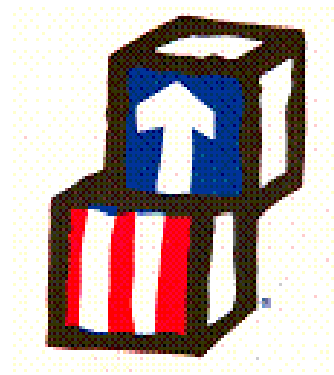


NORTH EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Staff Handbook

2011 - 2012



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This handbook is prepared for the faculty and staff of North Early Learning Center. It is intended as a useable reference and supplement to the various district and state level manuals, handbooks and guides.

It is hoped that this handbook will help to clarify expectations, answer questions about procedures, and thereby promote the personal and professional growth of each employee of North ELC.

Ultimately, the North students are the ones who will benefit from this handbook. Consistent procedures afford children more security from the adults responsible for their development.

North E.L.C. is a unique campus that serves 3 and 4 years old preschoolers that are eligible for Head Start, Pre-kindergarten or PPCD (Preschool Programs for Children with Disabilities).

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the West Orange-cove Consolidated Independent School District, as a progressive multicultural community, is to graduate students able to reach their potential and excel in a diverse society as productive, responsible citizens by utilizing an innovative curriculum, outstanding facilities, patrons' special talents and unique business/industry partnership.

PHILOSOPHY

North Early Learning Center is committed to the belief that children can develop to their potential in a nurturing environment which fosters mutual respect for the uniqueness and capabilities of the individual.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

(Performance Standard 1404.52)

All staff, consultants, and volunteers must abide by the following standards of conduct:

- (1) They will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.
- (2) They will follow the program's confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other staff members.
- (3) No child will be left alone or unsupervised while under your care.
- (4) They will use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation. In addition they will not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or denial of basic needs.

Everyone involved in this program will exercise high ethical standards, especially in conversation. Such standards should always be exhibited in any personal relations with students, co-workers, parents, other district personnel, members of the community, and the general public. Most of all, the children should always be respected, whatever the age or ability. Personal problems of students, and employees should only be discussed for the purpose of their improved well-being. All student information is confidential and should only be shared with others on a need to know basis.

Disparaging, sarcastic and offensive remarks are inappropriate for anyone entrusted with the intellectual, social, physical, and moral development of young children. We must always present ourselves in a professional manner.

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Policies and regulations in effect for North ELC and each of its employees are to be found in any of the following:

- Administrative Regulations, West Orange-Cove C.I.S.D.
- Senate Bill 1 of the Texas Education Code
- Head Start Standards
- West Orange-Cove C.I.S.D. Board Policy (LEGAL and LOCAL)
www.tasb.or/policy/pol/private/181906
- Business Office Reference Materials: West Orange-Cove C.I.S.D.”
(Printed annually)
- West Orange-Cove CISD Employees Handbook;
- North Early Learning Center Staff Handbook; Revised 2011
- North Early Learning Center Staff Planning Manual 2011
- West Orange-Cove CISD: Job Descriptions
- Policies and Administrative Procedures for the Education of Students with Disabilities
- Pre-kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines
- West Orange-Cove CISD Student Handbook: Elementary Schools
(including the district’s Discipline Management Plan)

Copies of documents listed above are accessible in the campus administrator’s office.

STAFF MEETINGS

1. Staff meetings will be held on Wednesdays at 2:30 p.m. as determined by the director.
2. The curriculum committee and educational manager will host a staff development meeting the last Wednesday of the month as needed.
3. Case Management will meet four times yearly during the day.

STAFF ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours for teachers and teacher assistants are from 7:15 a.m. until 3:15 p.m. Teacher assistants will be responsible for meeting the buses, directing children to their rooms and carrying out their assigned duty. Teachers and assistants should be in their classrooms at 7:15 a.m. Assistants should report to their assigned duties at 7:20 a.m. Para-professionals that are assigned a.m. bus duty will report to duty at 7:00 a.m. and will leave campus 15 minutes early daily.

A special effort should be made to be punctual at all times (i.e.: arrival and departure times, 30-minute lunch, 45-minute conference for teachers, etc.).

In the event it is necessary for a staff member will be late, please notify the principal or the secretary if the principal is not available.

Staff members who must be absent from an assigned duty should contact the office so that arrangements can be made to have that duty covered by other staff.

ABSENCES

Anticipated absences should be communicated to the office as soon as possible. Notifying the office of a foreseen absence allows for securing a suitable substitute with greater ease and expedience.

If illness or an emergency necessitates absence, teachers are asked to make every effort to notify the principal no earlier than 5:30 a.m. and no later than 6:00 a.m. Securing a suitable substitute can take a considerable amount of time while one is preparing to leave home for the workday.

Your attendance is the single most important factor in the success of the students placed in your class. Incentives for perfect attendance by staff and for staff will be provided.

LEAVE

Please refer to the District Employee Handbook.

SUBSTITUTE SELECTION and PREPARATIONS

All substitutes are selected and contacted by the office. If you have had a substitute that you liked, let the principal or secretary know.

It is imperative that the substitute is provided with a current and exact class roll, an up to date bus and carpool list, time schedule and lesson plans that are clear, explicit, and readily usable. An attendance sheet must also be made available to the substitute to be completed in the teacher's absence. Refer to your substitute teacher folder for additional information on planning for the substitute.

RETURN FOLLOWING ABSENCE

Upon return following an absence, the staff member must obtain a "Request for Leave" form from the office. This form must be completed, stating the reason for the absence, and returned to the principal. A staff member who has exhausted his or her allowable sick leave should notify the office of such.

JURY DUTY

If a staff member is summoned for jury duty, the office should be notified as soon as possible so as to obtain a substitute. Lesson plans should be prepared for the substitute for the duration of the court proceedings and given to the office prior to the proceedings or recurrently during the duration of the proceedings.

Upon release from jury duty, staff members should return to school with jury duty release form from the court.

LEAVING CAMPUS

The principal needs to be aware of any staff member's absence from school during the workday.

Should it become necessary for a staff member to leave campus during the school day, the principal should be personally contacted. Sending notice to the office about the departure will not suffice for personal contact. If the principal is off campus, the staff member should notify the secretary.

A register for signing-out, specifying time of departure and destination, and for signing-in, specifying time of return, is provided in the office. No member of the staff should be away from the campus without signing-out and making the office aware of their absence. This procedure is as much for the protection of the staff as for the responsible management of the school.

CLASSROOM RESPONSIBILITIES

CURRICULUM

It is professionally and legally imperative that each teacher use appropriately Chapter 75 of the Texas Education Code as well as district curriculum guides on the planning, presentation, and assessment of instruction. The OWL Curriculum will be used in teaching the skills in the Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines and the Head Start Student Outcome Standards.

GRADE BOOK

Each teacher is supplied with a class grade book, into which should be recorded a complete record of each student's attendance. This record should be kept in good order and up to date at all times. At the end of the school year, the grade books must be turned in to the principal for filing as supporting records of attendance.

Mastery of skills should be recorded on the Student Portfolio Skills Checklist and the Progress Report.

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS

Student Progress Reports are completed each 6-week reporting period based on student outcomes as noted on the Head Start/Pre-Kindergarten Portfolio. The Student Progress Reports are to be shared with the parents at the end of each 6-week reporting period through a Parent/Teacher Conference or Home Visit.

CUMULATIVE RECORD FOLDERS

The cumulative record folders house the official school records for students attending school in the West Orange-Cove CISD. The records must be completed with accuracy and care. The cumulative records must be completed in ink and must have the teacher's signature as an indication that they are true and accurate records. Signature stamps may not be used on the cumulative record folder. The cumulative record folders should also contain the following documents:

- Student Portfolio Skills Checklist
- Progress Report
- Spring DIAL-III Test Booklet
- ESL Documentation
- Teacher Observation Sheet
- Work Samples (Self Portrait and Writing)
- Parent/School Compact
- Admissions data
- Health Record
- Home Visit and Parent/Teacher Conference forms

LESSON PLANS AND WEEKLY NEWSLETTERS

Lesson Plans and Weekly Newsletters are due in the office each Friday or Monday morning at the latest. Lesson Plans and Weekly Newsletters are to be computer generated.

The following color coding should be used for the Lesson Plans:

- Dental – green
- Multicultural – pink
- Nutrition – red
- Mental Health – blue
- Health/Safety – brown

The Lesson Plans should include daily lessons in the following areas: Skills, Dental, Multicultural, Nutrition, Mental Health, Health/Safety. There should also be an indication of individualization and the integration of Speech and Language skills.

Teachers will also send home a weekly newsletter on Fridays that includes the instructional focus, upcoming classroom events, dates to remember, activities to do at home and other information and items of interest.

The blue folder is to be marked and sent home weekly.

SCHEDULES

A copy of each teacher's daily schedule is to be filed in the principal's office no later than the third week of school. Also, the schedule should be posted in the classroom.

Schedules should adhere to the campus, state and districts guidelines for time allotments.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

DISCIPLINE

North Early Learning Center adheres to the Discipline Management Programs set by the West Orange-Cove C.I.S.D. Board of Trustees located in the student handbook and Code of Conduct. Each teacher must become familiar with it.

No practice or procedure in any teacher's classroom or anywhere on this campus can be at variance with an expressed principle or procedure in the discipline management plan.

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION TECHNIQUES

Consistency, Consistency, Consistency!!

- Have children help develop classroom rules.
- Have a regular order of procedures.
- Explain classroom rules daily; review regularly.
- Discuss rules with children – ask children to explain the rules back to you or to another child.
- Redirect child to an activity that interests him/her.
- Reward for appropriate behavior

Management of Inappropriate Behaviors

Document on Classroom Discipline Referral Record

1. Discuss and explain the rule – Have child repeat broken rule
2. Redirection – Face to face with child and give alternate activity
3. Time Out – In class time out
4. Loss of Privilege – Activity
5. Parent Conference – Telephone or in person

6. Referral to Principal or Counselor office
7. Principal Conference – Vandalism, hurting others or out of control behaviors

No corporal punishment will be used at North ELC. We will follow the specific behavior management plan for North ELC. The parent will be called to help if the plan is not working and the child may be sent home for the remainder of the day as determined by the principal. Parents will not be allowed to administer corporal punishment to a child while on campus, and will be encouraged to utilize other methods of discipline.

There should be no physical contact for discipline (pulling on arms, grabbing an arm or leg, etc.) unless the child is hurting him/herself or someone else. Verbal redirection should be delivered in a firm calm voice.

MENTAL HEALTH

Behavior Management Procedures

Based on the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) document, teachers are required to develop a means of discipline that allows children to be self-disciplined and self-directing in developing their social and emotional awareness.

- Based on the Head Start Performance Standard 1304.24 (a)(l)(iii), we will create a system that will incorporate best practices for responding to inappropriate behaviors such as:
 - Redirecting a child from a conflict of negative event to a more positive activity;
 - Offering children choices among activities that are acceptable to parents;
 - Encouraging respect for the feelings and rights of others;
 - Helping children learn about logical or natural consequences of their actions.
- We will create a system that will make sure children are aware of expected behavior and will reinforce appropriately.
- Inappropriate behavior will be redirected while reinforcing the desired behavior.
- Appropriate behaviors will be posted in room with words and pictures that the children will be taught.
- Behavior modification options that will be utilized will be: (examples)
 - Star System: This allows children to earn a star when they participate or demonstrate a desired behavior. The star is not taken due to subsequent inappropriate behavior.
 - We will continue to educate parents about appropriate consequences to use at home.

- We will work in conjunction with the Special Services Department and other professionals to educate staff on methods of positive reinforcement.
 - Staff training will be provided as needed for special social/emotional needs.
 - We will continue to explore methods and systems of providing age-appropriate behavior modifications.
 - Communication Folders sent home to parents will focus on positive issues as well as issues of concern.

CLASSROOM SUPERVISION

Students must have adult supervision at all times during the school day. If there is an emergency the teacher shall call on the intercom for assistance.

If an emergency necessitates a teacher's leaving the class, the teacher's assistant will be expected to supervise the students until a teacher is available.

No teacher or teacher assistant should be out of the classroom between the morning opening (around 8:30 a.m.) and 10:00 a.m. This is the children's learning time and both adults should be working with the children in large and small group activities, in centers, individually, etc.

RESTROOM SUPERVISION

Children should be supervised closely while in the restrooms to ensure safety and to prevent the misuse of water and paper towels. (Example: One adult should be inside the restroom until the last child exits, while the other adult stands in the hallway with the others.) If it becomes necessary for one staff member to take the children to the restrooms, the children are to be lined up inside the restroom and escorted out as a group.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Absentee reports must be submitted via Skyward to the attendance clerk by 9:30 a.m. Attendance for p.m. students should be submitted by 12:30 p.m. daily.

In addition, the attendance registers are maintained in the office for auditing purposes, it is important that the attendance register be completed accurately.

Entries must be in red ink and no white-out should be used.

Written communications concerning absence, bus changes, change of address and/or phone numbers should be sent to the office.

CARE OF MONEY

Teachers having charge of any school money are responsible for it.

Money, purses or other valuables should not be left where they would present a temptation to students or personnel.

Teacher's desks and cabinets, despite locks, are not always safe places for valuables.

Students should not bring valuables or money to school, with the exception of lunch money and picture money. If a child comes to school with other money the teacher should place the money in an envelope and bring it to the office. The parent will be notified to pick it up.

LUNCHROOM PROCEDURES

All students, including those whose parents choose to bring breakfast and lunch, will eat all food in the cafeteria.

Teachers are to supervise students to and from the lunchroom. Please communicate clearly to your students the expectations and procedures for student conduct in the cafeteria. This can be done by role playing or practicing in the classroom.

- ✓ Enter and leave the cafeteria in an orderly and quite manner.

- ✓ Lunch cards are to be given to the children. Each child will pass his/her card to the cafeteria worker to be scanned at the point of sale.
- ✓ Teachers and teacher assistants should model basic table manners.
- ✓ Teachers and assistants will eat with the children, sharing the same menu to the extent possible.
- ✓ Each teacher assistant will be responsible for assisting children in their classroom through the cafeteria line. The cafeteria personnel will be responsible for preparing the trays - teachers and teachers' assistants will assist the students. Food allergies will be verified by the classroom and staff based on the information provided by the nurse. An alternate food selection will be provided.
- ✓ Children that come in after 8:00 a.m. who have not eaten breakfast should be accompanied by the parent or guardian who will sit with them until breakfast is finished and then will walk them to class. If for some reason this does not happen, the backup plan is for the student to be taken to the cooking room by a member of Family Services and given an opportunity to eat breakfast at that time. The Family Services staff member will then escort the child to his/her classroom.

BUSES AND CAR POOL

Students transported by STS School Buses will begin arriving at around 7:15. Assistants assigned to bus duty in the gym should arrive at 7:00 a.m. daily.

Student should begin leaving the classrooms at 2:00 p.m. to board their assigned buses.

No child shall be allowed to ride a different bus or be dropped off at a different address without a signed note from parent or guardian and approved by the director.

Teacher assistants will be responsible for meeting the children in the morning and directing students to their classrooms as per duty schedule.

Teachers and teachers' assistants will be responsible for assisting children while boarding buses in the afternoon.

Since school hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., parents bringing children should not arrive before 7:15 a.m. It would help the office if you could help us relay this to parents.

Car riders will not be dropped off where buses load and unload. Car riders are to be dropped off at the front of the school on Cordrey between 7:15 and 8:00 a.m. Car riders arriving after 8:00 a.m. are to be brought into the office by the driver and escorted to the cafeteria or classroom. Car riders are to be picked up at the front of the school on Cordrey between 2:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Teachers should monitor student attendance and provide incentives to encourage good attendance. Teachers should contact parents to discuss the importance of good attendance and to determine the cause of the absences when they become excessive (3 consecutive days or 5 cumulative days per 9 week period).

Any student who is absent for three consecutive days should be reported to Family Services for follow-up.

PERMISSION FOR STUDENTS LEAVING CAMPUS

If a student has to leave during school hours, we must have a note from home that the student will be picked up by a parent, guardian, or authorized adult listed on the student's emergency contact form.

No staff member should permit a student to leave campus for any reason or with anyone without permission from the office. Legally and professionally, it is important that careful attention be given to this responsibility. Any adult who is picking up a child from a classroom must come by the office, sign that child out, and have a signed note for the teacher from the office giving the adult permission to take the student.

If at any time, you see someone in the building or on the playground without identification, (a visitor's badge, or WOC maintenance dress) please notify the office immediately.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

All school employees should exhibit pride in their school. Instructional staff should model to their students respect for property belonging to themselves, to other individuals, and to the public.

Notice of any damage to school property should be reported as soon as possible to the office.

Many members of a community and the general public judge a school by its appearance. Instructional staff is asked to stress to students the importance of maintaining this school's attractiveness. Students should be discouraged from littering in the buildings and/ or on the grounds at all times.

FACULTY LOUNGES

The lounge is an area designated for teachers' and teacher assistants' privacy. Students are not allowed in the lounge at any time. If students need to use a phone, they must use a phone in the main office. The lounge should be maintained in a neat and orderly fashion. Food, drinks, and containers should not remain out after use. Items placed in the refrigerator should not cause it to become unsightly. Open items will be thrown away every Friday afternoon.

Milk or juice for the children should not be placed in the lounge refrigerator.

COOKING ACTIVITY ROOM

All utensils and supplies must be cleaned and stored in the proper place the day they are used. Refrigerator is to be used for snacks and cooking activities only. Do not put personal foods in this refrigerator.

FOOD AND DRINK

No food or drink is permitted in the classroom during the instructional day.

Staff is not to eat or drink while on hall or cafeteria duty. Staff will eat and drink with the children during lunch and snacks.

FIRE PREVENTION, FIRE AND DISASTER DRILLS

The state requires every school to conduct one (1) fire drill per month and one disaster drill per semester.

Emergency Alarm Sounds:

- High-Low Bad Weather Drill
- Police Siren Fire Drill
- Interrupted Tone Duck and Cover
- Chime Secure room
- Continuous Alarm Emergency Evacuation

The assigned exit, which is posted in the rooms, should be taken during fire drills unless there is an obstruction. Then the best alternate route should be taken.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

All parents and visitors to school during the school day are required to come by the office and get a visitors badge before going to a classroom for any reason. Teachers are asked to cooperate in this important regulation by reminding parents of this rule if they visit a classroom without having first checked in at the office. Visitor tags will also be given for scheduled visitations for parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring. All teachers should encourage parents to visit their child's classroom.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

All teachers and assistants will conduct two (2) parent/teacher conferences and make (2) home visits a year. These will be scheduled at the beginning of each school year.

The dates for these periods will be on the school calendar and sufficient notice will be given to the parents.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Teachers are asked to arrange for face-to-face conferences with parents during the assigned conference periods. The conference should take place in the teacher's classroom or in the principal's office, not in the faculty lounge or workroom. There should be only the teacher and parent present. The teacher can request that the principal and/or teacher assistant be present. If a parent does not keep their scheduled time, the conference should be rescheduled.

Teachers should document, however briefly, all parent conferences, whether the conference is held in person or by telephone. The teacher will maintain all written communication and log telephone and face to face contacts with the parent on contact logs provided by Family Services. These contact logs will be turned in to Family Services monthly.

Reports of home visits and parent/ teacher conferences will be given to the Principal within one week of completion.

SPEECH THERAPY

Therapy for all North ELC students is conducted by the Speech Pathologist on campus. Students are referred for speech therapy by their classroom teacher, parent or other staff based on screening or observations.

COLLECTIONS, SALES, AND SALESPERSONS

Teachers may collect money from pupils only when such collections are authorized by the school district.

No collections, sales, or contributions by students or outside groups may be conducted in school unless approved by the superintendent.

No salesperson will be allowed in the school building unless they have written permission from the superintendent. Salespersons will not be allowed in the lounge during the school day to contact teachers to sell or take orders for any product or service.

All staff members have the opportunity to participate in the United Way Fund each fall. It is important that each route his or her contribution through the school.

Partners in Education (P.I.E.)

The P. I.E. offers support and assistance to the faculty, staff, and students of this school. Teachers wishing to obtain help from P.I.E. may obtain forms from the office.

Please encourage parents to work as volunteers in you classrooms. There assistance will greatly enhance the success of their children.

STUDENT SERVICES

NURSE

A nurse will be on campus on a regular schedule. Only the nurse, or designated personnel in the nurse's absence, may administer medication according to guidelines established by district policy.

Vision and hearing screenings are conducted by the school nurse. The nurse will schedule medical and dental screenings.

The nurse will update immunization records and keep records of students with special health problems, making referrals as needed.

Any teacher aware of a student's change of address, phone number, or guardian should ensure that notice of such change was communicated to the office for the student's emergency medical form. Accurate and up to date data is important when contacting the child's home in the event of an injury or other emergency.

TESTING

The Dial-III will be given to three and four-year old Head Start, Pre-K and PPCD students (as appropriate) in September to determine those students

needing more individualized instruction. The Dial III will be given at least twice per year.

GENERAL SERVICES

TELEPHONE USE and MESSAGES

Only emergency messages will be delivered to a teacher at a time when that teacher has direct responsibility for their class. Regular messages will be taken and placed in the mail box. Teachers are asked to check their boxes regularly for messages.

Messages for students will be relayed through the teachers.

Cell Phone Usage

Cell phones are not to be used during the instructional day or during staff meetings except in emergency situations.

Careful consideration should be taken to ensure that the use of cell phone or campus phones for personal non-emergency calls are kept to a minimum and not interrupt job assignments and on the job productivity.

INTER-CAMPUS MAIL

The district conducts inter-campus mail service to each school in the district and to the central office. Brown envelopes of various sizes may be obtained from the office for inter-campus mail. Mail is delivered daily from the central office to the district locations.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

FIELD TRIPS

Field trip should correlate to the curriculum. Most of the field trip will be part of the curriculum and not optional by the teacher.

All field trips must be scheduled through the office. They should be scheduled in advance so transportation can be secured. All field trips should have a sufficient number of adults to supervise the students.

If more than one class is going on the same trip, teachers need to coordinate their trips before scheduling in the office.

AWARDS

Certificates will be given to all students for completion of Pre-K, Head Start and PPCD. Perfect Attendance awards will be given each nine week period and at the end of the year.

Throughout the school year, teachers are encouraged to utilize classroom awards as positive reinforcement of commendable performance.

FINAL NOTE

Faculty and staff members of North Early Learning Center are encouraged to discuss any of this handbook with the campus administrator, appropriate central office personnel, and other colleagues. Suggestions for modifications, additions, or exclusions are welcome.

Meaningful communication, cooperation, and a positive attitude can only improve our unique education arrangement.

Let's be a team that makes a difference in the lives of children and families!

