

# MANCOS EARLY LEARNING CENTER HANDBOOK

2024-2025 Parent and Student Handbook



"The basics for young children are wonder, discovery, and experience.  
If it hasn't been in the hand, the body, and the heart,  
it can't be in the brain."

-Bev Bos

[mancosre6.edu](http://mancosre6.edu)



**MANCOS**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT



# WELCOME

## MANCOS EARLY LEARNING CENTER



Welcome to Mancos Early Learning Center where we are committed to children's growth and development!

Our staff honors the uniqueness of each child. We encourage growth and learning through play to bring wonder and discovery to our children. We believe this component is critical to children's academic success in the future. Our staff connects with each child to foster learning, a strong sense of self, and a connection to others.

Our approach:

- develops lifelong learners
- creates caretakers of one another and themselves and their environment
- grows collaborators and innovators.

We have an extremely dedicated and highly-qualified staff that shares best instructional practices and supports students' growth at all levels of need.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Who We Are.....</b>	<b>6</b>
• Vision and Mission.....	7
• Philosophy and Purpose.....	8
• Values.....	9
• Children with Special Needs.....	9
• Theory.....	10
• Approach.....	11
<b>Children with Special Needs.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Screening and Assessment Process.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>San Juan BOCES.....</b>	<b>16-17</b>
<b>Parent/ Guardian Rights and Responsibilities.....</b>	<b>18-19</b>
<b>Services.....</b>	
• Child Development.....	20
• Family Partnerships.....	20
• Community Partnerships.....	20
<b>Program Options.....</b>	<b>20</b>
• Full Day (Children ages 3-5).....	20
• Half Day (Children ages 3-5).....	20
<b>Play-Based Curriculum.....</b>	<b>21</b>
• The School Based Curriculum.....	21
• Ongoing Authentic Assessment.....	21
<b>Organization of the Classrooms in the School.....</b>	<b>22</b>
• Staff-Child Ratios.....	22
• The Staff.....	22
<b>Guidance and Discipline.....</b>	<b>23</b>
• Conscious Discipline.....	23
• Guidance for Families.....	24

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Families in the Program.....</b>	<b>24-28</b>
• Play Dates with Teachers.....	25
• Family-Staff Conferences.....	25
• Parent Committee.....	25
• Parent Surveys.....	25
• Kid's Corner and Family Communication.....	26
• Educational Opportunities for Parents.....	26
• Lending Library.....	26
• Family Nights or Events.....	26
• Breastfeeding Parents.....	27
• Transition from Home to MELC.....	27
• Transition from Another Program to MELC.....	27
• Transition from one Classroom to Another Classroom.....	28
• Transition from MELC to Kindergarten.....	28
<b>Guidelines and Procedures.....</b>	<b>29-33</b>
• Enrollment.....	29
• Confidentiality.....	30
• Communication.....	30
• Child Abuse and Neglect.....	30
• Grievance and Problem-Solving Process.....	31
• Filing a Complaint Concerning Licensing Violations.....	31
• Weather Delays and Closures.....	32
• 2-Hour Delay.....	32
• Transportation.....	33
• Media.....	33
• Classroom Closing Procedures.....	33
• Volunteers.....	33
• Watch DOGS.....	33
<b>Holiday and Celebration Guidance.....</b>	<b>34-37</b>
• Definitions.....	34
• Holiday and Celebration Philosophy.....	34
• Guidance for Holiday Recognition.....	35-36
• Guidance for Birthday Recognition.....	37
• Guidance for Kindergarten Transition Celebration.....	37

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Arriving at the School.....</b>	<b>38</b>
• Hours of Operation.....	38
• Drop Off and Pick Up Time.....	38
• Absences.....	39
<b>Departing the School.....</b>	<b>40</b>
• What to Do when Leaving for the Day.....	40
• Authorized Pick Up.....	40
• Late Child Pick Up.....	40
• Information Changes and Withdrawal.....	40
<b>Your Child's Safety.....</b>	<b>41-42</b>
• Procedures for Identifying Where Children are at all Times.....	41
• Building Security and Visitors to the School.....	41
• Field Trips and Other Activities.....	42
• Tobacco/ Drug-Free School.....	42
• No PETS.....	42
<b>Unexpected Situations and Emergencies.....</b>	<b>43-46</b>
• Inclement Weather.....	43
• Emergency Procedures.....	43
• Incident and Accident Reports.....	43
• School Day Illness.....	43
• Lost Children.....	44
• Lost/ Missing or Abducted Child.....	44-46
<b>The Food Program.....</b>	<b>47</b>
• General Information.....	47
• Food from Home.....	47

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Daily Routines</b> .....	<b>48-49</b>
• Rest or Quiet Time.....	48
• Diapering.....	48
• Toilet Training.....	48
• Playing Outdoors.....	49
<b>Monthly Routines</b> .....	<b>50</b>
• Montezuma School to Farm Garden Education Sessions.....	50
• Story Time at the Mancos Public Library.....	50
• Music with Julie Hartline.....	50
<b>Clothing and Belongings from Home</b> .....	<b>51</b>
• Clothing.....	51
• Children's Belongings.....	51
• Laundry Policy.....	51
<b>Promoting and Protecting Your Child's Health</b> .....	<b>52-54</b>
• Administering Medication.....	52
• Well Checks & Immunization Records.....	52
• Illness at School.....	52
• Contagious Diseases and Illness.....	53
• Nurse Practice Act.....	53
• Health Plans and Allergies.....	53
• Health Screenings.....	53
• Developmental Screenings.....	54
• Mental Health.....	54
• Trauma Informed.....	54
<b>Illness Policy</b> .....	<b>55-60</b>
<b>Important Phone Numbers to Remember</b> .....	<b>61</b>
<b>Website Email Addresses</b> .....	<b>61</b>

# WHO WE ARE

In 2013, the Mancos School District, the Town of Mancos, Tri-County Head Start, and the Southwest Colorado Small Business Development Center collaborated to bring the Mancos Early Learning Center to fruition to meet community needs regarding high-quality learning experiences for children.

Welcome to Mancos Early Learning Center where we are committed to children's growth and development! Our staff honors the uniqueness of each child. We encourage growth and learning through play to bring wonder and discovery to our children. We believe this component is critical to children's academic success in the future. Our staff connects with each child to foster learning, a strong sense of self, and a connection to others. Our approach:

- Develops lifelong learners
- Creates caretakers of one another and themselves and their environment
- Grows collaborators and innovators.

We have an extremely dedicated and highly-qualified staff that shares best instructional practices and supports students' growth at all levels of need.

# MANCOS SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Vision

Every student will graduate with a broad academic foundation which enables each to demonstrate the skills of critical thinking, problem solving, team work and independent judgment. All students will understand democratic principles and recognize their civic responsibilities, and will be capable of ambitiously and appropriately participating in an age of dynamic technological change within a global context.

## Mission

In partnership with our community, we will foster safe, positive and rigorous learning experiences.



# MANCOS EARLY LEARNING CENTER

## Philosophy

At MELC we believe young children learn to make sense of their world through play, exploration, inquiry, collaboration, and interaction with others including peers, teachers, families, and their community. Time and space for unstructured play provide children opportunities to practice regulating their emotions and further develop their social and cognitive skills while helping them to gain self-confidence.

The culture and environment at the MELC are inclusive and respectful of all and encourage the expression of self and family. We value family partnerships and community connections and work closely to provide an enriched environment for children to flourish and learn. Integrated learning between children, families, community members, and teachers, forms trust and connections that create a community of lifelong learners.

## Purpose

Our purpose is to provide a high-quality early education program to children 3-5 years of age and their families in our community. The program is open to all children with no discrimination for race, color, or ethnic origin. An integrated early intervention program is available to provide a positive and secure environment for developing growth in all areas of early childhood. Children with special needs of the appropriate age are accepted into our program. The curriculum will be modified as needed to meet individual learning development.

# VALUES

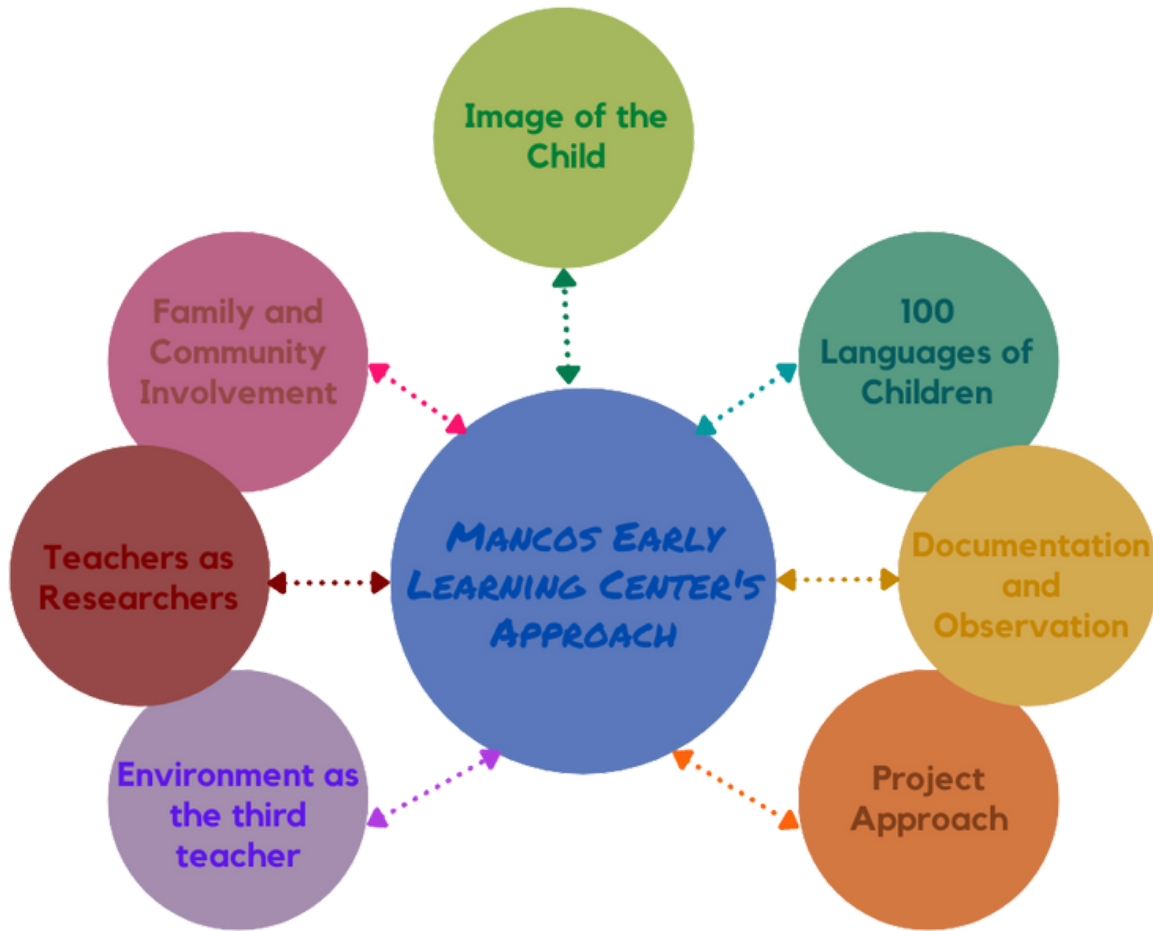
Mancos Early Learning Center aims to create a school culture built on the love of learning. As a united school community, treating each other in a friendly and courteous way sustains the positive school culture of the Mancos School District. We work to foster a community characterized by trust, dignity, love, and justice with our children and families, our staff members, and other community partners on campus and beyond. These values are the foundation to the MELC culture.

- **Value diversity, equity, and inclusion**
- **Operate with integrity**
- **Growth mentality**
- **Strive for excellence**
- **Collaborate through innovation**

## Theory

Quality early childhood programs are created and implemented by adopting and adapting evidenced-based early childhood developmental and educational theories. MELC continuously strives to improve program quality and child outcomes by bringing early childhood theoretical approaches to life. These approaches inform us about best practices for serving our community.

# Approach



Our approach is a child-centered using self-directed, experiential learning in a relationship-driven environments. It is based on the principles of respect, responsibility and community through exploration, discovery and play.

Children form their own personality during the early years of development and they are endowed with "a hundred languages", through which they can express their ideas. As a staff, we use self assessment and the reflective practice process to address areas needing improvement, establish goals, adapt, change, and implement supportive and developmentally appropriate early childhood practices.

# Children with Special Needs

The learning activities that help maximize the development of preschoolers with disabilities or special needs are little or no different from activities designed for children who do not have disabilities or special needs. There are, however, adaptations to the environment that may be necessary for some children with physical, emotional, or sensory impairments that help them achieve autonomy and successful experiences. Children with identified special needs have an *Individualized Education Plan* (IEP). These plans outline specific services from which the child will benefit. We will work with you to plan a supportive environment for your child's success.

# Screening and Assessment Process

(a) Screening. (1) In collaboration with each child's parent and with parental consent, a program must complete or obtain a current developmental screening to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills within 45 calendar days of when the child first attends the program or, for the home-based program option, receives a home visit. A program that operates for 90 days or less must complete or obtain a current developmental screening within 30 calendar days of when the child first attends the program.

(2) A program must use one or more research-based developmental standardized screening tools to complete the screening. A program must use as part of the screening additional information from family members, teachers, and relevant staff familiar with the child's typical behavior.

(3) If warranted through screening and additional relevant information and with direct guidance from a mental health or child development professional a program must, with the parent's consent, promptly and appropriately address any needs identified through:

(i) Referral to the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA for a formal evaluation to assess the child's eligibility for services under IDEA as soon as possible, and not to exceed timelines required under IDEA; and,

(ii) Partnership with the child's parents and the relevant local agency to support families through the formal evaluation process.

(4) If a child is determined to be eligible for services under IDEA, the program must partner with parents and the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA, as appropriate, and deliver the services in subpart F of this part.

(5) If, after the formal evaluation described in paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section, the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA determines the child is not eligible for early intervention or special education and related services under IDEA, the program must:

# Screening and Assessment Process

(3) If warranted from the information gathered from paragraphs (b)(1) and (2) of this section and with direct guidance from a mental health or child development professional and a parent's consent, a program must refer the child to the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA for a formal evaluation to assess a child's eligibility for services under IDEA.

(c) Characteristics of screenings and assessments. (1) Screenings and assessments must be valid and reliable for the population and purpose for which they will be used, including by being conducted by qualified and trained personnel, and being age, developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and appropriate for children with disabilities, as needed.

(2) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English, a program must use qualified bilingual staff, contractor, or consultant to:

(i) Assess language skills in English and in the child's home language, to assess both the child's progress in the home language and in English language acquisition;

(ii) Conduct screenings and assessments for domains other than language skills in the language or languages that best capture the child's development and skills in the specific domain; and,

(iii) Ensure those conducting the screening or assessment know and understand the child's language and culture and have sufficient skill level in the child's home language to accurately administer the screening or assessment and to record and understand the child's responses, interactions, and communications.

(3) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English and qualified bilingual staff, contractors, or consultants are not able to conduct screenings and assessments, a program must use an interpreter in conjunction with a qualified staff person to conduct screenings and assessments as described in paragraphs (2)(i) through (iii) of this section.

# Screening and Assessment Process

(4) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English and can demonstrate that there is not a qualified bilingual staff person or interpreter, then screenings and assessments may be conducted in English. In such a case, a program must also gather and use other information, including structured observations over time and information gathered in a child's home language from the family, for use in evaluating the child's development and progress.

(d) Prohibitions on use of screening and assessment data. The use of screening and assessment items and data on any screening or assessment authorized under this subchapter by any agent of the federal government is prohibited for the purposes of ranking, comparing, or otherwise evaluating individual children for purposes other than research, training, or technical assistance, and is prohibited for the purposes of providing rewards or sanctions for individual children or staff. A program must not use screening or assessments to exclude children from enrollment or participation.

# San Juan BOCES

The **San Juan BOCES** is the Administrative Unit for Special Education in our 8 member public school districts. We provide specialized services and support to schools to ensure that all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

## **Early Childhood Programs**

Committed to ensuring that children with special needs are identified, evaluated, and appropriately served in Southwestern Colorado.

## **San Juan BOCES Child Find**

701 Camino Del Rio

Suite 221

Durango, CO 81301

(970) 946-5253

(970) 403-1748 fax

[childfind@sjboces.org](mailto:childfind@sjboces.org)

The first five years of your child's development are crucial. The Child Find Team at San Juan BOCES is available to provide FREE screenings and evaluations for children birth to 5 years of age who are suspected of having a developmental delay or disability. These screenings can answer many questions about your child's development, and are intended to identify children who may need extra support.

The Child Find Team includes:

- Early Childhood Special Educators
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Speech/Language Pathologists
- School Psychologists
- School Social Workers



# San Juan BOCES

## F.A.Q.s

How do I decide if my child should be seen?

Child Find provides developmental assessments for young children (birth through 5 years of age) for whom there may be a question of a developmental delay.

Do you have concerns about:

- How your child's speech is developing?
- How your child is learning?
- How your child sees or hears?
- How your child plays/interacts with other children?
- How your child moves his/her body and/or uses his/her hands for daily tasks?
- How your child reacts to difficult situations or transitions?

If you answered "Yes" to any of the above questions, you can call to request a FREE screening or additional information from the Child Find Coordinator.

How much does a Child Find assessment cost?

Child Find is a FREE service to the public and is funded by your tax dollars.

How do I contact Child Find?

If your child is birth to 3 years of age, contact Community Connections at (970) 259-2464.

Website: <https://www.communityconnectionsco.org>

Community Connections supports kids and families in Montezuma, Dolores, La Plata, Archuleta and San Juan counties through Early Intervention programs: San Juan Kids and Southwest Kids; and through a Family Support Services Program. Community Connections holds evaluations and children receive an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), with services generally received in the home setting.

If your child is 3 to 5 years of age, contact San Juan BOCES Child Find at (970) 247-3261, Ext 360

Eligible children receive an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and most children receive their services within a preschool setting with their same age peers.

# PARENT/ GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## **As a MELC parent/ guardian, you have the right to:**

- Have your culture, beliefs, concerns, and values welcomed, appreciated, respected, and reflected in your child's program.
- Receive information about all aspects of the program communicated to you in a language you can understand.
- Visit or observe your child in the school environment.
- Ask questions of and give feedback to staff members.
- Confidentiality in matters involving the welfare of every child and family in accordance with program policies and the law.
- Be notified of significant changes in staff within 48 hours.
- Be notified of policy and procedural changes within 48 hours.

# PARENT/ GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**As a MELC parent/ guardian, you have the responsibility to:**

- Understand this handbook and adhere to its guidelines and procedures.
- Ensure that MELC has current emergency contact information.
- Keep your child's immunization and well-child exam records current. Disclose essential information about the care of your child with the staff.
- Respect, approach, and dialogue with staff as professionals who work with you to provide a quality early childhood education program.
- Respect the diversity, culture, and language of all children, families, and staff in the MELC community.
- Raise issues promptly and directly, seeking mutually agreeable solutions that honor the needs of the organization and your family.
- Participate in goal setting as well as family-staff conferences, family meetings, play dates with teachers, and other activities as necessary to individualize a plan for your child.
- Maintain 85% attendance.
- Bring your child to school on time. It is important to ensure your child participates in ALL activities, including breakfast and lunch.
- Discuss ahead of time with staff any adjustments that need to be made for your child's participation in the daily routines such as appointments.
- Pick your child up on time. Routines are important for your child and staff.
- Keep your child safe and under your direct supervision while in your care at school, especially during drop-off and pick-up. Proximity ensures your child's safety and builds school readiness skills as they learn to stay close to their caregiver.

# SERVICES

## Child Development

We individualize your child's learning to support inclusion and make special adaptations based on needs. Ongoing observations and assessments are used on a regular basis to assist families and staff in supporting children and setting goals. Services available to all enrolled children include developmental screening and identifying special needs, assisting in referrals for evaluation, and helping you receive services that are indicated as needed during the evaluation process. You or your child's teacher may request a referral to receive additional services from specialists.

## Family Partnerships

Your child's teacher will collaborate with you to identify family goals and work to connect you to available resources and services to support your goals. Referrals can be made to agencies such as those offering childcare, emergency assistance, intervention services, continuing education, job training, and employment services. In addition, MELC offers educational workshops, parent and nutrition classes as well as themed family nights throughout the school year to support your family goals.

## Community Partnerships

We partner with many community agencies to provide resources such as health care, mental health services, nutrition, training and education, cultural events, and learning activities at school and home.

## Program Options

### **Full Day (Children 3-5)**

Children attend school for a Full Day from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

### **Half Day (Children 3-5)**

Children attend school for a Full Day from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

### **Morning or Afternoon Program (Children 3-5)**

The morning program runs from 8:00-11:30 am. The afternoon program runs from 12:30-4:00 pm. Teachers hold two "play dates with a teacher" and two family conferences per year for each program.

# PLAY-BASED CURRICULUM

## School-based curriculum

Our play-based curriculum is guided by current child development theory and developmentally appropriate practices. We follow the *Colorado Department of Education* (CDE) standards, the *Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines*, as well as the *National Association for the Education of Young Children* (NAEYC) guidelines. We use the *Creative Curriculum* and other inquiry-based, child-led programs that nurture self-expression, creativity, and problem-solving.

The *Creative Curriculum* has five components: 1) How children develop and learn, 2) How the classroom is set up, 3) What children learn (activities and experiences), 4) How teachers will care for and teach children, and 5) Partnerships with parents in working with their children. This is all designed and based on sound research and theory in early childhood development.

MELC also uses the *Reggio Emilia-inspired* approach to deliver the curriculum. This approach is based on fundamental values about how children learn. Children are active and competent participants in constructing their learning as they interact with the environment. The teachers learn along with children and guide them in documenting their learning making it visible to others. The classroom environment is considered the "third teacher" and includes many authentic and natural materials for children to use in representing concepts. This supports Project-based learning which is guided by the interest of children. Teachers facilitate rich investigations about the topic that include real experiences. Children document their learning through writing, drawing, photography, and designing models with natural materials.

In harmony with the above approach, MELC also uses Project Based Learning to nurture growth and development. In PBL, young children take an active role in their learning, developing key knowledge and skills that lead them to become more independent and collaborative. PBL empowers students to learn and discover fundamental lessons about themselves and the world around them.

# Ongoing Authentic Assessment

The *Creative Curriculum* is part of an integrated system of curriculum and assessment. The assessment system is called *Teaching Strategies GOLD*. All children moving on to kindergarten the following school year as well as children with an IEP and those enrolled in Head Start or the Colorado Preschool Program are assessed using this tool on an ongoing basis through observations in the classroom and at home. The data that is generated through these observations are used to plan for individualized instruction and support school readiness for each child.

## Organization of the Classrooms at MELC

**# of Adults to Children**

**1:8**

**Max # of Children**

**16**

All classrooms feature high-quality learning environments to help your child develop skills to reach individualized lesson plan goals.

## The Staff

We are committed to recruiting highly qualified staff who reflect the demographics of the children and families we serve. There is ongoing training throughout the year for all teachers to link research with their knowledge of best practices in the early childhood field. Staff is trained in First Aid, CPR, Universal Precautions, and other state licensing requirements. A criminal record check by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation and Federal Bureau of Investigation is obtained by the Mancos School District.

# GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Child behavior *is* a form of communication. Our goal is to teach children to become conscious of hurtful behavior patterns and find respectful ways to get their needs met. We teach these skills through a positive approach built on empathetic and loving relationships. This requires our teachers to have an understanding of child development, the framework on which to build higher-order thinking, and how to individualize curriculum plans.

MELC uses an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach called Conscious Discipline. This curriculum empowers the adult with the self-awareness, brain information, developmental knowledge, and useable skills necessary to create safe, connected, problem-solving homes and schools. This approach may look very different from the discipline approaches you experienced in school.

We focus on:

- Teaching children the social-emotional and communication skills necessary to manage themselves, resolve conflict, prevent bullying, and promote pro-social behaviors.
- Creating a School Family that builds connections between families and schools, teachers and teachers, teachers and students, and students and students.
- Nurturing a sense of belonging is key to fostering children's willingness to learn, wiring the brain for impulse control and self-regulation, and reducing stress while sustaining attention.
- Empowering teachers to consciously respond to daily conflict and transform it into an opportunity to teach critical life skills to children.
- Construct routines, rituals, and structures that leave coercion, fear, and external rewards behind, and encourage intrinsic motivation, helpfulness, problem-solving, and connections.

We **do not** withhold, deny, or force food or rest, punish children for toileting accidents, corporal or harsh punishment, time-outs, restraints, or fear-based discipline. MELC complies with Head Start rules and regulations which state, "A program must prohibit or severely limit the use of suspension due to a child's behavior. Such suspensions may only be temporary in nature. A program cannot expel or unenroll a child from Heat Start because of a child's behavior."

# GUIDANCE FOR FAMILIES

We need YOU! You are your child's first and primary teacher. Research has shown that caregiver involvement goes hand in hand with children's success in school. We encourage you, your child, and our staff to communicate with one another openly about the goals we are working on in the school. If your child has a difficult day, we invite you to speak with your child, the teacher, or another staff member or specialist to engage in critical thinking and problem-solving about strategies for creating a supportive School Family.

There are times when we will work with families to create a child's positive behavior support plan which is intentionally designed to extend beyond the school day. This type of plan may include specific strategies for parents/ guardians to address significant and repetitive behaviors that raise safety concerns.

Examples of behaviors that benefit from this type of plan include:

- Fighting, hitting, biting, or physical aggression
- Taking or damaging school property
- Using abusive language/ gestures
- Leaving the classroom or playground without permission
- Throwing objects, tipping over shelving

We look forward to working as a team with each of our families to support all students in developing the communication and social-emotional skills necessary to build cooperation, engage in constructive problem-solving, and achieve academic success.

# FAMILIES IN THE PROGRAM

Your participation in MELC is highly valued and supports our school community. We ask that you make a commitment to volunteer at least 4 hours of time spread throughout the school year. There are many options to share your time and talents that benefit the program and children. Talk with your child's teacher, the administrative assistant, or the Program Director about volunteer opportunities that would be meaningful for you



# FAMILIES IN THE PROGRAM

## Play Dates with Teachers

All families are expected to participate in "Play dates with Teachers." These take place before school starts and at the end of the school year and are held outside of the school setting either at the park, your home, or the Mancos Public Library. The purpose is to engage with you and your child outside of the school setting to begin building relationships that support your child's learning development. We use this time to get to know you and your child and understand the goals you and your family have for your child throughout the school year.

## Family-Staff Conferences

All families are expected to participate in two family-staff conferences per year as well as ongoing communication with your child's teacher. More information regarding the dates of parent/teacher conferences can be found on the website, school calendar, or in the newsletter. We encourage you to set up a conference with your teacher at any time you have questions or concerns.

## Parent Committee

The MELC Parent Committee meets monthly or at least 6 times per year after school to improve program practices. Parents are welcome and encouraged to participate, share fresh ideas for the center, set future goals, hold fundraisers and support the staff and children's needs throughout the year. This committee is a key component in monitoring and improving program quality.

## Parent Surveys

We use surveys to guide our practices to ensure that we as partners (the program and families) are supporting children's growth and development. These go out throughout the year.

# FAMILIES IN THE PROGRAM

## Kid's Corner and Family Communication

We send out a monthly newsletter through email with important dates, community information, and events as well as updates on what your child is learning throughout the month. Paper copies can be provided upon request. Additionally, your child's classroom has a folder dedicated to each child that contains information important to your child and your family. Teachers may also use other methods such as email or a classroom app to maintain open communication.

## Educational Opportunities for Parents

MELC offers workshops and training activities throughout the year in which you can participate. These opportunities can teach new skills and provide information about interesting, useful subjects.

## Lending Library

We partner with the Mancos Public Library to provide parent resources which can be checked out in the office. Books may be checked out at any time, and this includes children's books as well as other materials used in the program such as toys or other classroom items. There are often free items in the lobby as well.

## Family Nights or Events

MELC hosts several family nights or events throughout the school year to promote school and family connections as well as connect families. These events are intended to be engaging and include dinner for all participants.

# FAMILIES IN THE PROGRAM

## Breastfeeding Parents

We support and encourage mothers to breastfeed. The main office can be used for privacy for use when needed.

## Transition from Home to MELC

Play Dates with a Teacher are a great way to help the transition from home to preschool. The play dates happen before school begins and take place at the park, the library, or your home. This introduction in an environment out of the school setting is a way to begin building relationships as well as discuss goals you have for your family and your child. We have an open house before school begins to explore the school environment. Additionally, MELC uses a staggered start the first week of school with children attending either Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, and then all children together on Thursday.

## Transition from another program to MELC

The Play Dates with a Teacher offer an introduction to an environment outside of the school setting. This begins the foundation of building the relationship between you and the teacher and the child and the teacher. It is also an opportunity for you to share with the teacher what your child enjoyed about the previous school experience. The open house and staggered start can support the transition into MELC.

# FAMILIES IN THE PROGRAM

## Transition from Classroom to Classroom

MELC values continuity of care where children remain with the same peers and teachers. However, there are occasions where it is necessary to transition a child from one classroom to another classroom at MELC to support adult/ child ratios, staffing constraints, or other reasons for the transition. This will be discussed with families before any change is made, and staff will work to ensure the transition is smooth.

## Transition from MELC to Kindergarten

In May, kindergarten teachers at MELC observe the incoming kindergarten students that will be in their classrooms. This time provides them information on how students operate in the school setting. MELC students also spend time in the kindergarten classrooms including specials: P.E., art, music, and library and eat lunch in the cafeteria. The kindergarten hold an open house in May for families to learn what to expect when beginning kindergarten. Additionally, following the end of the school year, there is a seven-day summer school session for incoming kindergarteners. from 8:30-11:30 am. This is a time when students are introduced to the way things operate in kindergarten. They learn about the classroom routines and where things are located in the elementary school. Teachers are also able to get to know their new students, which makes the first day of school in August a special day.

# GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

## Enrollment

All applications and enrollment forms must be completed and returned to the office before your child is admitted to the center. Enrollment is held in the spring and fall. We offer funding through our community partners; Tri-County Head Start, Montezuma CCCAP, Colorado Preschool Program, and disability services through San Juan BOCES. Funding requirements vary depending on the child's and family's individual needs. Priority is given to the highest-need families first and all others that qualify after. We do offer tuition-only slots as well.

- Children must be 3 years old by 8/31/2023 to enroll
- We require a copy of your child's Certified Birth Certificate
- Updated Immunization Records or an Exemption Form
- Your child's most recent Well Check or Physical Exam
- Court Documents regarding Guardianship, restraining orders, etc.
- In-District children are given priority, if those are not filled then out-of-district children will be granted a spot after approval by the Director.
- Students are assigned to a room to ensure continuity of care. The primary staff remains in the same rooms to instill familiarity and a sense of safety in the children. Returning students typically remain a second year with the same staff to promote a strong emotional bond with both the child and parents. Changes can be made if in the child's best interest.
- If our building is full, your child will be added to the waitlist. Those first on the list have the opportunity to fill the spot first and we will go down the list until the spot(s) have been filled.

## Tuition

Deposit: \$350 at Enrollment for August coverage (4 Full Days)

Deposit: \$125 at Enrollment for August coverage (4 Half Days)

4 Full Days: \$700 per month

4 Half Days: \$350 per month

Tuition will be due the first of each month. Tuition that is 90 days past due is subject to a late fee. We reserve the right to adjust a child's schedule.

# GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

## **Confidentiality**

Information regarding MELC families is kept confidential within the program. Information is shared on a need-to-know basis with professionals who provide child and family services to ensure the safety of children enrolled in the program. Information is shared with outside providers only with appropriate authorization.

## **Communication**

Effective communication with children and families is central to the program's core beliefs. MELC ensures that both English-speaking and non-English-speaking families receive quality, culturally relevant services. Bilingual staff is available at the Mancos School District. If a bilingual staff person is not available in the family's native language, MELC will utilize contract interpreters or technology support. Friends and family members will only be used as interpreters at the request of the family. Requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Every effort will be made to provide an education staff person that speaks the language of your child. Where education staff is not available in your child's native language, a variety of teaching strategies and techniques in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) will be used to support children's learning, creativity, language, literacy, and numeracy skills. Classroom environments reflect the community and the culture, language, and ethnicity of the children and families.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

(Mancos School District RE-6) - Any school or employee who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a student has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the student being subjected to circumstances, or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, as defined by statute, shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the appropriate county department of social services or local law enforcement agency and report any abuse or neglect immediately to the director. The director and/or staff member is responsible to report this to the appropriate authorities.

# GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

## **Grievance and Problem-Solving Process**

Families should feel free to discuss any school-related concerns with teachers as most issues can be resolved at this level. If an issue cannot be resolved, parents are encouraged to take the concern to the Director. Grievance and problem-solving discussions will be documented. If an issue cannot be resolved at that level, families are encouraged to take the concern to the Superintendent of Mancos School District. Please refer to the Important Numbers section for contact information.

## **Filing a complaint concerning Licensing Violations: Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Policy AC, AC-R, and AC-E**

In compliance with Titles VI & VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 19167, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, and Colorado law, the Mancos School District Re-6 does not unlawfully discriminate based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientations, genetic information, disability or need for special education services in admissions, access to, treatment, or employment in educational programs or activities which it operates.

Complaint procedures have been established for students, parents, employees, and members of the public. The following person(s) have been identified as the compliance officer for the District:

### **Superintendent: Todd Cordrey**

tcordrey@mancosre6.edu (970) 533-7748

### **Licensing Specialist: Amy Davlin**

Officer of Early Childhood - Division of Early Care & Learning Licensing Specialist

1575 Sherman Street Denver, CO 80203

Amy.Davlin@state.co.us (970) 556-1987

# GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

## Weather Delays & Closures

Please dress your child appropriately for weather conditions as we go outside for good health benefits daily. A sweater, jacket, or coat must be provided for outdoor play in cooler weather. A coat, gloves, hat, snow pants, and snow boots are necessary if your child is to be allowed to play in the snow.

Cancellations and delay information will be sent to all parents through our Power Announcement System (phone call, email, and text), announced on the website and local TV and radio stations. **You must make sure your phone number and email are updated so you can receive alerts.** All school closures and all practices and other events are canceled when a school cancellation is reported. If School is delayed: You may also check on the local radio and TV stations as well as on the School Website.

### 2-Hour Delay

Bus Routes: 2 hours later than the regular pick-up time.

Elementary Morning Library 9:40 am

Staff Reports 9:40 am

Preschool Starts: 10:00 am

Elementary Starts: 10:00 am

Secondary Schools Start: 10:00 am

Preschool Ends: 3:45 pm

Elementary School Ends: 4:00 pm

Secondary Schools Ends: 4:00



# GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

## **Transportation**

At this time Mancos School District RE-6 will not be providing transportation to and from school for preschoolers. The new law, enacted on August 1st, 2010, requires all children under 8 years of age to be properly protected in a child safety seat when traveling in a motor vehicle. The staff cannot allow your child to leave the center without proper car seat safety. Please review Colorado's Child Passenger Safety Law handout to make sure your child is in the proper car seat for their size and age.

## **Media**

Computer technology may be used in classrooms and limited to two 15-minute timers per day, not exceeding 30 minutes. Children with personal adaptive technology are allowed to use this. Media is age appropriate. Music is played on classroom devices.

## **Classroom Closing Procedures**

Child attendance is tracked and documented daily. At school closing (4:00 pm), every classroom, closet, bathroom, hallway, and playground are checked to guarantee all children are safely out of the building. Staff confirms all children are gone before leaving the school

## **Volunteers**

MELC values the participation of families and community members. Importantly, the use of volunteers assists MELC in meeting its required match for funding through the monetary value of volunteer time, donations, and gifts. We welcome visitors to our program; all visitors must sign in at the office before going into a classroom. Volunteers must be 18 years of age. A visitor's log, including name, date, time in and out, and reason for the visit is maintained. Due to the Division of Child Care Rules and Regulations, we are not allowed to have siblings or other children at the Center during class times.

## **Watch DOGS**

This is a program for dads and father figures to get more involved by volunteering a day to spend at the school. As a Watch DOG, you will spend your day throughout the preschool and elementary campus (if you have elementary students as well). The Mancos School District hosts Donuts for Dads and a Pizza Night for time with their children. Let the office know if you are interested.

# Holiday and Celebration Guidance

MELC is interested in facilitating meaningful experiences for children. Children will be encouraged to share meaningful experiences from their family traditions with the class. Conversations about the diversity of cultures will be encouraged and will be included as part of our inclusive curriculum and program. Your child's teacher will reach out to you to know more about your family's traditions. Multicultural experiences should not be limited to a celebration of holidays and should include food, music, families, shelter, and other aspects common to all cultures.

## Definitions

- **Holiday:** a day fixed by law or cultural custom on which traditions or activities are celebrated in honor of an event or person.
- **Tradition:** a handing down of cultural statements, beliefs, legends, customs, or information from generation to generation, especially by word of mouth or practice.
- **Celebration:** to observe a day or event with ceremonies of respect, festivity, or rejoicing.

## Holiday and Celebration Philosophy

- To be responsive to cultural diversity
- To promote activities that are appropriate to a child's level of development
- To affirm the parents' contribution to their child's education
- To support families in decreasing holiday stress and depression

# Holiday and Celebration Guidance

## Guidance for Holiday Recognition

Learning about cultures in school can broaden children's awareness of their own and others' cultural experiences if they are thoughtfully used as part of an inclusive curriculum about cultural diversity. Activities on a holiday should not be a child's first introduction to a culture. First, children need to understand who people are and what their daily lives are like to have a better understanding of the holiday. We support representing cultures and diversity throughout the year and not just on special holidays. In classrooms and curriculum, children and parents should be able to observe some of the following:

- Pictures of all types of families
- Books from different cultures
- Dolls that represent different ethnicities
- Music from different cultures

Guidance from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

- Families and program staff ask themselves why children should learn about this holiday. Is it developmentally appropriate for those in the group? Why is it important for specific children and families?
- Activities are connected to specific children and families in the group. This linking helps children understand holiday activities in the context of people's daily lives. Children should have the chance to explore the meaning and significance of each holiday.

# Holiday and Celebration Guidance

## Guidance for Holiday Recognition

Guidance from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

- Both children and staff honor every group represented in the classroom. This respect does not require that every holiday of every group must be celebrated: otherwise, classrooms would be celebrating all the time. It does require, however, that none should be treated as though they were "unusual." Children should recognize that everyone's holidays are culturally significant.
- Activities demonstrate the fact that not everyone in the same ethnic group celebrates holidays in the same way. Families may provide examples of their unique traditions.
- Families and program staff work together to plan strategies for children whose families' beliefs do not permit participation in holiday celebrations. Families should take part in creating satisfactory alternatives for the child within the classroom.
- The focus is on meaningful ways to celebrate holidays without spending money. Families find certain holidays stressful because of the amount of commercialization and media pressure to buy gifts. Teachers can help by showing children that homemade costumes and gifts are very special and that celebrating can be joyful without gifts.

# Holiday and Celebration Guidance

## Guidance for Birthday Recognition

To make birthdays special for children celebrating a birthday and at the same time respecting children who do not celebrate, the below will guide celebrations:

- Teachers learn about the children's and the family's beliefs regarding birthday celebrations during the first "Play date with a teacher" and use this information to help all children feel special, regardless of their cultural beliefs.
- Teachers will honor your child's special day with traditions other than the use of food (a special crown, a button, etc.).
- Teachers will plan developmentally appropriate ways for classmates to honor their friends without excluding anyone (letter or card made by classmates).

## Guidance for Kindergarten Transition Celebration

MELC's year-end transition celebration is designed to honor the completion of a child's educational experience through developmentally appropriate activities. Activities planned with the children, families, and staff should focus on the transition through the eyes of the child. These activities should help the child and the parent feel good about the child's growth and development. Young children's needs are better met in small informal group activities rather than staged events. Expectations for children must be realistic.

# ARRIVING AT THE SCHOOL

## Hours of Operation

The core operational hours for MELC are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Thursday. The building is secured, and entry requires being buzzed in.

## Drop Off and Pick Up Time

Families should bring their children to school on time. It is important to ensure your child participates in ALL the activities, including breakfast and lunch. Pick up your child on time. Routines are important for your child and the school.

It is our policy that children be present no later than 9:00 am and picked up no later than 4:00 pm unless it has been pre-arranged with staff due to an appointment, or other unforeseen circumstances. Please keep in mind that it is difficult for one child to arrive later than other children after school has begun.

We understand that life happens and ask that you let us know if you are running late. If this is a continuous event, your child's teacher will meet with you. After that, the Director will set up a conference with the family. If your child is left at the Center after hours, we will try to get a hold of the parent/guardian and then will begin calling people on the Emergency Contact List, before being reported to the Director.

Staff is required to sign children in and out daily. ID is required at any time when picking up children. Please notify anyone on your Emergency Contact form that ID is REQUIRED before your child leaves the Center. **We will NOT release your child to anyone that is NOT listed on your Emergency Contact Form.**

# ABSENCES

Refer to our illness policy in this handbook for special guidelines on when you should your child home from school. As part of School Readiness, it is important that your child attends school, play dates with a teacher, and socialize regularly. Families need to notify MELC if their child will be absent from class or miss a play date with a teacher. Families should inform MELC if there are family emergencies or vacations. Excused absences include cultural/ religious observances and child illness. When there is an unexplained absence or reasons to be concerned about the child, parents or guardians will be called to determine the reason the child was absent and be offered any assistance needed.

MELC will consider the child as resigned when one or more of the following occur:

- A family voluntarily withdraws a child from the program.
- The family moves outside of MELC's service area.
- The family does not bring their child to school ten consecutive days after completion of the Attendance Plan of Action, and continued efforts to work with the family to remove barriers.

# DEPARTING THE SCHOOL

## What to Do when Leaving for the Day

- Be buzzed in by the office.
- Collect your child's belongings.
- Check your child's folder from communication from the staff.

## Authorized Pick Up

Staff is required to sign children in and out daily. ID is required at any time when picking up children. Notify anyone on your Emergency Contact form that ID is REQUIRED before your child leaves the Center. **We will NOT release your child to anyone that is NOT listed on your Emergency Contact Form.**

## Important Note

The school must have legal documentation in your child's file stating custody guidelines when families have specific legal custodial arrangements (e.g., custody and restraining orders, court orders). Only in an emergency can a parent/ guardian verbally authorize a person to pick-up who is not designated on the pick-up form.

## Late Child Pick Up

We understand that life happens and ask that you let us know if you are running late. If this is a continuous event, your child's teacher will meet with you. After that, the Director will set up a conference with the family. If your child is left at the Center after hours, we will try to get a hold of the parent/guardian and then will begin calling people on the Emergency Contact List, before being reported to the Director.

## Information Changes and Withdrawal

Parents/Guardians are expected to keep the child and family information correct and updated with the office. When a student is withdrawn from, a parent/guardian must sign a withdrawn form from the office for the child's file stating the child's last day of attendance and the reason for withdrawal.



# Your Child's Safety

Your child's health and safety are the primary focus of MELC staff. The following are procedures for ensuring and protecting the health and safety of your child in school throughout the course of the day.

- The main entrance is locked and you must be buzzed in to enter the school.
- Staff greet you at arrival and /or departure, and staff sign students in and out for the day.
- If there is reasonable suspicion that the adult designated to pick up your child is impaired by drug or alcohol use, your child will not be released in their care. The next prioritized person on your emergency contact list will be notified to pick up your child.
- Parents are responsible for supervising children at all times while the children are not in the care of MELC staff.
- Children are not to have access to technology without supervision from staff or families. All technologies are subject to filtering and monitoring procedures.

## **Procedures for Identifying Where Children are at all Times**

Active supervision of children is monitored throughout the day including when children are in the classroom, when they exit the classroom, and when they exit the school. Attendance records are kept at all times. Teachers complete face-to-name counts at each transition and at various times throughout the day. The school has a fenced-in outdoor space, and children can be seen at all times.

## **Building Security and Visitors to the School**

MELC is a secure facility and maintains a record of all visitors that includes the day, the visitors' name and phone number, and the purpose for the visit. All visitors must enter the building by being buzzed in. As an added security precaution, **DO NOT HOLD THE DOOR OPEN FOR OTHERS**. Staff will buzz people into the building.

# Your Child's Safety

## **Field Trips and Other Activities**

We take small group field trips throughout the year. Permission slips for any off-campus field trips will be sent home to each child/family and must be signed and returned one day before the trip to allow the child to attend the event. Parents will be asked to go along to lower the student/adult ratio to ensure the safety of all. Adult to child ratio on these trips is 5:1.

## **Tobacco/Drug-Free School**

To promote the general health, welfare and well-being of students and staff, smoking, chewing, or any other use of tobacco/marijuana or smokeless product by staff, students, and members of the public is prohibited on all school property. Any member of the general public considered by the superintendent or designee to be in violation of the policy will be instructed to leave school property. Disciplinary measures for students who violate this policy will include in-house detention, revocation of privileges and exclusion from extracurricular activities. Repeated violations may result in suspension from school. (Mancos School District Policy ADC)

## **No Pets**

As a consideration for allergies, please do not bring pets into the building unless it is a service animal.

# UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS AND EMERGENCIES

## **Inclement Weather**

MELC follows the decisions made by the Mancos School District about school closures.

School closure announcements are made on the following:

- Email notification
- Text notification
- Phone notification
- Social media notification

## **Emergency Procedures**

Fire, tornado, and evacuation drills are practiced monthly at the school. If there is an actual emergency, staff will guide all children to a designated safe place. Staff will account for each child and adult, and comfort and aid will be provided as needed. Families will be notified of location of their child.

## **Incident and Accident Reports**

MELC staff are responsible for prevention, non-medical first aid, documentation, and notification of any incident, accident, and/ or injury involving a child under their supervision. School staff is responsible for learning and enforcing safety procedures. This includes calling 911, if needed. The child's parents are notified of all incidents and called immediately if medical attention is needed. Referral for further non-emergency medical care should be made if needed. If the nurse determines a referral for medical care is indicated, the nurse makes the referral. Parents receive a copy of the *Incident/ Accident Report Form*.

## **School Day Illness**

When you are notified that your child is ill during the school day, you will need to make arrangements to have your child picked up within one hour.

# UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS AND EMERGENCIES

## Lost Children

MELC is committed to providing a safe environment and supervising all children enrolled in the program.

- All children must be well supervised at all times by their responsible caregiver. If you have concerns that the classroom is difficult to supervise, please discuss them with your child's teacher and/ or the Director.
- Attendance is monitored throughout the day using a name-to-face method including when children are in the classroom, when they exit the classroom and school, and when they are outside of the classroom. Staff keep attendance records at all times. MELC has a fenced-in playground, and children can be seen at all times.
- Any time an authorized adult (e.g., Nurse, disabilities staff, etc.) takes a child out of the classroom, the teacher must be notified. An adult must stay with the child at all times.
- In the unlikely event a child is unaccounted for while in our care, we will conduct an immediate search and contact the parent and authorities if needed.
- A Lost/ Missing or Abducted Student Standard Procedure is in place.

## Lost/ Missing or Abducted Child

**A child is considered lost/ missing when** a child cannot be located after they are known to have been signed into MELC. Should the child be lost or missing, the following individuals are immediately notified:

- Director
- Emergency Preparedness Team

# UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS AND EMERGENCIES

## **Lost/ Missing or Abducted Child continued**

The Director will ensure the following steps are taken:

- Conduct a thorough, immediate search of the premises, inside and outside.
- If the child is not located within a few minutes (five or less), call 911.
- Call the parent/ guardian. Inform him/ her of the circumstances; elicit information on where a child might go. Ask that someone remain at the home in case the child returns home.
- Provide a picture, if available, and full description of the student (age, height, weight, color of hair, eyes, and clothing) to assist MELC staff and police.
- Maintain classroom routine for other students.
- Ask the teacher and family about any known concerns regarding the child/ family.
- Provide support and assurance to the parents throughout the incident.
- Document all actions that are taken.
- When the student is found, contact all appropriate individuals.

**A child is considered abducted when** any person takes a student without authorization.

Should the child be taken from the school premises or on a MELC field trip without proper authorization, the following people will be notified immediately:

- 911
- Director
- Safety Director
- Superintendent

# UNEXPECTED SITUATIONS AND EMERGENCIES

## **Lost/ Missing or Abducted Child continued**

The Director will ensure the following steps are taken:

- Describe the incident and the abductor: age, height, weight, the color of hair and eyes, vehicle type, and location, if applicable.
- Conduct an immediate search of the building and grounds.
- Identify witnesses and notify police for witness questioning.
- Provide a school picture (if available) and full description of the student (age, height, weight, color of hair, eyes, and clothing) to assist the police.
- Contact the parents/ guardians of the student involved and establish a communication plan with them.
- Move other students away from the area of abduction.
- Maintain classroom routine for other students.
- Maintain a written account of the incident and actions taken.
- When a student is found, contact all appropriate individuals.

# The Food Program

## General Information

All meals at the ELC are prepared by the Mancos School District RE-6 Cafeteria and participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). If your child has a special dietary need or food allergy you MUST provide a signed doctor statement. Cold lunches are allowed-so long as they do not have to be heated or refrigerated. Refer to the Child and Adult Care Food Program for nutrition requirements. For questions, concerns or nutrition requirements or programs contact: Kacey Armes , [karmes@mancosre6.edu](mailto:karmes@mancosre6.edu), 970-533-7745.

Menus are available online at [www.mancosre6.edu](http://www.mancosre6.edu) and are also located in each classroom. Meals are served in the classrooms, encouraging good table manners and language development by the teachers modeling while they eat with the children. We provide meals for children, not only for nutrition, but also for learning opportunities. We use this time to teach, share and explore new foods. Breakfast, lunch, and snacks (afternoon) are served in the classroom. Through a grant and local donors we are able to provide fresh fruit and vegetables daily. On those special days when you would like to eat with your child, you are welcome to join in.

## Food from Home

You are welcome to pack meals for your child. For planning purposes for the Mancos School District kitchen staff, we ask that you are consistent with packing meals for your child.

**Children are not allowed to share food with each other.**

# Daily Routines

## **Rest or Quiet Time**

MELC provides a quiet rest or naptime for children during the day. Each classroom's schedule is posted in their classroom. Each child has a cot and sheet. Teaching teams encourage resting using calming and quieting techniques (e.g., soft music, dimming lights, and back rubs). Each child has his or her own special routine for relaxing. Please send a small pillow and blanket. Stuffed animals are allowed for rest time.

## **Diapering**

MELC staff is trained in proper diapering techniques that is posted in the classroom with the changing table. Universal precautions are used. These precautions, which guard against disease, require a change of disposable gloves, washing of child and caregivers hands, and sanitation of the area before and after changing of each child.

## **Toilet Training**

Staff will work with the child and family to provide guidance in toilet training. When children develop an awareness of when they are dry and when they are wet or soiled and show an interest in using the toilet, they are encouraged to sit on the toilet. Hands are always washed after using the restroom. When children experience success in using the toilet and understand the connection between body functions and the toilet, they will gradually use the toilet on their own. If a child understands and is capable but is not willing, the the child is not completely ready to learn how to use the toilet and staff will work with the family to determine when the child is ready. We ask that you provide diapers/pull-ups and clothing for accident times and make it more comfortable for your child.



# Daily Routines

## Playing Outdoors

MELC values the importance of outdoor play and spends time outdoors every day. Families are expected to dress their children appropriately for outdoor play. MELC does not have the teacher-child ration support to allow for certain children to be kept inside during scheduled outdoor play so all children will be playing outside.

Children should play outside when the conditions do not pose any concerns for health and safety such as a significant risk of frostbite or heat-related illness. Teachers must protect children from harm caused by adverse weather, ensuring that children wear appropriate clothing and/ or appropriate shelter is provided for weather conditions. Weather that poses a significant health risk includes wind chill factor below -15 degrees F and heat index at or above 90 degrees.

Outdoor play is not only an opportunity for learning and development in a different environment, it also provides many health benefits. Outdoor play allows for physical activity that supports maintenance of health, weight, and better nighttime sleep. Short exposure of the skin to sunlight promotes the production of vitamin D that growing children require.

We also engage in messy play outside of the classroom. Water and mud play are supported, so please make sure your child has extra clothes and they are dressed in clothing that you do not mind if it gets dirty.

# Monthly Routines

## **Montezuma School to Farm Garden Education Sessions**

Montezuma School to Farm has collaborated with the Mancos School District since 2011. They use AmeriCorps volunteers to educate preschool through middle school students at an in-kind garden area on campus of the Mancos School District. A typical preschool garden lesson is fifteen minutes long, once a month. They also worked extremely hard to incorporate a small garden on the North side of ELC with raised beds and seating, so preschool students will be able to engage in the garden activities more often. These lessons teach students about gardening in arid environments, planting vegetables, watering and pruning the plants as they grow, harvesting the plants, and eating them when they are ripe and ready.

## **Story Time at the Mancos Public Library**

Erin Bohm, the children's librarian at the Mancos Public Library provides the MELC classrooms with a monthly story time. Children either attend story time at the outdoor space at the library or Erin spends time in each classroom.

## **Music with Julie Hartline**

Julie visits each classroom monthly to provide interactive music experiences for the children enrolled at MELC.

# CLOTHING AND BELONGINGS FROM HOME

## **Clothing**

MELC days are filled with all kinds of hands-on learning. Children should wear simple, washable clothing, and comfortable shoes. Since our classroom extends to the outdoors, dress your child appropriately for the weather. Days at the school are sometimes messy, so bring a change of clothes for your child including pants, shirts, socks, and underwear. Make sure clothing is labeled including jackets, coats, gloves, mittens, and snow pants. Children play outside for extended period of time, sunscreen is applied to those children who have signed parent permission forms. Colorado often brings many different weather conditions in a single day. We recommend parents pack their children's backpack with extra clothes that will keep your children comfortable if the weather changes. Consider providing indoor shoes as well.

## **Children's Belongings**

MELC has individual cubbies where children store their personal belongings. Toys, candy, money, medications, lotions, creams, and other items that must not be accessible to children are not permitted. Please make sure ALL clothing and personal possessions are labeled with your child's name. Full day children will need a blanket and pillow for rest time. They can have a stuffed animal as well for rest time. All items brought to school must fit in their cubby. This helps to meet the Health Department regulations about children's belongings and placement of these items.

## **Laundry Policy**

MELC staff will be responsible for laundering sheets, blankets, and pillows routinely. Per State Health Department regulations, parents are responsible for washing wet/ and or soiled clothes. These items will be put in a marked plastic bag for parents to take home.

# PROMOTING AND PROTECTING YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

## **Administering Medication**

All medications, including ointment, pain/fever relievers, dietary supplements, or individual special medical procedures will be administered to the child only with written orders from a physician. All medication must be in the original container. Prescription medication must have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, instructions, and the name and strength of the medication. This medication will be given per those instructions. Parents are responsible for providing liquid measuring spoons for administering liquid medication.

## **Well Checks & Immunization Records**

A copy of your child's most recent well check (physical exam) is required by the State to be on file and updated yearly. All children need to be up-to-date on their immunizations. Parents have 14 days from the time the Nurse reviews records to make an appointment and get the necessary shots or their child will be excluded from school until an appointment or exemption form is signed. The Department of Social Services requires us to notify you that NOT all children attending the program may be fully immunized due to religious or other reasons. The Health Department assures us that immunized children are NOT at risk and, in the event of quarantine; the children NOT immunized will NOT BE ALLOWED to attend the program.

## **Illness at School**

If your child becomes ill or experiences vomiting, diarrhea, has a fever of 100 degrees plus, or shows signs of any other illness while attending school, you will get a call informing you to pick up your child or arrange for someone on your Emergency Contact list to come get your child.

# PROMOTING AND PROTECTING YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

## **Contagious Diseases and Illnesses**

Observation of the general health of your child will be done by the Center staff daily. If your child should develop symptoms of illness or communicable disease, the child will be isolated from the other children and a parent will be called to pick them up. Any child with vomiting, diarrhea, fever (100°) will be sent home and MUST stay home for at least 24 hours. The child is not allowed to return until all symptoms are gone WITHOUT the use of medications unless ordered by a doctor.

## **Nurse Practice Act**

For staff to give any prescription medication to your child, we are required by law to be delegated by a School Nurse to administer children's medicines in compliance with Section 12-389-132 C.R.S. of the "Nurse Practice Act."

## **Health Plans and Allergies**

Students with health issues or severe allergies will need a signed Physician's note with specific instructions. A Medical Plan will need to be implemented with the Staff and school Nurse.

## **Health Screenings**

Health and developmental screenings are required by the State and conducted early in the year. The Cortez Health Department offers free preventive dental services for PreK-12 grade. San Juan BOCES audiologists check all students' hearing with the OAE machine and the Lion's Club screens our children for vision with their PlusOptix Vision Screener. Children that do not pass hearing and vision screenings will be referred to a specialist. Health Screenings are completed within 45 days of attendance. Health Screenings can also be done for free at the Children's Festival held in July in Cortez. Contact Montelores Early Childhood Council (MECC) for additional information.

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## **Developmental Screenings**

Developmental screenings (ASQSE2 and ASQ3) are sent home and are to be completed the first 45 days after enrollment or as needed if concerns arise. A Child Find Form can be filled out and submitted to San Juan BOCES for additional services. Developmental Screenings can also be done for free at the Children's Festival held in July in Cortez. Contact Montelores Early Childhood Council (MECC) for additional information.

## **Mental Health**

We have a Behavior Specialist on staff at the Mancos School District. Contact Nicholas Loeb. [nloeb@mancosre6.edu](mailto:nloeb@mancosre6.edu)

## **Trauma Informed**

MELC staff are trained to integrate social-emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation through Conscious Discipline. This allows staff to spend less time policing behavior and more time teaching vital life skills.

# Illness Policy

## When to Keep Your Child at Home

There are four main reasons to keep children and adults at home:

1. The child or staff is at risk of infecting others with COVID-19 or another contagious illness, either because of symptoms or recent close contact.
2. The child or staff member does not feel well enough to take part in usual activities. For example, a child is overly tired, fussy or will not stop crying.
3. A child needs more care than teachers and staff can give while still caring for the other children.
4. The child or staff member has symptoms or an illness is on this list, and staying home is required.

# Illness Policy

## Guidance for COVID-19 Symptoms



Guidance for COVID-19 Symptoms	Child or staff member must stay home?
<p>COVID-19 symptoms which must be <i>fully resolved</i> before a child or staff member returns to school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feeling Feverish, having chills or Fever (Temperature of 100.4°F or greater. Babies who are 4 months or younger need to see a doctor right away for a fever of 100°F or higher)</li> <li>● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing</li> <li>● Nausea, Vomiting/Throwing Up</li> <li>● Diarrhea (Frequent, loose, or watery stools (poop) compared to normal ones that are not caused by food or medicine)</li> <li>● Cough*</li> </ul>	<p>Yes - These symptoms are often present in individuals with COVID-19 and other contagious infectious disease, and a person with any of these symptoms (whether new or worsening from baseline) should first receive a diagnostic test for COVID-19.</p> <p>When to seek emergency medical attention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Trouble breathing</li> <li>● Persistent pain or pressure in the chest</li> <li>● New confusion</li> <li>● Inability to wake or stay awake</li> <li>● Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips or nail beds, depending on skin tone</li> </ul> <p>These are not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.</p> <p>Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility. Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.</p> <p>If all symptoms are consistent with the usual symptoms of a known chronic condition and the child is otherwise well enough to return to school, no further evaluation is necessary.</p> <p>If the test is positive, or the individual has not yet been tested, the individual should follow CDPHE's isolation guidance, <a href="https://covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine">https://covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine</a>. Further guidance for the school or child care can be found at <a href="https://covid19.colorado.gov/practical-guide-for-operationalizing-cdc-school-guidance">https://covid19.colorado.gov/practical-guide-for-operationalizing-cdc-school-guidance</a>.</p> <p>If the test is negative AND the symptoms are explained by a specific illness other than COVID-19, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>If the test is negative and the illness is not explained by a new illness or a known chronic condition, the ill individual should still stay home until symptoms have been resolved for at least 24 hours without medication.</p> <p>*Students and staff may return if the cough is not fully resolved following discussion with a care provider.</p>
<p>COVID-19 symptoms which must be <i>improving</i> before a child or staff member returns to school or child care</p>	<p>Yes - These symptoms are often present in individuals with COVID-19, and a person with any of these symptoms (whether new or worsening from baseline) should receive a diagnostic test for COVID-19. If all symptoms are consistent with the usual symptoms of a known chronic condition and</p>





# Illness Policy

## Guidance for COVID-19 Symptoms



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Sore throat</li><li>● Runny nose or congestion</li><li>● Muscle or body aches</li><li>● Headache</li><li>● Fatigue</li><li>● New Loss of Taste or Smell**</li></ul>	<p>the child is otherwise well enough to return to school, no further evaluation is necessary.</p> <p>If the diagnostic COVID test is positive, or the individual has not yet been tested, the individual should follow CDPHE's isolation guidance, <a href="https://covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine">https://covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine</a>. Further guidance can be found at <a href="https://covid19.colorado.gov/practical-guide-for-operationalizing-cdc-school-guidance">https://covid19.colorado.gov/practical-guide-for-operationalizing-cdc-school-guidance</a>.</p> <p>If the diagnostic test is negative and the symptoms are explained by a specific illness other than COVID-19, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>If the COVID test is negative and the illness is not explained by a new illness or a known chronic condition, the ill individual may return to school as long as all symptoms are improving and cough, shortness of breath, fever, diarrhea and vomiting have fully resolved.</p> <p>**Loss of taste or smell can persist for weeks or months. This condition does not need to be resolved or improving before an individual returns to school or care.</p>
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# Illness Policy

## Guidance for Symptoms Not Due to a Specific Disease, Following a Negative COVID Test



Guidance for Symptoms Not Due to a Specific Disease, Following a Negative COVID Test	Child or staff must stay home?
<p><b>Diarrhea</b> Frequent, loose, or watery stools (poop) compared to normal ones that are not caused by food or medicine.</p>	<p>Yes - Unless the diarrhea is related to an existing chronic condition, is explained by a diagnosed condition not requiring the person to stay home, or is consistent with the person's baseline.</p> <p>The child or staff member may return to school or child care 24 hours after their last episode of diarrhea unless the diarrhea is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If the diarrhea is explained by a specific illness, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p>
<p><b>Fever</b> Fever is a temperature of 100.4°F or greater. Babies who are 4 months or younger need to see a doctor right away for a fever of 100°F or higher.</p>	<p>Yes - The child or staff member may return to school or child care if the fever has been resolved for 24 hours without fever reducing medications unless the fever is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If the fever is explained by a specific illness COVID-19, then the child or staff can return to school or child care following exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p>
<p><b>Flu-like Symptoms</b> Fever Sore throat Runny nose or congestion</p>	<p>Yes - Children and staff may return to school or child care as long as they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms are improving, unless the symptoms are caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If the symptoms can be explained by a specific illness, then follow the exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>In consultation with a healthcare provider, additional evaluation for flu-like illnesses, sore throat, and upper respiratory symptoms may be appropriate, including evaluation for strep throat.</p>
<p><b>Vomiting/Throwing Up</b></p>	<p>Yes - Unless the vomiting is related to an existing chronic condition or is explained by a diagnosed condition not requiring the person to stay home. If the vomiting is unexplained and inconsistent with the person's baseline state of health, the child or staff member may return 24 hours after their last episode of vomiting. If the vomiting can be explained by a specific illness, then follow the exclusion guidelines for that illness.</p> <p>If a child with a recent head injury vomits, seek medical attention.</p>

# Illness Policy

## Guidance for Specific Diagnosed Illnesses



Guidance for Specific Diagnosed Illnesses	Child or staff must stay home?
Chicken Pox	Yes - until the blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days), or in immunized people without crusting, until no lesions within 24 hour period.
Conjunctivitis (pink eye) Pink color of eye and thick yellow/green discharge	No - children and adults do not need to stay home unless they have a fever or are not able to participate in usual activities. Call your doctor for advice and possible treatment.
COVID-19 (clinical diagnosis, symptoms without testing, or a positive diagnostic test)	Yes - children and staff who have suspected COVID-19 or who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 must be excluded and follow CDPHE's <a href="#">isolation guidance</a> . Guidance for schools and child care settings can be found here: <a href="https://covid19.colorado.gov/cases-and-outbreaks-child-care-schools">https://covid19.colorado.gov/cases-and-outbreaks-child-care-schools</a> .
Fifth's Disease (parvovirus)	No - the illness is no longer contagious once the rash appears.
Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie virus)	No - unless the child or adult has mouth sores, has uncontrollable drooling or is not able to take part in usual activities.
Head Lice or Scabies	Yes - children may stay at school or child care until the end of the day but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment.
Hepatitis A, Salmonella, Shigella, or Shiga-toxin Producing E. coli	Yes - children and staff may return to school or child care when cleared by the health department.
Herpes	No - unless there are open sores that cannot be covered or there is uncontrollable drooling.
Impetigo	Yes - children and adults need to stay home until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started.
Ringworm	Yes - children may stay at school or child care until the end of the day but cannot return until after they have had the first treatment. Keep the area covered for the first 3 days if participating in activities with person to person contact.
Roseola	No - unless there is a fever or behavior changes.
Influenza	Yes - Children and staff should remain out of school or child care until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have been improving for 24 hours.
Croup, RSV (Respiratory)	No - It is recommended that children and staff remain out of school or



# Illness Policy

## Guidance for Specific Diagnosed Illnesses



Syncytial Virus)	child care until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have been improving for 24 hours.
Strep Throat	Yes - for 12 hours after starting antibiotics unless the doctor says that it is okay to return to school sooner.
Other Vaccine Preventable Diseases Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Yes - Children and staff can return to school once they are no longer contagious (see Infectious Disease Guidelines). Public health consultation may be necessary.
Yeast Infections Thrush or Candida diaper rash	No - follow good hand washing and hygiene practices.
Other Symptoms or illnesses not listed	Contact the child care center director or school health staff to see if the child or staff member needs to stay home (see Infectious Disease Guidelines).

This document was developed in collaboration with pediatricians, medical epidemiologists and public health professionals. The information presented is intended for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of your personal doctor's advice and is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information should not be used in place of a visit, call or consultation or advice of your doctor or other health care provider.

### References

American Academy of Pediatrics. *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide*. Aronson SS, Shope TR, eds. 5th ed. Itasca, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2020.20.  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. *Infectious Diseases In Child Care and School Settings: Guidelines for Child Care Providers and Health Consultants, School Nurses and Other Personnel*. 2022.  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. COVID-19 Resources. <https://covid19.colorado.gov/>. October 7, 2020.

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# Important Phone Numbers to Remember

Mancos Early Learning Center.....	970-533-1587
Mancos Early Learning Center Fax.....	970-533-9010
Mancos School District.....	970-533-7748
Mancos School District Nurse.....	970-533-7746
Cortez Dispatch.....	970-565-8441

## Website and Email Addresses

Mancos School District Website: [mancosre6.edu](http://mancosre6.edu)

Todd Cordrey: Superintendent- [tcordrey@mancosre6.edu](mailto:tcordrey@mancosre6.edu)

Sharon Martinez: District Nurse- [smartinez@mancosre6.edu](mailto:smartinez@mancosre6.edu)

Lacy Patcheck: Administrative Assistant- [gkennedy@mancosre6.edu](mailto:gkennedy@mancosre6.edu)

Tyra Hughes: Director- [thughes@mancosre6.edu](mailto:thughes@mancosre6.edu)

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