

Southeast Island School District



Early Education Parent Handbook 2025-2026

Updated 5/12/2025

Mission Statement

Set a foundation by cultivating experiences for students to develop goals and thrive in an ever changing world.

Welcome to Preschool!

We are excited to welcome your child to our preschool program! Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment where children can learn, explore, and grow. This handbook outlines our daily schedule, learning objectives, staff structure, and policies to ensure every child thrives.

Program Overview

Ages and Stages

Our program serves **3- and 4-year-olds**, with developmentally appropriate activities tailored to each age group:

- **3-year-olds:** Attend **2 hours/day, 4 days/week** (focus on socialization, foundational skills, and play-based learning).
- **4-year-olds:** Attend **3 hours/day, 4 days/week** (includes kindergarten readiness skills).
- **Kindergarten Integration:**
 - All kindergarteners participate in the **Mathshelf program** (10 mins, 2x/week).
 - Preschoolers (4/5-year-olds) join kindergarten classes for **up to 30 mins daily** starting **May 1st** to ease transitions.
 - If a child struggles, preschool teachers/parents gradually support the transition using familiar activities.

Mental Health and Social-Emotional Support

We prioritize emotional well-being with:

- **Mental health consultants** who: Astrid Richard-Cook
 - Support teachers in classroom management and individualized strategies.
 - Assist families in accessing interventions.
 - Address behavioral concerns (e.g., withdrawal, challenging behaviors).
 - **No expulsion or suspensions** for behavior unless a safety threat exists (and only after consulting specialists/parents).
 - **Post-suspension plans** include home visits, written support plans, and referrals if needed.
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Daily Schedule

9:00–9:15 AM – Arrival & Free Choice Centers

- Children explore play-based learning stations (e.g., blocks, art, dramatic play).

9:15–9:30 AM – Circle Time

- Interactive activities: calendar, weather, letter/number review, dancing, and songs.

9:30–9:45 AM – Snack Time

- Healthy snacks with family-style seating to model social skills.

9:45–10:15 AM – Gym/Outdoor Recess

- Cooperative games and motor skill development (4 of 7 schools have playgrounds; others will by FY26).

10:15–10:30 AM – Special Activities

- **Mon/Wed:** Music, Dance, or Haida Language.
- **Tue/Thu:** Social-Emotional Learning (e.g., feelings, problem-solving).

10:30–11:00 AM – Small Group Centers

- Rotating stations: Handwriting Without Tears, Mathshelf, sensory play, puzzles, and more.

11:00–11:15 AM – Large Group Activity

- Teacher-led lesson aligned with **My Teaching Strategies** objectives (observations documented).

11:15–11:20 AM – Clean Up

- Children help tidy the classroom.

11:20–11:30 AM – Story Time

- Interactive read-aloud to boost literacy.

11:30–11:50 AM – Lunch

- USDA-compliant meals with conversational practice.

Classroom Structure & Staffing

- **Class Sizes:**
 - **Up to 20 students:** 1 certified teacher + 1 paraprofessional.
 - **Under 7 students:** Paraprofessional leads with local certified teacher oversight.
- **3- and 4-year-olds** are separated into distinct classes if enrollment exceeds 7.

Curriculum & Resources

- **Core Curriculum: My Teaching Strategies** (aligned with Alaska Early Learning Guidelines).
 - **Supplemental Programs:**
 - **Heggerty** (daily phonemic awareness, 5–10 mins).
 - **Handwriting Without Tears** (fine motor skills).
 - **Mathshelf** (math games for preschoolers/kindergarteners).
 - **Science of Reading** (to be added in FY25).
 - **Adaptations:** Culturally sensitive modifications reviewed by external evaluators.
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Facilities & Accommodations

- **Indoor:**
 - ADA-compliant classrooms with centers (art, reading, sensory play).
 - iPads for Mathshelf; smart TVs for lessons.
 - **Outdoor:** Playgrounds at 4 of 7 schools (remaining 3 by FY26).
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Policies

- **Transitions:** Gentle shifts signaled by a bell; flexibility for stress-free adjustments.
 - **Physical Activity:** Gradual exposure for reluctant participants.
 - **Behavior Support:** No punitive measures; collaborative plans with parents/consultants.
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Parent Partnership

We encourage family involvement, especially during transitions. Parents may:

- Join kindergarten integration sessions.
- Meet with mental health consultants.
- Participate in home visits if needed.

Contact: Christi Nixon, Preschool Coordinator, or your child's teacher for questions.




We look forward to a year of growth and joy! 🌟

Approved by Southeast Island School District Board of Education on [DATE] • Updated [5/2025]





Appendix A: Early Childhood Education & Parent Resource Guide

This appendix includes curated and verified resources to support early childhood education, parenting, and family engagement. These tools are provided to empower families with knowledge, connection, and practical support.




Family-School Partnerships

- **National PTA – Family-School Partnerships**
Offers tools and standards to build effective collaboration between families and schools.
 <https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/family-school-partnerships>
 - **Project Appleseed**
A national campaign encouraging volunteerism and community engagement in public schools.
 <http://www.projectappleseed.org>
 - **National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE)**
Promotes strong home-school-community partnerships through resources and advocacy.
 <https://www.coatesvillefoundation.org/national-coalition-for-parent-involvement-in-education>
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Parenting Support & Education

- **ZERO TO THREE**
Research-based guidance on infant and toddler development, parenting strategies, and early learning.
 <https://www.zerotothree.org>
 - **Parenting Wisely**
An interactive, evidence-based online program that improves parenting skills and child behavior.
 <https://www.parentingwisely.com>
 - **National Fatherhood Initiative**
Supports fathers through programs, articles, and community engagement tools.
 <https://www.fatherhood.org>
 - **National Center for Fathering**
Offers practical tools, tips, and research to help fathers positively engage with their children.
 <https://fathers.com>
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Child Development & Learning

- **UT Dana Center**
Provides research and resources focused on advancing STEM education and cognitive development.
 <https://www.utdanacenter.org>
 - **Kidsource Therapy**
Offers pediatric therapy services and developmental tools to support learning.
 <https://kidsourcetherapy.com>
 - **Search Institute**
Researches and promotes positive youth development through strengths-based approaches.
 <https://www.search-institute.org>
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Learning at Home & Activities

- **Brookes Publishing – At-Home Activities**
Provides downloadable learning activities for early learners and their caregivers.
 <https://brookespublishing.com/at-home-activities>
 - **Pre-K Printable Fun**
A rich resource of free printables and activity plans for preschool educators and parents.
 <https://www.prekprintablefun.com>
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Grandparents & Multigenerational Support

- **The Grandparent Foundation**
Offers support for grandparents raising grandchildren and navigating caregiving challenges.
 <https://grandparentsfoundation.org>
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Additional Family Resources

- **National Partnership for Women & Families**
Advocates for family-supportive policies and provides information on work-life balance.
 <https://www.nationalpartnership.org>
 - **National Parenting Education Network (NPEEN)**
A collaborative organization focused on advancing the field of parenting education.
 <https://npen.org>
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For additional questions, support, or referrals, please contact your child's teacher or the Preschool Coordinator at Southeast Island School District.

Appendix B: Contacts For More Information

Rod Morrison

Superintendent

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District Wide Principal/Dean of Students

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