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Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center  
Preschool Program  
Plymouth

2017-2018  
Family Handbook



CONFIDENTLY LEADING THROUGH  
COLLABORATION, CUSTOMIZATION AND CREATIVITY

890 West Fourth Street, Suite 100, Mansfield, Ohio 44906 | Phone: 419-774-5520 | Fax: 419-774-5523 | [www.moesc.net](http://www.moesc.net)

**Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center**  
**Plymouth Preschool**  
48 West Broadway Street  
Plymouth, Ohio 44865

**Classes:**

Monday - Thursday  
8:30 - 11:30 am  
12:30 - 3:30 pm

**Office:**

Monday - Friday  
8:00 - 4:00  
419-687-4331 ext. 7

Stacy Crawford, Coordinator  
Karen Channing, Administrative Assistant

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Dear Families,

We, along with the staff of Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool Program, welcome you and dedicate this year to your child's success! We realize that you have many options for preschool for your child. We are honored to be able to serve your child and your family.

This handbook describes policies and procedures to keep you informed about Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool. We have attempted to include information concerning the most common questions that families have asked in the past and guidelines for policies and procedures to help business run as smoothly as possible.

Please take a few minutes to review the handbook and keep it in a safe place for future reference. If you find you have a question that is not answered in the handbook, please call the office at 419-774-5556.

The Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool Program relies on dedicated community and family volunteers to provide extra help, give an encouraging word, or give an important smile for a child who has done their best work. Throughout the year, volunteers are encouraged to assist the teachers in the classroom. Please see your child's teacher if you would like to volunteer.

We continually strive to provide the highest quality program to the preschool children of our valued communities. Thank you for allowing us to work with your child.

Educationally,  
Stacy Crawford  
Preschool Coordinator

MOESC Board of Governors

Mary Dixon  
Doug Theaker  
Brad Geissman  
Glenna Plotts  
Dick Prater  
Marge Prater  
Kyle Swigart

# Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool Program

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

Families and preschool staff will work together to prepare children for future learning experiences. We will provide a safe, positive environment designed to meet the needs of all children.

## **PHILOSOPHY:**

We believe that each child is a unique individual with an unlimited capacity for learning. We believe that young children learn optimally through interaction with peers, adults, and their physical environment. Since children learn through play experiences in which they connect past experiences to new experiences, our role as preschool staff is to provide an environment that is responsive to the children. The focus in early childhood is on the process children use when learning within this environment. Knowledge gained is a result of participation in these processes and will vary according to their needs. Together, with parents and other community resources, the school coordinates the efforts for the optimal education of children.

## **PROGRAM:**

The Mid-Ohio Preschool Program uses the state of Ohio's Early Content Standards as a guide for instruction. The program uses Creative Curriculum which aligns with the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards. The preschool provides an integrated early childhood setting in which children of various backgrounds and needs engage in developmentally appropriate activities and practices. Play serves as a vital learning activity. Self-esteem, socialization and appreciation of differences are valued outcomes.

Classrooms are divided into interest centers, such as art, dramatic play, block building, manipulatives, language, sensory, motor, etc. The materials and activities at each interest center are individualized by staff for the children. Activities alternate, and time is set aside for the children to meet as a group with the teacher for planned circle activities. Self-help activities are also addressed. Through play and self-initiated learning, the children refine the social/emotional, motor, thinking, and language skills necessary for success in school.

# Program Information

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Regular attendance by all students is very important and is strongly encouraged. Please refer to the school calendar in the enrollment packet. In keeping with compliance with the Missing Child Act, please call to report your child's absence and the reason why. In many cases, irregular attendance is the major reason for poor achievement.

If irregular attendance occurs, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be contacted and/or counseled. If the child's lack of attendance is the result of an accident/injury or illness, then please contact the preschool, and arrangements will be made for your child. If irregular attendance continues and is at 50 percent or less for two consecutive months, then the child will be removed from the program. Our preschool programs have waiting lists, therefore it is unfair to have children on a waiting list when an enrolled child is not attending.

## **ARRIVAL:**

School begins at 8:30 a.m. for the morning class and 12:15 p.m. for the afternoon class. The Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool doors will open at 8:15 a.m. and again at 12:00 p.m. for dropping off your child. For your child's safety, staff is not available to monitor students before drop-off time. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated. Please note that for the safety of the students, the interior entrance door locks automatically after arrival time. You will need to be buzzed in for late arrival.

## **RELEASE:**

When not riding the school bus, we will only release your child to you or persons who are designated by you on your child's enrollment form. If you desire someone other than these designated persons to pick up your child, you must notify the school in advance in writing. Please ask the designated person to report to the office with a photo ID. The morning session begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 11:30 a.m. The afternoon session begins at 12:15 p.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. Please do not bring children early. Please pick up promptly. We do not have staff or facilities for taking care of children beyond the designated times. If your child is not picked up in a timely fashion, then Children's Services may be contacted. Parents must enter into Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool with their child when arriving for class. Children arriving or departing to/from class are to be signed in/out by the adult bringing them/picking them up.

## **EMERGENCY PRESCHOOL CLOSINGS:**

Closings and delays for the preschool will be announced on the Mid-Ohio ESC website landing page. Additionally, announcements will be under the heading of **Mid-Ohio Learning Center** on local media outlets. Below is a list of radio and on-line stations that will announce school closings and delays.

Radio: WVNO, Y105, and WMAN

On-line: WMFD, Richland Source

If your child rides a bus to preschool, please make sure to listen for your school district's closures. It is understood that if districts that transport their own children are closed, then those children will not be transported that day.

If the Learning Center is on a delay, there will be no AM preschool. If there is a delay, check again later to make sure the center isn't closed for the day.

If Head Start is cancelled, there will be no transportation provided. In that case, do not send your child unless you are able to pick your child up at the end of the morning session.

There may be an occasion when the preschool will need to close for an unforeseen reason, such as a water main break or power outage. In these types of situations, you will see or hear one of the following announcements:

Mid-Ohio Learning Center – closed

Mid-Ohio Learning Center – No AM or no PM class

**COST:**

There is no fee for children with an IEP, whose admission is determined by state and local criteria. The tuition for preschool for children without an IEP during the 2017-2018 school year will be on a sliding fee schedule up to **\$100.00** per month. There is a \$10.00 non-refundable registration fee.

- A. The monthly fee is **due on the fifteenth day of the previous month** (example: October fees are due September 15<sup>th</sup>). Tuition may be paid at the office by cash, check, or money order; or you may pay by credit/debit card online at [www.moesc.net](http://www.moesc.net), under Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool. A delinquent account (late one month) will result in your child's exclusion from school. **Parents who pay tuition are required to sign a service contract.**
- B. If you choose to pay by check, please make the **check payable to: Mid-Ohio ESC**. The child's name and the month covered should appear on the face of the check. Post-dated checks will not be accepted. Please save your receipts for income tax purposes because we do not give yearly payment reports.
- C. Please present the exact amount if you paying in cash. We do not keep cash at the school site.
- D. There will be no refunds of tuition for early withdrawals or for snow delays or closures.
- E. Mid-Ohio uses a sliding fee schedule that is based upon the United States Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Guidelines. Tuition will be calculated after evidence of income has been provided. Evidence must include one of the following documents: a previous year W-2 form, a current Payroll Statement, a Federal Tax Form, Ohio Work First, Food Stamp and W-2 Form, Food Stamp Number and Payroll Statement,

and/or Food Stamp Number and Federal Tax Form. Current Federal Poverty Guidelines used to calculate tuition is provided below:

**United States Department of Health and Human Services  
2017 FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES**

<b>Size of Family Unit</b>	<b>100% Poverty Level</b>	<b>115% Poverty Level</b>	<b>125% Poverty Level</b>	<b>187.5% Poverty Level</b>	<b>200% Poverty Level</b>
1	\$12,060	\$13,869	\$15,075	\$22,613	\$24,120
2	\$16,240	\$18,676	\$20,300	\$30,450	\$32,480
3	\$20,420	\$23,483	\$25,525	\$38,288	\$40,840
4	\$24,600	\$28,290	\$30,750	\$46,125	\$49,200
5	\$28,780	\$33,097	\$35,975	\$53,963	\$57,560
6	\$32,960	\$37,904	\$41,200	\$61,800	\$65,920
7	\$37,140	\$42,711	\$46,425	\$69,638	\$74,289
8	\$41,320	\$47,518	\$51,650	\$77,475	\$82,640
<b>Family units with more than 8 members</b>	Add \$4,180 for each additional	Add \$4,807 for each additional	Add \$5,225 for each additional	Add \$7,838 for each additional	Add \$8,360 for each additional

<b>Sliding Fee Schedule</b>	Free	\$20/month	\$40/month	\$60/month	\$100/month
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# General Policies

## **FAMILY PARTICIPATION:**

The preschool encourages family visitors and volunteers. Family members are always welcome to share their time, hobbies, or talents in the classroom; and assist on advisory boards. Parent conferences, family workshops, and family socials will be planned throughout the year. When you spend time with your children at school, you are demonstrating your interest and commitment to their education.

## **OPEN DOOR POLICY:**

Any parent of a child enrolled in the program will be permitted access to the school during its hours of operation to contact his/her child, to evaluate the program environment, or for other purposes approved by the Preschool Coordinator. Please sign in upon entering the premises, then sign out upon leaving.

## **SNACK:**

A healthy snack is provided for both the morning and afternoon classes.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES:**

Conferences with parents about their child's educational growth and social development will be held on an assigned Friday in the fall and in the spring. Please consult your child's school calendar for these dates. If you require a conference at another time, please speak with your child's teacher to schedule. Additional conferences may be scheduled at the request of the parent or teacher. End of year IEP conferences for some children will be held in April and/or May.

## **NOTICES SENT HOME:**

Sending a backpack or book bag (with your child's name written on it) each day will help insure that children's work and important messages from the teacher get to you safely.

## **CLOTHING:**

Please dress children appropriately for school and label all clothing to be worn outdoors. Clothing should be comfortable and suitable for playing. It is helpful to the staff and best for your child to have clothing he/she can manage on his/her own. During the day, your child will be running, painting, climbing, etc. If your child is in a dress, please make sure she wears shorts underneath. Your cooperation is asked in making sure your child comes to school with proper footwear. Tennis shoes are best. Please no flip flops. Since accidents do happen, parents need to provide a complete extra set of clothing, including pants, shirt, underwear, and socks that are suitable for the season and are clearly labeled with the child's name.

## **OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES:**

All children will be expected to participate in outdoor play during the school year. The decision to remain indoors when the weather is inclement will be based on temperature, wind chill factor, and precipitation. In cold weather, please dress students appropriately. Students will not be



permitted to remain in the classroom unsupervised.

**TOYS AND NOVELTIES:**

Students are not to bring balls, toys, and novelties to school unless the teacher permits it for a specific activity and they must remain in the classroom. Such playthings can create classroom disruptions and/or cause serious injury to other students. No toy guns, knives, swords, etc. are permitted at school. All items brought to school are the sole responsibility of the student and will be confiscated if unallowable or misused. Parents must claim these items. We provide all equipment necessary for your child's enjoyment at outdoor play.

**OMBUDSMAN:**

An ombudsman is a public official appointed to investigate parents' complaints or serious concerns with policy at the school level. The following is the Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool plan for parent's concerns:

Teacher	Kathryn Kleman	419-687-4331 ext. 7
Preschool Coordinator	Stacy Crawford	419-774-5556 ext. 2031
Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center	Adrienne Randall	419-774-2507
Ohio Department of Education		614-466-0224

# Health, Safety, and Wellness

## **ILLNESSES AND EMERGENCIES:**

If a child becomes sick, runs a temperature at school, or shows signs of a communicable disease or illness, the parents or legal guardian will be called immediately so the child can be picked up and his/her health needs properly met. We do not have the facilities to care for a sick child at school.

If your child is absent because of a contagious illness, please contact the office. A doctor's excuse is required for your child to return to school. We request that you not bring your child to school if he/she is running a temperature or has any condition to which you would not want your own child exposed.

In case of a sudden illness or serious accident, a parent or legal guardian will be notified immediately. Be sure the emergency number is current at all times. **A child may not attend preschool without at least two current emergency numbers.** Please make sure that emergency contacts are kept up to date. If a phone number is changed, notify the office so that your child's information can be updated. If a parent, legal guardian or family doctor cannot be located when a severe emergency develops, the child will be taken to the hospital emergency room by ambulance. Mid-Ohio ESC Preschool will not assume responsibility for the payment of hospital, doctor, or ambulance fees.

## **PHYSICALS:**

Students **must** have a physical on file within 30 days of enrollment. The physical must have been completed within the past calendar year. The physical form has been included in the enrollment packet. The form is also available in the office. The school nurse is available to families who might need assistance in obtaining a physical. Any student who does not have a physical on file within 30 days of enrollment will be excluded from the program until the physical is completed and on file. This requirement will be strictly enforced.

## **HEALTHCHEK**

Healthchek is Ohio's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (ESPD) service package. Information regarding preventative services available for babies, kids and young adults covered by Medicaid, is available in the enrollment package. For more information, contact:

Huron County Representative: Carol Loose 419-668-8126 ext. 3400

Richland County Representative: John Dorsey 419-774-5483

## **MEDICATION:**

The Preschool Program discourages the dispensing of medication to students while at school. In those cases where medications must be administered during the school day, the following restrictions apply:

**Prescription medication:**

By Ohio Law, prescription medicine can only be administered when a physician's order is on file at the school. This form must be signed by both the physician and the parent/guardian. **New medication forms, available from the preschool office, must be submitted each school year, as well as any changes in medication orders.** Please note that inhaled medications, such as those used in the treatment of asthma, are considered prescription medicines and also require a signed form. Also, remember that:

- A. Students are not allowed to administer medications to themselves. The school nurse, preschool teacher, preschool site manager, or their designee will perform this task in accordance with physician's instructions.
  
- B. Medication must be in the original container with the student's name and directions for administration clearly visible.

**Non-prescription medication:**

The use of over-the-counter medications is discouraged in the preschool and will only be dispensed by the nurse, the preschool coordinator, or their designee when a physician's written request is on file in the preschool office. All other requirements outlined under Prescription medication above also apply.

**PRESCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

The health and safety of the children are safeguarded by an organized program of school health services designed to identify child health problems and to coordinate school and community health resources for children.

The program shall adhere to Governing Board policies and administrative guidelines concerning immunization; emergency medical authorization requirements; providing and posting procedures for emergency situations, including fire drills, rapid dismissals, and tornado drills (including keeping records of such drills or dismissals); and providing procedures for written notification to parents in the event of a child being injured and maintaining a log of injury reports. Medical and dental emergency procedures shall be posted in each preschool room and by each telephone, and shall be made available to school personnel, children, and parents. Emergency numbers shall be posted by each telephone. Grounds, play areas, and other facilities shall be supervised when scheduled for use by children. First-aid facilities and materials shall be provided.

When administering a medication, food supplement, modified diet, or fluoride supplement, the program shall:

- A. Prior to administration, secure the written instructions of a licensed prescriber as appropriate for the administration of any medication, food supplement, modified diet, or fluoride supplement; and
- B. Each time medication is administered, a written record or log including dosage, date, and time shall be made. That record or log shall be kept on file for one (1) year.

All preschool staff members shall wash their hands with soap and running water after each diaper change, or after assisting a child with toileting; after cleaning; after toileting; before preparing or eating food; before feeding any child; and when hands have been in contact with nasal or mucous secretions. Disposable towels or an air hand dryer shall be available at all times.

**MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:**

A person trained to recognize the common signs of communicable disease or other illness shall observe each child daily as s/he enters a group. A "person trained to recognize the common signs of communicable disease" means any person trained in prevention, recognition, and management of communicable diseases.

The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease:

- A. The program shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness, or has been exposed to a communicable disease.
- B. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent or guardian:
  - 1. Diarrhea (more than one (1) abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four (24) hour period);
  - 2. Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;
  - 3. Difficult or rapid breathing;
  - 4. Yellowish skin or eyes;

5. Conjunctivitis;
  6. Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness;
  7. Untreated infected skin patch;
  8. Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool;
  9. Stiff neck;
  10. Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.
- C. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed in paragraph B of this rule as well as the following:
1. unusual spots or rashes
  2. sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
  3. elevated temperature
  4. vomiting
- D. Programs shall follow the Ohio Department of Health "child day care communicable disease chart" for appropriate management of suspected illnesses.
- E. A child isolated due to suspected communicable diseases shall be:
1. Cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used in the preschool program;
  2. Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised;

3. Made comfortable and provided with a cot. All linens and blankets used by the ill child shall be laundered before being used by another child. After use, the cots shall be disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent, or, if soiled with blood, feces, vomitus or other body fluids, the cots shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent;
4. Observed carefully for worsening condition;
5. Discharged to parent, guardian, or person designated by the parent or guardian as soon as practical.

Training shall be provided for all preschool staff in signs and symptoms of illness and in handwashing and disinfection procedures.

The parent or guardian shall be notified immediately when a child is exhibiting signs or symptoms of illness or has been exposed to a communicable disease.

The parents of all enrolled children shall be notified when children are exposed to a diagnosed communicable disease such as pink eye, ringworm, chicken pox, or lice.

In each building in which a program is operated there shall be readily available at all times at least one (1) preschool staff member who has completed a course approved by the State Department of Health in (1) first aid and (2) prevention, recognition, and management of communicable diseases.

#### **CHILD ABUSE RECOGNITION AND PREVENTION:**

In each building in which a program is operated, there shall be readily available at all times at least one (1) preschool staff member who has completed a course in child abuse recognition and prevention based on an approved curriculum. Consistent with State law and Policy 8462, preschool staff shall complete at least four (4) hours of in-service training in child abuse recognition and prevention within two (2) years of employment and every five (5) years thereafter.

#### **DIAPERING/TOILETING:**

The changing of diapers for all non-toilet-trained children shall be handled in conformity with the following methods:

- A. The changing of diapers for all non-toilet-trained children shall occur in a space that contains a hand-washing facility.
- B. The program shall provide disposable gloves for diapering; however, the use of gloves or hand sanitizer does not preclude requirements for proper hand washing.

- C. If an infant's diapers are to be changed in his/her crib or at a central changing station, there shall be some separation material between the infant and the changing surface. The material shall be discarded and replaced after each change.
- D. The central diaper-changing station or crib shall be disinfected after each diaper change with an appropriate germicidal agent in a manner consistent with the manufacturer's guidelines. If the diaper-changing station is soiled after the diaper change, it shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent.
- E. Any product used during diaper changing on more than one (1) child shall be used in such a way that the container does not touch the child. Any product obtained applied to a child shall be applied in such a manner so as not to contaminate the product or its container. Common containers shall be cleaned and disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent when soiled.
- F. For the purpose of diapering, topical ointments and creams provided by parents shall include written instructions. Such instructions shall include the name of the ointment, cream, or lotion; name of the child; birth date of the child; date; and signature. Written instructions shall be valid for no longer than three (3) months. Authorization for administration of the ointment, cream, or lotion may be cancelled by written request of the parent at any time.

Storing of clean diapers shall be handled in accordance with the following methods:

- A. A clean supply of diapers stored in a specifically designated area shall be available at all times.
- B. Diapers or clothing used during diaper changing and brought from the child's home shall be stored in space assigned exclusively for each child's belongings. Soiled clothing and/or diapers shall be sent home daily.

Storage and laundering of soiled diapers shall be handled in accordance with the following methods:

- A. Diapers or clothing soiled with fecal matter and sent home with a child need not be rinsed at the program facility, but may be placed directly into a plastic container or bag, sealed tightly, stored away from the rest of the child's belongings and out of the reach of children.

- B. Soiled diapers to be disposed of by the program shall be placed in a common plastic-lined covered container which shall be emptied, cleaned, and disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent daily or more frequently as needed.
- C. Diapers to be laundered at home or by the program shall be held for laundering for no longer than one (1) day.
- D. Soiled disposable diapers shall be discarded daily.

**LICE POLICY:**

Periodic head checks are made in the classroom throughout the year. If it is found that your child has head lice then you will need to pick him/her up at the school immediately. Please make sure to have current emergency contact numbers on file at all times. Your child will need to be treated with the appropriate shampoo and all of the nits (eggs) removed from his/her hair. Before your child may return to school, he/she must be brought in and checked by the nurse or designated personnel and found to be lice free.

**INSPECTIONS:**

Copies of food and fire inspections are available upon request. The Preschool License is posted outside the classroom and office. Copies are also available upon request.



# Board Policies

## **STUDENT PRIVACY AND PARENTAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION:**

The Governing Board respects the privacy rights of parents and their children. No student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the Educational Service Center's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an un-emancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
- B. Mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;
- C. Sex behavior or attitudes;
- E. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. Legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- H. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

The Superintendent shall require that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

Additionally, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum of the student. The parent will have access to the instructional material within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal. The term instructional material means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, including printed and representational materials, audio-visual materials,

and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the Internet). The term does not include academic tests or assessments.

The Board will not allow the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information (or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose).

The Superintendent is directed to provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the Educational Service Center of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the Superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the Educational Service Center, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described in A through H above are scheduled or expected to be scheduled.

For purposes of this policy, the term "parent" includes a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the welfare of the child)

**WEAPONS:**

The Governing Board prohibits students from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon, in a school safety zone and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Board for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the Board including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Board, a school-sponsored event, or in a Board-owned vehicle.

The term "weapon" means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and explosives.

**NONDISCRIMINATION:**

The Governing Board does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, sex, disability, military status, ancestry, age, or genetic information in its program, activities, or employment.

Further, it is the policy of this Educational Service Center to provide an equal opportunity for all students, regardless of race, color, creed, age, disability, religion, gender, ancestry, national origin, place of residence within the boundaries of the Center, or social or economic background, to learn through the curriculum offered in this Center.

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:**

### **Section I**

Any person who believes that she/he has been discriminated against or denied equal opportunity or access to programs or services may file a complaint, which may be referred to as a grievance, with the Center's Civil Rights Coordinator. The Civil Rights Coordinators for Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center are Lisa Cook, Human Resource Director and Mark Donnelly Director of Business and Operations. Either Civil Rights Coordinator may be reached at 419-774-5520.

The individual may also, at any time, contact the:

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights-Cleveland Office  
600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 750  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2611  
Telephone: (216) 522-4970

### **Section II**

A person who believes she/he has a valid basis for a complaint may discuss the matter, informally and on an oral basis with the Center's Civil Rights Coordinator, who will investigate the complaint and respond in writing to the complainant. If the informal procedures, do not resolve the matter to the complainant's satisfaction or s/he skips the informal process, she/he may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

#### **Step 1**

Investigation by the Center's Civil Rights Coordinator: A person may initiate a formal investigation by filing a written complaint with the Center's Civil Rights Coordinator. The complaint must contain the name and address of the individual or representative filing the complaint, be signed by the complainant or someone authorized to sign for the complainant, and describe the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Civil Rights Coordinator of the nature and date of the alleged violation, and propose a resolution. The complaint must be filed within thirty (30) calendar days of the circumstances or event giving rise to the complaint, unless the time for filing is extended by the Civil Rights Coordinator for good cause. The Civil Rights Coordinator will conduct an impartial investigation of the complaint. As part of the investigation, the Civil Rights Coordinator shall permit the complainant to present witnesses and other evidence in support of his/her complaint. The investigation shall be completed within ten (10) business days of the written complaint being filed. The Civil Rights Coordinator will notify the complainant in writing of his/her decision and will maintain the Center's files and records relating to the complaint.

## Step 2

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Civil Rights Coordinator's Step 1 decision, she/he may submit, in writing, a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) business days after receipt of the Coordinator's response. The Superintendent shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days of receiving the written appeal

## Step 3

If the complainant remains unsatisfied, she/he may appeal through a signed written statement to the Governing Board within five (5) business days of his/her receipt of the Superintendent's Step 2 response. In an attempt to resolve the complaint, the Governing Board shall meet with the concerned parties and their representative within twenty (20) business days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of this meeting.

### **DRUG POLICY**

In accordance with Federal Law, the Board of Education prohibits the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of drugs by students on school grounds, in school or school-approved vehicles, or at any school-related event. Drugs include any alcoholic beverage, anabolic steroid, dangerous controlled substance. Compliancy with this policy is mandatory for all students. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with due process and as specified in the student handbooks, up to and including expulsion from school. When required by State law, the District will also notify law enforcement officials.

The district is concerned about any student who is a victim of alcohol or drug abuse and will facilitate the process by which she/he receives help through programs and services available in the community. Students and their parents should contact the school principal or counseling office whenever such help is needed.

### **PROHIBITION AGAINST RETALIATION:**

The Board will not discriminate against, coerce, intimidate, threaten, or interfere with any individual because the person opposed any act or practice made unlawfully by any Federal civil rights law, or because that individual made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under those laws or because that individual exercised, enjoyed, aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of any right granted or protected by those laws.

### **BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR:**

The Governing Board is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and violence within a dating relationship. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the Educational Service Center, including activities on school property, on a school bus, or while en route to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means:

- A. any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student(s) and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s); or
- B. violence within a dating relationship.

"Electronic act" means an act committed through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. This type of behavior is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, bullying/cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying also means cyberbullying through electronically transmitted acts (i.e., internet, e-mail, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that a student(s) or a group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental and physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s).

Any student or student's parent/guardian who believes she/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Preschool Coordinator, Director of Student Services, or the Superintendent. The student may also report concerns to teachers and other school staff who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate

administrator or Board official. Complaints against the Preschool Coordinator should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

All complaints about aggressive behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. The appropriate administrator shall prepare a written report of the investigation upon completion. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action shall be included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying/cyberbullying by an electronic act or otherwise, has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include suspension or up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

If, during an investigation of a reported act of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying/cyberbullying, the appropriate administrator believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on a Protected Class, the Preschool Coordinator will report the act of bullying and/or harassment to one of the Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers so that it may be investigated in accordance with the procedures set forth in Policy 5517 - Anti-Harassment.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of aggressive behavior is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as aggressive behavior. Retaliation may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Deliberately making false reports about harassment, intimidation, and bullying and/or other aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Deliberately making false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

If a student or other individual believes there has been aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

The Center shall implement intervention strategies to protect a victim or other person from new or additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying and from retaliation following such a report.

This policy shall not be interpreted to infringe upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by State or Federal law).

The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken. If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the Building Principal or appropriate administrator shall notify the custodial parent/guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing such notification care shall be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

If after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by a specific student are verified, the Building Principal or appropriate administrator shall notify in writing the custodial parent/guardian of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in the notification.

#### **COMPLAINTS:**

Students and/or their parents/guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such reports shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Preschool Coordinator for review, investigation, and action.

Students, parents/guardians, and school personnel may make informal or anonymous complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such complaints shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal or anonymous complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the information provided. This written report shall be promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the Preschool Coordinator for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

Individuals who make informal complaints as provided above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action shall be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

When an individual making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

**PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY:**

The Center will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform to any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

**REPORTING REQUIREMENT:**

At least semi-annually, the Superintendent shall provide to the President of the Board a written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the Center web site (if one exists). The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school, or at school-sponsored events.

Allegations of criminal misconduct and suspected child abuse will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or to Child Protective Services in accordance with statute. Center

**IMMUNITY:**

A Center employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with this policy and if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying promptly, in good faith, and in compliance with the procedures specified in this policy. Such immunity from liability shall not apply to an employee, student, or volunteer determined to have made an intentionally false report about harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

**NOTIFICATION:**

Notice of this policy will be **annually** circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the Center and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. At least once each school year a written statement describing the policy and consequences for violations of the policy shall be sent to each student's custodial parent or guardian.

The statement may be sent with regular student report cards or may be delivered electronically.

The policy and an explanation of the seriousness of bullying by electronic means shall be made available to students in the Center and to their custodial parents or guardians.



State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedures.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING:**

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of aggressive behavior, including bullying and violence within a dating relationship. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate training to all members of the Center community related to the implementation of this policy and accompanying administrative guidelines. All training regarding the Board's policy and administrative guidelines about aggressive behavior and bullying in general, will be age and content appropriate.

Annually, the Center shall provide all students enrolled in the Center with age-appropriate instruction regarding the Board's policy, including a written or verbal discussion of the consequences for violations of the policy to the extent that State or Federal funds are

In accordance with Board Policy 8462, the Superintendent shall include a review of this policy on bullying and other forms of harassment in the required training in the prevention of child abuse, violence, and substance abuse and the promotion of positive youth development.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy. Guidelines shall include reporting and investigative procedures, as needed. The complaint procedure established by the Superintendent shall be followed.