rather than being teach-driven. Joining in children's activities.
- Appreciating each child's autonomy to participate in and initiate activities.

Provide classroom organization and management by-

- Using effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior by presenting clear behavioral expectations and minimizing time spent on behavioral issues.
- Using instruction time and routines to provide the maximum number of opportunities for children to learn.
- Maximizing child engagement and their ability to learn by providing interesting activities, instruction, centers and materials.
- Facilitating activities so that children have opportunities to experience, perceive, explore and use materials.

Provide instructional support by-

- Incorporating instructional discussions and activities that promote children's higher-order thinking skills versus rote and fact-based learning.
- Using feedback that focuses on expanding learning and understanding (formative evaluation) and not correctness or the end product (summative).
- Facilitating children's language through the quality and amount of their use of language-stimulation and language-facilitation techniques.
- Modeling high quality language through self and parallel talk, open-ended questions, repetition and expansion/extension, scaffolding and use of advanced language.

Teachers will be provided feedback through CLASS observations or other observational methods focused on the above domains and dimensions.

### Family Style Meals

The following Policy defines family style meals and describes procedures to maintain and promote: A pleasant, nurturing mealtime atmosphere for children and adults; A safe and sanitary meal service; A healthy lifestyle; Opportunities for learning in all areas including language, literacy, cognitive, physical and social development, through appropriate activities and conversations. .

Meal times are a pleasant, nurturing experience for children, parents, and staff. Meals are served family style, with all children and adults eating together from the same menu. Children are actively involved in meal service including setting tables, preparing portions of the meal, serving food, cleaning up, and conversing with other children and adults, as appropriate to their age and developmental level. Adults sit with small groups of children, modeling healthy eating habits and a nurturing, unhurried mealtime routine. Adults are important models for children and therefore avoid behaviors, in front of children, that do not promote a healthy lifestyle.

Definition of Family Style:

- Assisting with meal preparation
- Assisting with setting/ clearing the table
- Sharing conversation during meals
- Passing food around the table
- Serving yourself
- Sitting together at the table
- Sharing the same menu (except children with special diets)
- Choosing the foods you want to eat

*Each of these should be considered/ incorporated as the developmental level of the children allows.*

Mealtime Procedures:

- Children and adults will wash their hands prior to preparation of food, setting tables, and prior to eating. Children and adults will also wash their hands after eating meals.
- All tables used for meal service will be washed (with a soap solution) and sanitized (with bleach solution) prior to each meal. Tables are washed and sanitized after meals as well.
- Activities and transitions prior to meals should support children to come to meals in a calm manner.
- Enough adults to meet the required classroom ratios will be seated with children. Parents and other volunteers will be invited to join in meals.
- Teachers will position themselves so that they do not have their backs to children while seated at the tables in order to be able to supervise all children at all times.
- Each food item will have its own serving container with a distinct utensil used for serving food only.
- Each child/adult will have their own individual place settings. This may include: plate/bowl, silverware, napkin, cup, and other eating utensils such as adaptive equipment, as necessary.
- Staff are encouraged to provide children with opportunities to use different types of silverware (i.e. knife, fork, spoon) and equipment (i.e. ladles, chopsticks, tongs) in order to provide exposure and experience and build fine motor skills.
- Milk, water, or other liquids, will be in pitchers on the table so that children can pour into their

own glasses, as appropriate for the age and developmental level of the children.

- Children participating in meals will be sitting within view of an adult.
- All staff scheduled to eat with children are expected to sit with children and model eating the same meal.
- Staff shall not bring nor consume food or beverages in front of the children that are not on the menu and not part of meals. Examples include coffee drinks, soda, snacks, etc. Adults promote healthy eating and lifestyle habits at all times when children are present.
- Staff will allow enrolled children, siblings and parents to eat first to assure there is adequate food. In general, staff should not rely on there being enough food for them to eat a full meal.
- Children will be encouraged to pass and serve their own food, including milk/ liquids, and clean up spills, as appropriate for the age and developmental level of the children. Adults will assist as necessary.

Adults encourage interesting and pleasant conversation during mealtime by:

- Asking open-ended questions
- Modeling listening skills
- Encouraging turn-taking in conversations
- Encouraging children to converse with each other.
- Encouraging children to compare, contrast, and classify food attributes such as taste, texture, shape, size, color, etc.
- Modeling a positive attitude toward all foods served.
- Utilizing special diets/ foods as learning opportunities.

Basic Skills and Concepts to Reinforce During Meals:

- We pass food in one direction around the table.
- We sit and talk with our friends (even after they are done eating, for a few minutes).
- We serve ourselves.
- We taste new foods.
- We keep serving spoons in the bowls and out of our mouths.
- We use our silverware for eating.
- We practice cutting with our knives. (Non-traditional foods provide good practice - bananas, toast, peaches, etc).
- We keep knives out of our mouths.
- We chew our food thoroughly.
- We close our mouth when we chew.
- We chew and swallow our food before we talk or get up from the table.
- We clean up after ourselves.
- We clean up when we spill.
- We sit on our bottoms to eat.
- We push in our chairs when we are finished eating.
- We wash our hands before and after we eat.
- Please, thank you, no thank you, and others manners are modeled and encouraged.

### **Personnel Evaluations Incorporating Family Feedback**

As part of the David Douglas School District's extensive personnel evaluation policies and procedures (documented in the Teacher Growth and Evaluation Handbook), the preschool ensures the program staff are meeting the needs of families. Based on program feedback collected through family surveys, home visits, parent teacher conferences and advisory committees, the Principal and staff will make every effort to integrate and make any changes necessary to the program to improve services for children and families. The staff member's effectiveness at collaborating with families and making needed program adjustments is considered in Domain 3, Standard 3.c and 3.e and Domain 4, Standard 4.c of the staff member's summative performance evaluation. DDSD is determined to listen to families, respect their input and respond in a way that will meet the needs of the children being served.

### **Family Advisories**

DDSD preschool actively seeks parents to join the school advisory councils. There are several opportunities for families to engage at each elementary school. Advisory meetings typically meet formally once a month to gather input. Many of the advisories have subcommittees that work to plan and implement specific educational workshops for parents or plan and implement family events at each school. School leaders encourage parents to take on a leadership role and all parents are encouraged to participate at whatever level they can.

### Family Engagement

Family engagement is essential for enhancing children's learning and family well-being. Family engagement occurs when there are ongoing, reciprocal, strengths-based partnerships between families and the DDSD preschool program. To strengthen family engagement DDSD preschool programs will:

- Encourage and validate family participation in decision making related to their children's education. DDSD will support families to act as advocates for their children and the preschool program by encouraging parents to actively take part in decision making opportunities by:
  - Including family members on school leadership teams, advisories, PUG, and/or PTA meetings
  - Encouraging family participation in volunteer opportunities, parent-teacher conferences, and/or school wide events.
  - Encouraging family advocacy for local, regional and state funding in support of early childhood programs and services.
- Provide consistent, two-way communication. Communication should be both school and family initiated and should be timely and continuous, inviting conversations about both the child's educational experience as well as the program. Preschool programs will strengthen communication by:
  - Developing routines for sharing information in multiple languages
  - Understanding the various cultures represented in the program and work with families in culturally sensitive ways.
  - Providing information for families in an understandable manner regardless of differences in language, literacy or ability.
  - Providing supports to families to connecting to other families and community resources.
  - Communicating regularly with families through in-person conversations, emails, through the website, through newsletters, by phone, at school meetings and/or events.
- Collaborate and exchange knowledge with families. Encourage family members to share their unique knowledge and skills by volunteering and actively engaging in events and activities at schools. Teachers are to seek out information about their child's lives, families and communities and integrate this information into their curriculum and instructional practices by:
  - Inviting parents and family members to come to school to share their experiences and knowledge with children by participating and/or leading activities.
  - Ensuring activities, instruction and materials in the classroom represent the culture of all children participating in the classroom.
- Work with families to create and sustain the extension of learning activities at home and in the community to enhance each child's learning by:
  - Developing complimentary learning activities for families to engage in at home and in community with children.
  - Sharing ideas for learning activities through preschool newsletters, parent-teacher conferences, home visits or other school events.
  - Encouraging families to provide feedback on learning activities in home and community.
- Support families in developing a home environment that values learning. The preschools will encourage families to collaborate in establishing goals for children both at home and school.

- Create an ongoing and comprehensive system for promoting family engagement by ensuring that preschool program leadership and staff receive the supports they need to fully engage families.