

NSECD Family Handbook

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Signature Page

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____ have received and reviewed the 2021-2022 NSECD Family Handbook. I understand the policies and procedures outlined in this Handbook, and agree to abide by them, as will my child. I also understand that this form is to be signed and returned to the site within two (2) weeks after the start of school. This form will be kept in my child's file and may be submitted to the NSECD Office upon request for auditing or monitoring purposes.

Name of School

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Introduction

Pre-kindergarten programs build a foundation of development and learning that allows children to build skills, attitudes, and habits to do well in school and throughout life. The Louisiana Department of Education understands that pre-K prepares your child for their journey of lifelong learning.

Both the NSECD program and the Louisiana Department of Education encourage you to be an active participant in your child's education, as you are your child's first teacher. We also encourage parent involvement in your child's school activities. Research shows that children whose parents take an active role in their education and show interest in their work, score higher on tests. It also builds a strong foundation for the child's educational future.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of the NSECD Program rules that the site must follow and to provide you with local contact information for resources. Please feel free to contact the Louisiana Department of Education Early Childhood team with any questions at earlychildhood@la.gov.

Program Philosophy

The NSECD Program is designed to provide three- and four-year-old children (living in economic disadvantage) access to high-quality, developmentally-appropriate, full-day pre-K classes in state-approved private preschools and Type III child care centers.

Language/Discipline

No form of demeaning language or corporal punishment is allowed in the NSECD Program, by anyone at any time.

Uniforms

Your school may request that pre-K children wear uniforms to school. While families must cover the cost of your child's uniforms, your child WILL NOT be denied enrollment if you are unable to purchase a school uniform. Families and the school can contact private or public support service agencies to get assistance for families.

Supplies

Families are required to either supply classroom materials such as glue, crayons, markers, tissues, and other typical materials, or they may pay a supply fee to cover the cost of supplies that are provided by the school. The school may donate classroom materials, but it is the parent's responsibility to cover the costs for classroom materials.

Attendance

All NSECD sites are required to report classroom attendance on a daily basis. The site will complete an intervention plan for children who are tardy or absent from school on a regular basis. The following course of action will be taken:

- You will be contacted (via telephone, letter or conference) to review the responsibility agreed to in the NSECD Parental Choice form (Appendix A).
- If the child continues to be tardy or absent, a meeting will be required with the NSECD program.
- The school may contact the Louisiana Department of Education for help in creating and carrying out an appropriate intervention plan to address this problem.

All children in the NSECD program are required to attend school for 74% of the scheduled school days per month. In order to be counted as present for attendance purposes, a child must be present a minimum of four (4) hours of the six (6) hour instructional period.

Before and After School Programs

The NSECD Program does not provide funding for before- and after-school care. Parents are required to make arrangements for their children's care outside of the regular 6 hour instructional school day. Parents who contract with the site to provide before- and after- care services for their child must pay the site's required fees. After three consecutive months of non-payment of before- or after- care fees, the site has the right to disenroll a child from the before- or after- care program.

Early Dismissal

If your child's site is scheduled for early dismissal, you are responsible for any additional child care fees.

Holiday

If your site provides optional care during holiday breaks (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Mardi Gras, etc.), families are responsible for paying for cost of attendance.

Immunization and Health Screening Requirements

All children attending NSECD programs are required to have their age-appropriate immunizations and screenings during the school year. Families are responsible for ensuring that children receive all required immunizations.

Immunization List

Louisiana requires that all students entering school for the first time have received all immunizations against vaccine-preventable diseases according to a schedule approved by the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Office of Public Health (OPH):

Vaccination	Requirement: Under 4 Years on the first day of school, entering Pre-K, Child Care, or Head Start	Requirement: 4 Years and older on the first day of school, entering Kindergarten, Pre-K, Child Care, or Head Start
HepB (Hepatitis B)	Three (3) doses of Hepatitis B vaccine	Three (3) doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
RV (Rotavirus)	Three (3) doses of Rotavirus vaccine	
Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b)		Three (3) doses of Haemophilus Influenza Type B vaccine (Hib)
DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)	Three (3) or Four (4) doses of Diphtheria Tetanus Acellular Pertussis vaccine	Booster dose of Diphtheria Tetanus Acellular Pertussis vaccine received on or after the 4th birthday
PCV (Pneumococcal Infections)	Three (3) doses of Pneumococcal Conjugate vaccine for children less than 24 months of age	
Polio (IPV)	Two (2) or (3) Three doses of polio vaccine	Booster dose of Poliovirus vaccine received on after the 4 th birthday
MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)	One (1) Or Two (2) doses of Measles, Mumps, Rubella vaccine	Two (2) doses of Measles, Mumps, Rubella vaccine
Var (Varicella – Chicken Pox)	One (1) dose of Varicella Vaccine	Two (2) doses of Varicella vaccine

Is your child unvaccinated due to family beliefs?

Pursuant to R.S. 17:170, families who choose not to vaccinate their children due to medical, religious, or philosophical beliefs may submit a [Statement of Exemption](#) to attend the program.

Do you lack health insurance or a way to pay for shots?

Families can receive free immunizations through [Shots for Tots](#).

Has your child never been vaccinated, but you would like them to be?

Your child may be able to follow this [accelerated schedule for children starting immunizations late](#). Ask your pediatrician for more information.

If your child receives any immunizations during the school year, an up-to-date record is to be given to your NSECD program. Immunization documents are to be turned in during registration (or by the time pre-K classes begin), and they will be kept on file in the site office. If your child is due for an immunization, please contact your pediatrician to schedule an appointment.

Health Screenings

Hearing and vision screenings will be provided to children in the NSECD program within the first 90 days of school. Follow up contacts will be made to all parents whose children have a screening result that falls out of the typical developmental range. The site will inform all parents whose children need additional testing. Parents are asked to make sure that your child is present and on time for these scheduled health screenings. NSECD sites are strongly encouraged to provide additional screenings (speech, dental, social/emotional, motor skills, BMI). Check with your site for screening dates and times.

If your child's site does not offer dental screenings, please understand the importance of dental hygiene and the effect it has on overall health. Encouraging your children to develop healthy dental habits will benefit them in the future.

Transportation

Parents, you are responsible for getting your child to and from your NSECD site. The NSECD Program does not provide transportation for children. If a participating site decides to provide transportation for children, the NSECD Program is not liable for any issues that may arise while the child is under the supervision of the driver.

Snacks and Meals

Parents who choose to send meals and snacks for their child must first acknowledge that they are aware of the Provider's responsibility to serve nutritious meals and snacks to all children and to provide these meals for free, or at the reduced or full price cost according to eligibility guidelines established for USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

In addition, the site is to provide pre-K children with a nutritious morning or afternoon snack (depending on the time that breakfast and lunch are served). If your child does not participate in the free or reduced lunch program, you are responsible for any cafeteria fees that are set by your site. Parents are responsible for paying cafeteria fees. After three consecutive months of non-payment, the NSECD site has the right to disenroll a child from the program.

Field Trips

Sites are required to take pre-K classes on at least two field trips during the regular school year, pending COVID restrictions. Parents who choose to participate on the field trip are responsible for their own cost(s).

Family Involvement

Family involvement is critical to child development. Children grow in the context of their family and community. For children, a sense of community brings connection to both their surroundings and the individuals in those surroundings — further connecting them to their own unique place in the world. The NSECD Program encourages families to become involved in their child’s educational experience and share in the unique community NSECD provides.

Your child’s site will regularly include parents in special celebrations and welcome parents who want to share special talents with the class whether it is through volunteering, class visits, attending programs or field trips, etc. Your child’s site may ask you to attend volunteer training, follow safety procedures, and log volunteer hours.

If you’d like to get more information about being involved in your child’s education, please reach out to your program director. In addition to staying involved with your child’s education while they are in pre-K, you are encouraged to extend learning opportunities into your time at home. Your child’s teacher may provide you with suggestions and activities for extending learning. You may also view the Department’s [literacy guidance](#) and the [family support toolbox](#).

Parent Orientation Meeting

Within the first month of enrollment, if not offered prior to program start, the site will have a pre-K orientation for all families of children in the NSECD Program. This orientation will offer an opportunity for you, the parent or guardian, to ask questions to the pre-K teachers and administrators about the NSECD Program.

Sites are to provide the following at orientation:

- Opportunities for parents to gain knowledge about child development and parenting techniques
- Support services, including parenting classes available in the community and information on enrollment in local adult literacy programs
- Information on opportunities to participate in classroom activities, field trips, or workshops relating to parenting or child development

Please contact your NSECD program directly for more information about participating in your orientation and getting more information about how to best support your child's pre-K experience.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents or guardians should attend a minimum of two individual parent-teacher conferences per year. The teacher shall prepare a summary of development in each domain based on documentation collected in the child portfolios. During the conference, the teacher shall review with parents portfolio content and the child's development. Families are encouraged to comment and share concerns. All conference summaries require signature for confirmation.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Parents are not required to financially support extracurricular activities or fundraisers. Parents who choose to participate in these activities, such as purchasing school pictures, T-shirts, etc., may be charged fees for these activities.

Disenrollment

A parent may remove their child from the NSECD Program at any time. If a child is disenrolled for any reason, a parent must sign a disenrollment form provided by the site. In addition,

- Children may be removed from the class roster if they fail to maintain **program attendance requirements** for three consecutive months.
- Children may be removed from the class roster if there is an outstanding balance for **cafeteria fees** for three consecutive months.
- Children may be removed from the class roster if there is an outstanding balance for **before-and-after school care fees** for three consecutive months.

Disenrolled children may be eligible to re-enroll into the NSECD Program but may be placed on a waiting list depending on available space.

Parents may transfer their child to another participating NSECD site only if the transfer site has an available slot. Parents are urged to check with the site they wish to transfer to before voluntarily removing their child.