



PARENT HANDBOOK

2018-2019



Communication with GSRP Staff and Administrators

How to Effectively Communicate with GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program)

GSRP is committed to communication with parents and the community. We believe open lines of communication are essential to the educational process. Parents are advised to contact their child's teacher(s) or educator in charge of the class or program via voicemail or email when a question or concern arises.

If your child's teacher(s) does not have the ability to assist you in addressing your concerns in a satisfactory way, please follow the **communication contact ladder** below for questions or concerns. The chart also serves as a resource to parents and the community regarding communications with various departments for other concerns or questions.

District staff members will make a concerted effort to field all parent inquiries in a timely fashion (within one business day). Please note that staff members are not permitted to contact parents during instructional time and/ thereby, may not correspond to you immediately during the school day. Staff members are also not expected to check voicemail or email during evenings, school recess, or weekends. In the event of an emergency during the school day, please contact the Main Office in your assigned districts.

Contact Ladder Procedure:

First: Please contact your child's (ren) GSRP Teacher(s).

Second: If the Teacher(s) was not able to assistance you with your concerns or questions please feel free to contact program coordinator, Jumana Jondy or our GSRP early childhood specialist Heather Williamson.

Parent Handbook Table of Contents

I.	GSRP Communication Information	Pg. 2
	Philosophy Statement.....	Pg. 4
II.	Program Overview:	
	a. Curriculum- Creative Curriculum.....	Pg. 5
	b. Developmental Screening and Assessments	Pg. 5
	c. Program Evaluation	Pg. 5
	d. Staff/ Volunteer Policy	Pg. 5-6
	e. Staff Training Policy.....	Pg. 6
III.	Daily Routine Sample	Pg. 7
IV.	Parent Involvement	Pg. 8-9
	a. Home Visits	Pg. 8
	b. Parent/Teacher Conferences.....	Pg. 8
	c. Local Advisory Committee.....	Pg. 8
	d. Data Analysis Team.....	Pg. 8
	e. Great Start Readiness Program Advisory Board	Pg. 8-9
V.	Sliding Fee Scale/ Tuition.....	Pg. 10
VI.	Procedures for selection, placement and enrollment	Pg. 11
VII.	Referral policy for special needs and form	Pg. 12-14
VIII.	Confidentiality policy	Pg. 15
IX.	Weekly Schedule and Attendance policy	Pg. 15
X.	Exclusion policy	Pg. 16
XI.	Weather policy	Pg. 16
XII.	Rest time policy	Pg. 16
XIII.	Medication policy	Pg. 17
XIV.	Health policies and practices on physical activity and nutrition for children.....	Pg. 18-19
	a. Health Care plan	Pg. 18
	b. Outdoor policy	Pg. 18
	c. Wellness and Nutrition	Pg. 18
	d. Nutrition policy	Pg. 18
	e. CACFP.....	Pg. 18-19
	f. NSLP	Pg. 19
XV.	Accident and emergency policies	Pg. 19-20
	a. Illness Care plan	Pg. 20
	b. Illness/Accident Care Plan	Pg. 20
	c. Fire-drill/ lockdown policy	Pg. 21
XVI.	Child discipline/conflict resolution.....	Pg. 21
XVII.	Policy for reporting child abuse/neglect	Pg. 21
XVIII.	Child Custody Policy	Pg. 21
XIX.	Withdrawal Policy.....	Pg. 21-22
XX.	Teacher Contact Policy	Pg. 22
XXI.	Grievance Policy	Pg. 23
XXII.	Culture and Diversity in the Learning Environment	Pg. 23
XXIII.	Classroom Celebrations and Guidelines.....	Pg. 23-24
XXIV.	Hand Washing and Universal Precautions	Pg. 24- 25
XXV.	Smoking and Drug Policy	Pg. 25



Genesee County Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) Philosophy Statement

As a Michigan nationally recognized preschool program, Genesee County GSRP Programs provide developmentally appropriate learning in a safe, positive, nurturing environment; promoting social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth with creativity and language development. Teacher – Child relationships are developed and nurtured through positive interactions and experiences that foster strong self-concepts and socialization skills. Partnerships and collaborations between school, family, and community celebrate and support diversity. GSRP maintains the concept *“it takes a village to raise a child”*. Every partner brings value in the support and development of our preschool children. Families are empowered to be active participants in their child’s educational career. This creates the foundation for lifelong education that is vital in developing a child’s love for learning. Teaching teams use research-based curriculum to support each child as they make their own discoveries using a balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed approaches. Diverse opportunities are provided which support children’s instinctive curiosity and desire to play. Programs are guided through natural learning opportunities with thoughtful reflection on experiences. A child’s growth is measured through

developmental screening and on-going child observation and assessment. High quality programming is evaluated by an Early Childhood Specialist using the Program Quality Assessment (PQA). These evaluations determine program goals, benchmarks, and outcomes to guide teaching teams and families to ensure a great start.

Program Overview

A. Curriculum --- Creative Curriculum®

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool uses exploration and discovery as a way of learning, *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* enables children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. *Creative Curriculum* is based on 38 objectives for development and learning, which are fully aligned with the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten. *Creative Curriculum* presents knowledge-building volumes and daily practice resources in tandem, giving every educator the “what,” “why” and “how” of early childhood education. *Creative Curriculum* offers daily opportunities to individualize instruction, helping teachers meet the needs of every type of learner. *Creative Curriculum* addresses all the important areas of learning, from social-emotional and math to technology and the arts, and incorporates them throughout every part of everyday. *Creative Curriculum* offers daily, built-in opportunities for observation, helping teachers and administrators clearly see the strong relationship between curriculum and assessment. *Creative Curriculum* offers complete support for working with English- and dual-language learners, including detailed guidance that helps to build teachers’ knowledge about best practices. *Creative Curriculum* contains guidance for working with all learners, including advanced learners and children with disabilities.

B. Developmental Screening and Assessments

Developmental Screening is the use of a brief procedure or instrument designed to identify, from within a large population of children, those who may need further assessment to verify developmental and/or health risks. Developmental screening is standardized and surveys abilities in broad terms: large and small muscle coordination, perception, language, cognitive development, and emotional and behavioral concerns. The Great Start Readiness Program uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ III and ASQ-SE) as the programs screening tool. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire is conducted twice a year and the results are shared with families during home visits, parent teacher conferences, as considered necessary by the teaching team, and upon parental request.

Ongoing Child Assessment is a process in which the teaching staff systematically observes and record information about the child's level of development and/or knowledge, skills, and attitudes; in order to make a determination about what has been learned, improve teaching, and support children's progress. The Great Start Readiness Program child outcome data from the Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) will be assessed three times a year.

C. Program Evaluation

The GSRP program is evaluated twice a year by an Early Childhood Specialist using the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) required by the State of Michigan. The Early Childhood Specialist is employed through the **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center**

D. Staff/Volunteers Policy

The GSRP teacher is employed by the **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center**. The lead teacher is highly qualified as outlined by the Michigan Department of Education. Additionally, the Michigan Department of Human Services will screen all staff for any possible criminal or substantiated child abuse history. All staff is fingerprinted to ensure that they have no criminal history. Associate teachers must meet the requirements of the Michigan Department of Education. A staff member will not be employed if he or she has been convicted of child abuse/neglect or a felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual.

Parents and Volunteers shall not have unsupervised contact with children within the **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center** Great Start Readiness Program. Volunteers will be supervised by employed staff at all times. Volunteers must complete a volunteer application and screening process as determined by the local school district. Volunteers must **only** attend with GSRP enrolled children.

E. Staff Training Policy

Staff within the **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center** Great Start Readiness Program has current certification in infant, child, and adult CPR and First Aid. Staff complete training on blood-borne pathogens. In addition to CPR, first aid, and bloodborne pathogen training all staff complete a minimum of 24 hours of additional training each year. Training topics include child development, curriculum, child discipline, health and safety, nutrition, working with parents, and licensing rules.

Great Start Readiness Program--School Day Sample Routine

Great Start Readiness Program Schedule

8:20-8:50 Arrival/ Breakfast/ Limited Choice activity time- Children enter the room at their own pace. There will be choices set out on the table for the child to work on.

8:50-9:00 Morning Meeting- Children will be participating in calendar, letter, shape and counting activities.

9:00-9:10 Planning Time- Children indicate their plans to adults in the place where they would like to go and play during work time.

9:10-10:10 Work Time- Children's hour of uninterrupted choice time. Children always initiate activities and carry out their intentions. Children may make many choices about where and how to use materials.

10:10-10:20 Clean up and Recall Time- Children and adults clean up together. In small group settings, children reflect on, and talk about their work time choices.

10:20-10:45 Large Group

10:45-11:00 Small Group Time- Adult initiated learning experience based on children's interest and development where children explore.

11:00-11:50 Outside time/ Gym Time (weather permitting)

11:50 Read Aloud/ Wash Hands

12:00-12:35- Lunch/Brush Teeth- Lunch will be served family style. Children will choose whether to eat, what to eat and how much to eat.

12:35-1:40 Quiet/Rest Time- Children are encouraged to rest on their cots. Children who do not fall asleep are able to read books quietly on their cots.

1:40-2:30 Limited Choice Activities/ Outside (weather permitting)

2:30-2:45 Snack

2:45-3:20 Arabic- Adult initiated learning experiences based in Arabic, Learning letters, shapes, colors and numbers.

3:30 Dismissal-DOORS OPEN AT 3:35 TO ENSURE A QUICK RELEASE

Parent involvement information, including advisory committees:

Parent Involvement

Parent engagement is crucial to positive child outcomes. The GSRP program provides a variety of opportunities for parents to become involved in the program and regularly seeks input from parents. Opportunities to volunteer in the classroom, on field trips and on special occasions are open to parents. Parents also have the opportunity to participate in the Great Start Collaborative Advisory Board.

Additional information will be provided upon request:

- A. Home visits
- B. Parent Teacher Conferences

Home Visits and Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents play an integral role in their child's development. A strong partnership between staff and families is crucial to child success. Families in the GSRP program will participate in two home visits and two parent teacher conferences during the program year. Visits help maintain open communication between the staff and families. The initial home visit serves as an orientation opportunity for the child and parents and helps us get to know each other. Parent teacher conferences are held a minimum of two times throughout the program year to discuss overall development, child strengths, areas of concern, and results of assessments. Parents are provided with activities to help foster kindergarten readiness. A final home visit will summarize the child's development and transition to kindergarten.

- C. Local Advisory Committee
 - Annual orientation/training to instill confidence in parents as active group members and decision makers.
 - Includes representation from GSRP teaching staff.
 - One parent for every 18 enrolled children.

- A focus on local considerations, including recruitment/enrollment, Preschool Program Quality Assessment (PQA) results and child outcome data.
- Meets minimally twice per year.

D. Data Analysis Team

- Early Childhood Specialist (ECS) as leader.
- Made up of teaching teams, supervisor, parents, and specialists/stakeholders.
- Meets minimally 3 times each year.
- Analyze aggregated program and child outcome data by sub recipient
- Sets goals and monitors progress toward goals.
- Reports to the local GSRP Advisory Committee, school board, parents and the public.

E. Great Start Readiness Program Advisory Board

- Collaboration with and involvement of community volunteer and/or social service organizations in addressing all aspects of educational disadvantage;
- Partnership with the local GSC, Regional Resource Center, and others to build the capacity of local community agencies to take part in GSRP;
- Collaborative recruitment and enrollment process to assure that each child is enrolled in the program most appropriate to his or her needs and to maximize the use of federal, state, and local funds;
- The choice of an approved curriculum;
- Nutritional services utilizing federal, state and local food program support as applicable;
- Health and developmental screening process;
- Referrals to community social service agencies, as appropriate;
- Parent involvement;
- PQA and Child Outcome data;
- Continuous improvement efforts, and
- Transition into kindergarten.
- Work with other parents in the region.
- A focus of broad support for early childhood and school readiness.
- Includes liaison(s) to local GSRP Advisory Committees.

Sliding Fee Scale/Tuition

No fees are charged for services provided by the **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center** Great Start Readiness Program for eligible children. The Great Start Readiness Program is funded by the State of Michigan through the Michigan Department of Education.

If there are slots available and the Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center gets permission from the Michigan Department of Education to serve over income families, families will have to pay tuition for your child to attend a Great Start Readiness Program. This tuition amount is determined by a sliding fee scale which is based off of your annual income. Below you will find the guidelines to help you determine your tuition rate. Please do not make tuition payments to your child's classroom teacher. All payments need to be sent to the **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center**.

Family Size	At or Above 250-350% of Poverty Level	1/2 Day Program Annual Tuition Payment	Full Day Program Annual Tuition Payment
	Annual Income		
1	36,419 or higher	543	1087
2	49,379 or higher	543	1087
3	62,339 or higher	543	1087
4	75,299 or higher	543	1087
5	88,259 or higher	543	1087
6	101,219 or higher	543	1087
7	114,179 or higher	543	1087
8	127,139 or higher	543	1087

Procedures for selection, placement and enrollment:

For admission contact **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center Great Start Readiness Program**, please visit the website for Genesee Preschool: <http://www.GeneseePreschool.org> to see if your family qualifies according to guidelines set by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

If more families apply than there is space available, children with the greatest need (per the MDE guidelines) will be admitted first. Children with the greatest need will then subsequent openings will be filled. Children must live in Genesee County or within the boundaries of a Genesee County Local School District.

Children in the Great Start Readiness Program must be at least four years of age, and less than five years of age, by September 1, 2015. Copies of the following documents are required: birth certificate, immunization records, current health appraisal (within the last year), and proof of income. Paperwork must be provided prior to acceptance. Health appraisals must be updated annually.

Proof of Immunizations is required as follows:

A copy of your child's immunization records and any updates along with a well-child check-up form must be on file at the preschool. If your child has not yet received all required vaccinations (4DPT, 1MMR, 3 Polio, 3 Hepatitis B, HIB series, PCV series and Varicella (chicken pox), a schedule of appointments to receive age appropriate vaccinations must be provided. Failure to comply may result in the child's removal from the program. Additional items may be requested as evidence of the Michigan Department of Education's at-risk factors (i.e., proof of income, doctor's notes for health risks or, IEP's, etc...) and will need to be provided. Necessary enrollment and registration forms must be completed prior to the beginning of school. This includes the Child Information Record.

Waiver

In 2014, Michigan modified the administrative rules that changed how non medical waivers for immunizations will be processed for school and childcare programs. This rule went into effect on January 1, 2015. The new rule allows the parent/guardian the opportunity to have their concerns and questions about immunizations addressed. It allows scientific-based education and resources to be provided.

The new rule requires parents/guardians who want to claim a non medical waiver to receive education from a county health department about the benefits of vaccination and the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases before claiming the waiver. A nonmedical waiver is a parent's/guardian's written statement indicating the religious or philosophical (other) objections to a particular vaccination(s). Based on the new rule, parents/guardians will no longer be able to submit an uncertified immunization waiver form to the school or childcare center.

Parents/guardians will need to:

1. Contact their county health department to receive immunization waiver education and to obtain a certified State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form.
2. Take the certified State of Michigan Immunization Waiver Form to their child's school or child care facility.

3. Waiver forms that are altered cannot be accepted by schools or child care centers. Parents/guardians will need to submit to the school or childcare center the completed, certified, nonmedical immunization waiver form and/or complete immunization record. Students who do not comply with having either a completed immunization record or a certified waiver form are to be excluded from school or childcare unless they are in the 'dose waiting' (provisional) period.

Referral policy to meet child and family needs, including follow-up procedures:

Special Needs Policy

If a parent has concerns about their child's development, they should begin by contacting the lead teacher. The Lead Teacher will initiate the Response to Intervention process. If further interventions are needed a team will be formed to discuss how to best meet the child's needs. The team may include: parents, the teachers, the building principal or agency head, the Early Childhood Specialist, or other special education staff. If a child is already receiving services for a disability, the GSRP program staff will join the IEP team and continue services. For information about referring your child for a developmental evaluation log onto: www.1800earlyon.org

The Basics of Special Education 10 Steps in the Special Education Process:

1. Referral: Child is identified as possibly needing special education and related services. Visit 1800Earlyon.org or BuildUpMI.org or call 888-320-8384 to find your local coordinator. Within 10 calendar days after the referral, the school must inform parent of the referral and request written consent to evaluate the student.
2. Evaluation: Child is evaluated by the IEP team to gather information to understand the educational needs of the child and to guide decision-making on services for the child. "The time from referral or from receipt of parental consent to an initial evaluation to the completion of the individualized education program or the determination of ineligibility shall not be more than 30 school days." R 340.1721c
3. Eligibility is decided: IEP team, including parents, to determine if your child is eligible for special education using all available information about the child.
4. Child is found eligible for services: Child will either be found eligible for special education services and move to steps 5-10. If not eligible, see next page.
5. IEP Meeting is scheduled: An IEP meeting must be held within 30 calendar days after it is determined the child qualifies for special education. Involve parents in process.
6. IEP meeting is held and IEP is written: Entire IEP team writes the IEP together, using collected child data. IEP determines any and all services the child is to receive.
7. Services are provided: Services must begin as soon as possible after IEP development. All service providers and parents must have access to the IEP.
8. Progress is measured and reported to parents: The IEP will specify how the child's progress will be measured. Reports are shared with parents. The IEP is reviewed yearly.
9. IEP is reviewed: IEP is reviewed at least once per year. Document is revised to address any lack of expected progress. Either the school or parents can request a review.

10. Child is reevaluated: Must occur at least every three years. Occurs to establish continued eligibility and child's recent educational needs.

If child is not found eligible for Special Education:

Parents must receive a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of that determination.

- Under the IDEA, parents must also be given information about what they can do if they disagree with the eligibility decision.
- IDEA gives parents the right to request mediation or a due process hearing to resolve a dispute about the child's identification, evaluation, or education placement.
- Parents also have a right to obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE).
- A child who has a disability, but who is not eligible under IDEA, may be eligible for the protections afforded by other laws. It's not uncommon for a child to have a 504 plan at school to address disability-related educational needs (instead of an IEP).
- Teachers and parents will need to work together to design interventions for the child to use in the classroom that will ensure continued success.
- While a child may not have qualified for special education services, it is imperative to continuously monitor each child for developmental changes. As the child grows, he/she may become eligible for services. Ongoing assessment will give more information regarding developmental changes.

The referral form shown below can be used for any community agency or site i.e. United Way (211), WIC, DHS etc.

**REFERRAL FORM
(To Meet Child Needs)**

Date of Referral:

Referred by (Name/Position):

To (Name/Position):

Re:

Child's Name:

Date of Birth:

Parent(s): _____ Phone:

Address:

Teacher: _____ Site:

Site Phone:

Best time/part of day to visit classroom:

Reason for Referral:

Consultation with Parent/Guardian:

Parent(s) concerns/best time to contact parent:

Date:

Parent:

Signature:

An additional CONSENT TO EVALUATE form is required if further child evaluation is necessary.

Follow-up and Action Plan Information:

Confidentiality Policy

Information presented to **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center Great Start Readiness Program** will remain confidential and not be disclosed to parties other than **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center Great Start Readiness Program** staff members and the Michigan Department of Education without written consent of parent(s) or guardian(s). You will be asked to sign a release of information form at the end of the year so that your child's records can be shared with his or her next school.

Weekly Schedule and Attendance Policy

Children in **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center Great Start Readiness Program** will attend four days per week, Monday-Thursday. Children are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Excessive absences may result in termination from the program. If a child must miss school, please notify the teacher with a reason for absence. There are times when it is appropriate for your child to miss school. If your child is sick, please do not send them to school. If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be called to pick him/her up. If you cannot be reached the person you named as your emergency contact or named as other persons to be released to on the Child Information card will be contacted.

Beginning and end of program:

- Varies per school district, please refer to Daily Routine Sample.
- We follow the local school district calendar for holidays and breaks.

Great Start Readiness Days off

Professional Development Day for Staff

November 6, 2018

No School for Students

Thanksgiving

November 22-23, 2018

Outdoor time is held on a daily basis unless there is inclement weather or special circumstances. **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center** Great Start Readiness Program will adhere to the rule of 20 degrees or below for children to remain inside. Children need to have weather appropriate clothing for participation in outdoor activities. School/Snow Day Cancellations: Please check local news and radio stations for weather related school closings. If the local school district is closed or delayed due to weather, so is the Great Start Readiness Program.

Rest/Quiet Time Policy

Students attending a school day program will participate in a rest/quiet time daily. Children will be provided with a mat to lie on. Children wishing to use a pillow or blanket will need to bring one from home. These will be sent home weekly for laundering. Children will not be required to rest for more than one hour and alternate quiet activities will be provided for those children who do not sleep. Children who are sleeping and do not wake up independently will be gently awakened using soft touches, opening of the blinds, and conversation. Children are expected to assist with putting away their sleeping materials.

Medication Policy

The administration of medication by school personnel shall be authorized in writing and only performed in exceptional circumstances when administration by the parent at home is impossible or extremely difficult. Medication will be administered only by authorized school personnel. This authorization to administer medication shall be issued only in compliance with the following conditions:

- A. The Request of Administration of Medication form must be signed by the student's parent/guardian and filed with the building principal.
- B. Written instructions signed by the parent/guardian and the student's physician must be furnished and shall include:
 - 1) student's name, address, telephone number;
 - 2) physician's name, address, telephone number;
 - 3) pharmacy name, address, telephone number;
 - 4) name of medication, beginning date of administration;
 - 5) prescribed dosage, frequency and duration; parents shall be responsible for informing the district if the child has experienced side effects from the medication the child is to receive; termination date for administering the medication; special handling and storage instructions.
- C. Medication for students in preschool must be brought to school by an adult and in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. Refill of the medication is the sole responsibility of the student's parent/guardian.
- D. The school nurse or other designated preschool personnel will:
 - 1) Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication.

- 2) Keep a record of the administration of the medication which will include: date, time, dosage and person administering the medication along with the initials of an adult witness (this witness can be any school employee/or adult).
 - 3) Keep medication in a locked cabinet.
 - 4) Return the unused medication only to the student's parent/guardian (a student may return his/her inhaler).
 - 5) Any medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of the school year.
- E. The student's parent/guardian assumes responsibility to immediately inform the building administrator or his/her designated representative of any change in the child's health or change in the medication, including the discontinuation or modification of the medication.
 - F. In no instance are District personnel to administer an initial dose of new medication to student.
 - G. Forgotten doses of home medication will not be made up at school.
 - H. Student self-possession and/or self-administration of medication for preschool are prohibited unless the student's health is endangered by this prohibition.
 - I. No staff member will be permitted to dispense non-prescribed medication (OTC) to any student without a doctor's order.

Health policies and practices on physical activity and nutrition for children:

Health Care Plan

Daily Assessment of Children's Health Children's general health will be assessed upon arrival daily. If a child shows any sign of illness, he/she will be evaluated further and staff will determine if a parent needs to be called. Please consider keeping your child home if they are exhibiting any signs of illness.

Outdoor Policy

Children who are in a school day program will receive a minimum of 60 minutes per day of physical outdoor activities. Children in a half-day program will receive a minimum of 30 minutes per day of physical outdoor activities.

Wellness and Nutrition

Genesee Academy Early Learning Center Great Start Readiness Programs recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the well-being and health of all students. Our GSRP sites in cooperation with the Federal CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) and the NSLP (National School Lunch Program) provide healthy and nutritious snacks and meals for the children. The children are expected to go outside at least 30 minutes a day.

Nutrition Policy

The Great Start Readiness Program follows the guidelines of the DHS Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing and the CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program). GSRP sites implement “family style” dining. Foods served reflect the home and community cultures and are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt. Parents who choose to send a snack or meal to school with their child should take into consideration the nutritional value of the foods they chose. If parents choose to send in a special occasion food, it is asked that consideration be given to special needs diets and allergies. Please check with the teacher before choosing a food item. Snacks/meals are provided free of charge to GSRP children. Parents are required to complete a free and reduced lunch form. If your child has food allergies or the need for a special diet, please provide the staff with a written plan from your child’s doctor.

CACFP

GISD Great Start Readiness Program is a participant in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program. The CACFP provides cash reimbursement to child care centers for nutritious meals and helps children develop healthy eating habits. The CACFP is administered by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

Through the Child and Adult Care Food Program you can be assured that your child is getting balanced, nutritious meals and developing healthy lifelong eating habits. Proper nutrition during the early years ensures fewer physical and educational problems later in life.

As a participant in the CACFP, your child care center receives reimbursement for serving nutritious meals and snacks. Meals and snacks must meet the USDA meal pattern requirements listed below:

Breakfast	Lunch and Supper	Snack (serve 2 from the 4 food groups below)
Milk Fruit, Vegetable, or Juice Grain/Bread	Milk 2 Fruit/Vegetable servings Grain/Bread Meat or Meat Alternate	Milk Fruit, Vegetable, or Juice Grain/Bread Meat or Meat Alternate

NSLP (National School Lunch Program)

The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in over 100,000 public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally-balanced, low cost or free lunches to over 30 million children each school day.

Accident and emergency policies:

Our goal is that every child will be safe while in our care.

Illness Care Plan

When a child shows signs of illness such as cough, nausea, or lethargy a call will be made to the parent for transportation home. If unable to reach a parent, the next person on the emergency card will be notified. Students with fever above 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea or constant cough will be sent home. Child's temperature should be normal for 24 hours before returning to school (i.e. a child sent home Monday with a fever may not return until Wednesday).

Illness/Accident Care Plan

For minor injuries such as small cuts, bruises or abrasions:

Student will be given immediate first aid care by the preschool staff in accordance with their first aid training. Parents will be notified in writing or by phone.

For more serious injuries such as open skin wounds or bloody noses:

Student will be given immediate first aid care by the preschool staff in accordance with their first aid training. The parent will be notified by note or phone call.

If a child has bumped their head and display signs of a concussion such as:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about events
- Answers questions slowly
- Repeats questions
- Can't recall events prior to the hit, bump or fall
- Can't recall events after the hit, bump or fall
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes

9-1-1 will be called immediately, parent will be called right after and parent will be made aware of the situation that took place and action followed.

If child has bumped their head and display signs that worsen over time such as:

- One pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) larger than the other
- Drowsiness or cannot be awakened
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Difficulty recognizing people or places
- Increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously) 911 will be called immediately, parent will be called right after, and parent will be made aware of the situation that took place and action followed.

For major emergencies such as seizure or unconsciousness:

- 9-1-1 will be called from the nearest phone. The parent will be notified immediately. Program Serious Accident/Illness Emergency Plan will be followed. A copy of this can be obtained from the Great Start Readiness staff.

Fire/Tornado/Lock-down Drill

Fire drills are a necessary precaution for safety.

- There will be no warning signal. As the bell sounds, all students should form a line ready for exiting.
- No Talking
- Move quickly without running
- Go where directed
- Lock-down drills will be conducted at least twice per school year.
- When in “lockdown” only law enforcement and emergency personnel will be permitted to enter or exit the building.
- Tornado drills will be conducted at least twice per school year. Students are to follow classroom instructions and remain silent while the drill is taking place.

Child Discipline/Conflict Resolution

The Great Start Readiness Program uses discipline as a learning opportunity. As a result, we implement guidance that is caring, but firm. Consequences are short, consistent, immediate and logical. Emphasis is placed on providing affection, order, security, and unconditional positive regard for every child. Because a positive self-image is our main concern, any form of negative procedures or consequences will not be used. This includes shaming, threatening, depriving, or corporal punishment. Enrollment will not be denied and children will not be excluded based on challenging behavior, disability, or the need for individualized planning and intentional teaching.

The adults in the GSRP classroom will assume the following roles:

- Encourage children to do things for themselves
- Treat conflict situations with children matter-of-factly
- Approach children calmly and stop any hurtful actions
- Acknowledge children’s feelings
- Teach conflict resolution strategies
- Ask children for solutions and encourage them to solve the conflict together;
- Support children when they make decisions.

Policy for Child Abuse and Neglect

Staff at **Genesee Academy’s Early Learning Center Great Start Readiness Program** is aware that abuse and neglect of children is against the law. As teachers/child advocates we are required by Child Protection Law as mandated reporters to immediately report suspected abuse and neglect of children to Children's Protective Services. The staff reviews the Child Abuse and Neglect reporting procedures annually.

Child Custody Policy

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (i.e., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) the **Great Start Readiness Program** must be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed. In the absence of a court order on file with the **Great Start Readiness Program**, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The **Great Start Readiness Preschool Program** cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent,

regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, the **Great Start Readiness Program** suggests that the parent keeps the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access.

Withdrawal Policy

If you withdraw your child from the preschool, please provide notice in writing. We would like to recognize your child's involvement and participation in our program, and allow classmates time to say their goodbyes.

A child may no longer be included in the program if:

- They have excessive absences
- They do not meet the health/licensing requirements by the required deadlines
- The parent fails to follow program policies
- The program is determined to be an inappropriate setting

Teacher Contact Policy

If you need to contact us during the school day, please call and leave a message. Teachers avoid answering the phone during class hours so the focus can be on your child. If you have an emergency, please let the office know when calling.

Transportation Policy

Bussing to the **Great Start Readiness Program** is available in most school districts. You will be notified if transportation is not available within your district. Students will be walked to and picked up from the bus door by a parent/guardian upon pickup. If your child does not ride a bus, please walk them directly to the classroom door. Children are allowed two bus locations (i.e., home and day care)

Grievance Policy

If a parent has a concern about their child, classroom, or program:

1. Concern should be discussed with the teaching team.
2. If a solution is not agreed upon, the parents should contact the program coordinator.
3. If a solution is still not agreed upon, Deborah Peck would become involved as well.

Culture and Diversity in the Learning Environment

Materials in the classroom are developmentally appropriate, clean, safe, foster learning and are to reflect the home and community cultures and special needs of children in the program. Materials depict a wide range of non-stereotyped role models and cultures. The home and community cultures of each class are used to choose materials included in the classroom. Materials reflect children's interests,

parental hobbies, employment, and community traditions. Each child and family will be supported in their cultural values and norms of the home. All staff will have training opportunities annually to further their knowledge of enhancing their daily communications and curriculum planning.

Classroom Celebrations and Guidelines

Children's birthdays may be celebrated at the lead teacher's discretion - perhaps a "Special Person Day" for each child. Holidays are very special occasions which many children and families enjoy. However, families and teachers must understand and respect that not all people celebrate holidays or may celebrate in different ways. GSRP staff will work hard to plan activities that meet individual child and program goals. Activities are appropriate when they meet these goals and respect the values and traditions of all children and families in the program. No one is ever excluded due to their beliefs or practices.

Classrooms will not participate in traditional parties. Teachers will plan and implement the following items, as appropriate, with input from families and children:

- Demonstrations
- Discussions
- Ethnic Food
- Finger plays
- Guest Speakers
- Hands on Educational Activities
- Healthy Snacks
- Song and Dance
- Stories

In addition to the items above, the following lists describe what types of activities are **allowable** and **unallowable** will be implemented for various holidays throughout the year. Teachers and families should refer to this information and plan accordingly.

Activities like posters, crowns, etc. will not be included in the classroom curriculum – however, if the parents choose to bring a snack for the children, a healthy choice would be accepted. The reason for the healthy snack is because of possible after effects of cupcakes and other items that have high sugar content are not allowed in the GSRP classroom.

Allowable items for celebrating birthdays in the GSRP classroom:

- Invite families to volunteer and/or provide photographs, songs, and stories about their child
- Ask children and families to share how they celebrate
- Serve healthy snacks
- Research Birthday traditions around the world and present to children in a variety of formats

Unallowable items for celebrating birthdays in the GSRP classroom:

- Serve or send home sugary treats (i.e. cookies, candy, etc.)
- Send home party or play- date invitations or provide lists of children's names.

Allowable items for celebrating holidays in the GSRP classroom:

- Ask children and families to share how they celebrate holidays

- Serve healthy snacks
- Research different holiday traditions around the world and present to children in a variety of formats

Unallowable items for celebrating holidays in the GSRP classroom:

- Trick-or-treat
- Dress up in costumes
- Serve or send home sugary treats (i.e. cookies, candy, etc.)
- Display traditional holiday decorations
- Plan project/studies the focus solely on a particular holiday
- Plan a visit from Santa/Easter Bunny
- Exchange Christmas gifts in the classroom
- Hold an Easter Egg Hunt

Hand Washing and Universal Precautions:

Children and Staff Hand Washing

Hand-washing has long been established as one of the most important things we can do to prevent the spread of illness.

In our preschool, hand washing recommendations for workers are as follows:

- Upon arrival at school/center
- Before and after setting up snacks/food for student consumption.
- Before and after helping student use the bathroom.
- After handling items soiled with body fluids such as blood, drool, urine, stool, or discharge from nose or eyes
- After handling an ill child.
- After using the bathroom or taking care of other personal needs (i.e., nose wiping), and eating.

In our preschool, hand-washing recommendations for students are as follows:

- Upon arrival in the morning.
- After using the bathroom.
- Before and after eating food.
- After they have touched a child who may be sick or who has handled soiled items.
- After blowing/wiping their nose

Recommendation method for hand-washing is as follows:

- Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm water and soap.
- Wash between fingers and back of hands and wrists.
- Rinse hands well under running water and dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.
- Turn off water using a paper towel instead of bare hands. This helps prevent acquiring new germs on already clean hands.

Handling Children's Bodily Fluids

In preschool, universal precautions shall be observed in order to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM). Gloves will be worn for all tasks that may cause exposure to blood or OPIM shall be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual. After removing gloves, preschool workers will wash their hands as recommended in our hand-washing policy.

Cleaning and Sanitizing of all Equipment, Toys, and Surfaces

Tabletops will be washed before and after food is served and as they become soiled. Toys will be washed when they come in contact with a child's mouth or saliva. Equipment will be washed weekly or as needed.

- **3 Step Process for Sanitation includes:**
 - 1) **Clean with soap and water**
 - 2) **Rinse thoroughly**
 - 3) **Spray with bleach water.**

Process for sanitation while on field trips:

- Bleach wipes will **ONLY** be used while on field trips and out of the proximity of running water.

Controlling Infection, Including Universal Precautions

In order to prevent the transmission of HIV (AIDS), Hepatitis B and other blood borne pathogens, the **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center** will use universal precautions.

Universal precautions are defined as:

Guidelines designed to protect workers with occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens. Medical examination does not always identify all person infected with HIV or Hepatitis B, or other blood borne pathogens, therefore, the **Genesee Academy's Early Learning Center** will consider all blood and body fluids infectious and will follow the following universal precautions as pertaining to school environments when coming into contact with blood or bodily fluids:

1. Gloves will be worn for contact with blood, body fluids, mucous membranes, or open wounds, and for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids. Approved latex or vinyl gloves should be worn. Gloves are never to be washed and reused.
2. Hands and other skin areas must be washed thoroughly if contact with blood or body fluids. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed.
3. Saliva is not considered by the Center for Disease Control to transmit HIV but it is a body fluid and mouth-to-mask ventilation devices will be available for resuscitation and shall be used by trained personnel.
4. Designated First Aid caregivers shall be required to attend or review following yearly:
 - a. Universal precaution
 - b. HIV/HBV infections/transmissions
 - c. Handling of infectious waste

Smoking/Drug/Alcohol Policy

Smoking tobacco, consuming alcohol, and/or using/possessing illegal drugs are prohibited in and outside of the preschool at all times, including field trips.