

Montrose County School District RE-1J

Early Childhood Centers



Addresses and Telephone Numbers

Early Childhood Center
900 Colorado Avenue, Unit 4
Montrose, CO 81401 (970)249-5858

Johnson Early Childhood Center
13820 6700 Rd
Montrose CO 81402 (970)249-2584

Olathe Early Childhood Center
320 N. 3rd
Olathe, CO 81425 (970)240-6435

Parent Handbook **Policy and Procedure Information**

School Year 2023 - 2024

MESSAGE TO OUR FAMILIES:

Staff and the Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers recognizes and supports the family as the first teacher.

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to the Early Childhood Center family! We hope to make this year a rewarding experience for you and your family. This guide has been prepared to help you understand our programs, our Volunteer Handbook, and our Policy & Procedures. The Head Start Program Performance Standards & Regulations and The Early Childhood Centers Policy and Procedure Books can be found at all sites and can be reviewed at any time.

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PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

In partnership with our families and our communities, the children of the Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers will acquire a positive foundation for lifelong learning.

VISION

- To promote lifelong learning for children, families, and staff.
- To promote and maintain professionalism by encouraging staff to continue their education and licenses.
- To explore methods to help students to become more successful.
- To offer developmentally appropriate services to the optimal number of preschool students allowable by facilities.

VALUE STATEMENTS

At the Early Childhood Centers we will:

- Recognize and support the family as the child's first teacher.
- Recognize and support the children's individual development.
- Provide developmentally appropriate hands-on learning experiences using play.
- Provide a strong foundation of early literacy and mathematical skills.
- Provide a safe and nurturing environment physically, academically, socially and psychologically while attending school.
- Provide home learning experiences for children and families in all areas of the child's development.
- Establish partnerships with families, which are essential to the educational success of their children.
- Treat families with respect while promoting cultural awareness in all areas of the school curriculum.
- Partner with the communities, families and the children to create a positive learning experience.
- Recognize that ongoing communication between the staff, children, families, Policy Council, Governing Board (Montrose County School Board) and the community is crucial to creating a positive learning experience.

OUR CENTERS

The MCSD RE-1J Early Childhood Centers have three center locations: one center is located in Montrose, the Early Childhood Center (ECC) , at Johnson Elementary (JECC). and one in Olathe, Olathe Early Childhood Center (OECC) . Our schools follow the MCSD RE-1J District calendar. Our students will not attend when the district is not in session. Children attend Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Children are placed in Part Day or Full Day Sessions.

Office hours are from 7:30AM - 4:30PM.

Times of Operation for each Site and Session:

ECC Double Sessions: 7:30 AM - 11:15 AM -or- 7:45 AM - 11:30 AM -or- 8:00 AM - 11:45 AM
12:00 PM - 3:45 PM -or- 12:15 PM - 4:00 PM

ECC Full Day Sessions: 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM
7:45 AM - 3:45 PM
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

JECC Double Sessions: 7:15 AM - 11:00 AM
11:45 AM - 3:30 PM

OECC Double Session: 7:15 AM - 11:00 AM
11:45 AM - 3:30 PM

OECC Full Day Sessions: 7:15AM - 3:30PM
7:30AM - 3:30PM
7:45AM - 3:45PM

OUR PROGRAMS

The MCSD RE-1J Early Childhood Centers are comprised of three (four) separately funded programs that are fully integrated in the classrooms to provide a system of services offered to all children and families. The four programs are Head Start, Universal Preschool Colorado Program, Services for Children with a Disability and a Tuition Program (if available). All children of the Early Childhood Centers, regardless of funding source, receive classroom instruction utilizing Creative Curriculum and "Second Step" (a Social Emotional Readiness curriculum). The staff is dedicated to providing developmentally appropriate activities for preschool children. Parents are included in all aspects of the program and its operation.

WHAT IS HEAD START?

Head Start is a federally funded program of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. It was established in 1965 as an innovative approach providing preschool services to children of low-income families with nutritional and psychological needs. Head Start is a comprehensive program for children and families. The needs of children vary from community to community; therefore, the programs are individualized and operated locally. Montrose County has had Head Start in its community since September 1991. The grantee is the Montrose County School District RE-1J. The local Head Start program is funded for 102 children. Qualifiers:

- Income eligibility
- 3 or 4 years of age by August 1st of the current school year and not age eligible for Kindergarten.
- There are NO FEES for Head Start families

WHAT IS THE UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL COLORADO PROGRAM?

Universal Preschool (UPK) Colorado ensures that every child in the year before they are eligible for kindergarten is eligible for up to half-day (15 hours) of state-funded, voluntary preschool beginning in the 2023-24 school year. Providers may choose to offer 10-hour programs. Three-year-olds with qualifying factors are eligible for part-time (10 hours) of preschool programming. Qualifying factors:

- Family risk factors determined by the State of Colorado
- 3 or 4 years of age by August 1st of the current school year
- There are NO FEES for UPK families
- Families must apply at upk.colorado.gov and be matched to our program

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Early Childhood Centers offer services to preschool children with identified special needs. State and federal monies fund the local special needs program. The centers provide services to children ages 2.5 - 5 years that have a valid individual education plan (IEP). In cooperation with the parents, the early childhood staffing team plans and implements educational goals appropriate to the individual needs of the child. In compliance with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), any preschool child with a valid IEP is provided the opportunity for services in the program. Qualifiers:

- Valid IEP
- 2.5—5 years of age
- There are NO FEES for families of Children with Disabilities
- Families should complete the UPK application at upk.colorado.gov

TUITION PAY PROGRAM - IF AVAILABLE

Please contact the office regarding availability of the Tuition Program. Qualifiers:

- 3 or 4 years of age by August 1st of the current school year and not age eligible for Kindergarten.
- Fees are paid in advance and includes the cost of meals and snacks.

SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

In partnership with our families and communities, the children of the Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers will acquire a positive foundation for lifelong learning.

As assessed and measured by Teaching Strategies GOLD tri-annually, and through daily purposeful play.

Social Emotional Development

Children will develop age appropriate social and emotional relationships with peers and adults to build competence and confidence.

3-year-olds will learn to:

Label emotions in themselves and others

- Express their feelings
- Develop positive self-esteem and self-confidence through parallel play and friendships
- Seek adult help when needed

4-year-olds will demonstrate:

- Self-regulation to promote positive relationships
- Ability to solve social problems and suggest solutions
- Positive self-esteem and self-confidence through cooperative play and friendships
- Independence

Physical Development and Health

Children will develop age appropriate fine and gross motor skills as well as understand and practice healthy habits that support physical wellness.

3-year-olds will learn to:

- Explore different ways of moving
- Grasp/manipulate objects using hand and whole arm movements
- Practice healthy and safe habits as identified through curriculum and instruction

4-year-olds will demonstrate:

- Moving purposefully from place to place with control
- Using precise finger grip to manipulate objects
- Understanding of how their behaviors and choices influence their health and safety

Approaches to Learning

Children will display initiative, creativity, and imagination in play and when interacting with others.

3-year-olds will learn to:

- Sustain interest in activities with encouragement from an adult
- Develop curiosity by exploring and investigating ways to make things happen

4-year-olds will demonstrate:

- How to plan and pursue a variety of appropriately challenging activities
- Eagerness to seek and experience new knowledge and skills
- Using a variety of resources

Language and Literacy

Children will develop advancement of communication skills, language and written competencies using their imagination and natural curiosity for the written word as well as demonstrate increased competency in their home language while developing proficiency in English.

3-year-olds will learn to:

- Understand and follow simple one and two-step directions
- Initiate basic conversation
- Care for and appreciate books
- Develop basic concepts of print and writing

4-year-olds will demonstrate:

- Engagement in appropriate conversations and communication skills such as; eye contact, taking turns and voice/volume control.
- Concepts of print and writing
- Following two or more directions

Cognitive and General Knowledge

Children will develop age appropriate problem solving, logic, and reasoning skills in math.

3-year-olds will learn to:

- Observe and imitate the problem-solving skills of adults and peers
- Explore number concepts and operations, patterns and measurements

4-year-olds will demonstrate:

- Solving problems in different situations
- Number concepts and operations, patterns, and measurements

WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED

- Participate in scheduled home visits.
- Attend Parent/Teacher Conferences.
- Ensure regular attendance at preschool.

- Attend family activities and parent meetings.
- Complete weekly activities sent home by teachers.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Montrose County School District (MCSD) RE-1J Early Childhood Center depends on parental involvement in all aspects of the program including the governing and decision making of the preschool. Parents are required, by statute, to be a part of these Boards, Councils and Committees. The MCSD RE-1J Early Childhood Center relies on parents to volunteer to be members and to help make the preschool program a strong, safe learning environment for young children.

HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

The Early Childhood Center's Head Start Policy Council helps guide the agency and ensure program decisions are responsive to program needs. The Policy Council and the Governing Board work in collaboration to monitor all aspects of the Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood program. The Policy Council is composed of 51% parents of currently enrolled Head Start children and 49% other preschool parents and community members.

The Policy Council meets monthly at a time chosen by the Council members.

MCSD ECC ADVISORY COUNCIL

The MCSD ECC ADVISORY COUNCIL oversees the implementation of the Universal Preschool (UPK) Colorado Program. In addition the council monitors the implementation of program curriculum and the outcomes. The Advisory Council is composed of parents of currently enrolled children, community members and staff.

PARENT-DRIVEN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

The Parent-Driven Activities Committee (P-DAC) meetings are an opportunity for parents from each center to plan, organize and implement family, parent and child activities. The activities incorporate social opportunities for children and families, new learning experiences and training. Meetings are held in the evenings at the direction of the committee.

HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Health Advisory Committee's primary purpose is to address health needs of the children and families of the MCSD RE-1J Early Childhood Centers according to the Head Start Performance Standards. The Board makes recommendations on health related issues, addresses concerns, and provides valuable professional expertise. It is composed of staff, parents, community agencies, professional individuals with experience in physical, dental, mental health, and nutrition.

The Board meets two times per year, October and April.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Early Childhood Center uses data from all of the ongoing monitoring tools collected throughout each school year to establish short and long term goals for the program. Staff, parents, and Policy Council Representatives are involved in Strategic Planning for the program.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Head Start program is funded with federal funds. The Head Start grant period goes from April 1 to March 31. This grant must be submitted in December (90 days before the end of the grant period). The Head Start Grant Committee is composed of preschool staff and parents, as well as a representative from the School Board and Policy Council.

The Grant Committee meets weekly in October and November.

ADDITIONAL PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Classroom Volunteers
- Classroom Material Preparation
- Family Nights
- Home Visits
- Take-Home Projects

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers are welcomed into our school! Moms, dads, grandmas and grandpas, aunts and uncles! Classroom volunteers may start working in our classrooms beginning in October. This allows our teachers and students time to form bonds and important relationships that will last throughout the year. A volunteer schedule will go out in September. If you are not on the list and would like to be or you would like to visit on a particular day, please see your teacher to schedule a date and time.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS:

Any volunteer that works in our classrooms more than 14 hours per month will be required to take a TB test and pass an additional background check. All volunteers are screened/assessed for TB. The Early Childhood Center will be responsible for payment of these requirements.

Volunteers working more than fourteen (14) calendar days (112 hours) per calendar year, who are used to meeting staff to child ratio must be equally qualified as an Early Childhood teacher, assistant Early Childhood teacher or aide and have complete staff records on file with ECC. They also must complete finger print based background checks and the State Department automated child abuse and neglect background check.

Volunteers between the ages of twelve (12) and sixteen (16) must have a written purpose developed by the center for volunteering and may not volunteer for more than 2 hours per day.

VOLUNTEER CHECK-IN

Visitors and volunteers that enter into our school must sign in at the front office, must provide a valid form of identification the first time of volunteering so that it can be scanned through our Raptor V-soft software and sign the Classrooms Visitor Sign IN sheet once in the classroom. The software helps track visitors and volunteers at our schools. The scan provides us alerts on public sex offenders.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

The only time a volunteer may be left alone with a child other than their own without completing all required background checks is while driving on a fieldtrip.

A TYPICAL DAY IN PRESCHOOL

Class Hours:

Half-Day: 3.75 hrs./day Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Full Day: 8 hrs./day Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Classroom Schedule

Arrival: The children are delivered and signed-in by parents or an authorized person to school.

Welcome: The teachers greet the children. Backpacks, and jackets are put in cubbies or hung up.

Hand Washing: The children and adults wash for meals, after using the restroom, after blowing their noses or sneezing and putting their hands in their mouth.

Meals: All meals are served family style. The children are encouraged to serve themselves and to try new foods. Polite manners and quiet conversation are practiced.

Tooth Brushing/Free Play: The children are called one at a time to brush their teeth. The others play while waiting their turn.

Circle: A large group activity which may include calendar, weather, class job assignments, stories, finger plays, music and movement or community visitors. The weekly theme is introduced and expanded upon.

Outdoor Play: Includes child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities. Balls, tricycles, climbing equipment, running and jumping are examples.

Centers: The child chooses an interest area that he/she would like to work at. The centers include: art, blocks, computers, manipulative, dramatic play, science, library, music and writing. The teacher plans specific activities for a small group of children.

Small Groups: The teacher will assign you a specific duty.

Clean-up: Guide the children in the clean-up process. They are responsible for the materials they use. Be creative and make clean-up fun. Encourage all children to participate.

Reminder: Clean-up time may be very difficult for some children. Putting away one or two items may be a great first step. Recognize their efforts.

Story: The teacher or Para will lead the story. Sit with the children. Quiet those that are disruptive. It's okay to hold one next to you. A quiet "Shh" with your finger to your lips works well, too.

Departure: Assist the children in gathering their belongings, putting on their coats and preparing to go home.

You will not be asked to do all of these responsibilities in one day. This is only a tool to help prepare you for the activities. Watch the teacher and Para!

THE VOLUNTEER'S ROLE

The volunteer is assigned specific duties within the components of the daily schedule. This is posted on the daily lesson plan on the parent board. Please check your duties at the start of your day with the teacher.

Welcome: The welcome time is for the teacher, child and his/her parents. One volunteer and/or classroom paraprofessional (Para) uses this time to set-up for the meal. One volunteer remains in the classroom assisting children with putting away their backpacks and belongings and starting hand washing.

Meal preparation: Volunteers, please follow these healthy hygiene procedures: 1) Wash hands. 2) Put on disposable gloves. Two to three children will assist in setting the tables.

The volunteer's responsibility is to: 1) Introduce yourself to the children and ask their names, 2) Be sure the children have washed their hands, 3) Guide and encourage the children. Help them as needed. The classroom Para will check the menu and obtain the plates, bowls, silverware, utensils and food needed for the meal. The children will need your assistance setting the table with silverware, napkins, plates and cups at each setting. You will help in filling the serving dishes. The children may set any cold food items on the table. The Para and volunteers are the only persons to handle hot food dishes. Early in the school year some children may only be ready to set napkins on the table. Be patient and supportive.

Hand Washing: Each child and adult needs to wash their hands prior to eating, after using the bathroom, blowing their nose or putting their hands in their mouth and/or nose. Allow each child plenty of time to wash.

Procedure: Hand washing procedures are posted by the sink. 1) Use warm water. 2) Apply soap and rub hands together to form a lather. Be sure the children scrub between each finger, on the top and bottom of each hand and the wrist. 3) Rinse well in warm water. 4) Dry with a clean paper towel. 5) Dispose of paper in the trash can. At the beginning of the school year some children may need you to help them wash completely. Assist and encourage them to try pulling up their sleeves and washing their own hands. Model washing your hands for them. Remind the children before meals to keep their hands only in clean places until the meal is completed.

Tooth Brushing: Each child has his/her own toothbrush. Please ask the teacher or para for guidance on the toothbrushing procedure.

Note: If you observe a worn toothbrush ask the teacher for a replacement.

Circle: This is a large group activity. The teacher or Para will lead the activity. The volunteer's role is to: 1) Sit on the floor in the circle with the children. If you are physically unable to sit on the floor you are welcome to bring a chair into the circle. 2) Interact in the activities with the children. 3) Encourage and praise the children around you. 4) When a child is inattentive, quiet, or disruptive, reposition yourself closer to that child. Help draw them back into the activity.

Outdoor Play: Prior to going outdoors, review the playground rules. These are posted in the classroom. Assist the children in putting on jackets, (zipping/snapping) gloves, and hats, as needed. All adults must wear orange vests, if available. 1) Position yourself with or near a small group of children. 2) Be alert and watchful for safe playing conditions. 3) Assist the children when needed. Encourage them to try skills and activities on their own, i.e. riding tricycles, pumping on the swings. 4) Participate with the children when appropriate, i.e. Group games, playing catch, or when they ask you to be a part of their creative play.

Centers: The teacher will assign you a specific center. She will provide you with materials, directions and guidelines for implementing the activity. 1) Ask the children their names. 2) Spell the child's name correctly, in lowercase letters. A list is available from the teacher. 3) Allow the children to create and use their own problem solving skills. There is more than one way to achieve a task. 4) Value each child's accomplishments. Praise and encourage.

Small Groups: The teacher will assign you a specific duty.

Clean-up: Guide the children in the clean-up process. They are responsible for the materials they use. Be creative and make clean-up fun. Encourage all children to participate.

Reminder: Clean-up may be very difficult for some children. Putting away one or two items may be a great first step. Recognize their efforts.

Story: The teacher or Para will lead the story. Sit with the children. Quiet those that are disruptive. It's okay to hold one next to you. A quiet "Shh" with your finger to your lips works well, too.

Departure: Assist the children in gathering their belongings, putting on their coats and preparing to go home.

You will not be asked to do all of these responsibilities in one day. This is only a tool to help prepare you for the activities. Watch the teacher and Para! They are wonderful role models for you, too! As you become more comfortable with the routine, your responsibilities will become natural for you. Feel free to explore with the children, ask questions of them and the teacher. Children learn routines very quickly.

Please remember to sign in each time you volunteer on the volunteer sheet. You will need to sign your name, write down the number of hours you worked under the day of the month and give a brief description of the duties you performed that day. These hours are vital to generating in-kind for our grant as well as documenting the volunteer time you contribute monthly.

Above all, enjoy the children! Smile! Have fun!

FIRST AID AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Safety is of primary importance in our classrooms. However, accidents do happen. Each classroom is equipped with a well-supplied first aid kit. Ask the teacher where it is located in their specific room. Please direct any accidents to either the teacher or Para. "Ouch" reports are sent home to parents. If the injury is severe, parents are notified immediately. In addition to first aid kits, each classroom has a fire extinguisher and a flashlight or emergency lighting. Fire drills and lockdown drills are conducted on a regular basis so the children are prepared in case of the actual event. Exiting and emergency procedures are located on the classroom bulletin board. Please review these carefully so you will be able to assist the teacher in the event of an emergency. Please report any unsafe conditions you observe to the classroom teacher immediately.

CONFIDENTIALITY

WHEN YOU BECOME A VOLUNTEER, YOU NEED TO BE AWARE THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY IN OUR PROGRAM. ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS WHILE YOU ARE VOLUNTEERING MUST REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL. PLEASE DO NOT SHARE WITH OTHERS ANY INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDREN AND INCIDENTS THAT MAY OCCUR WHILE YOU ARE A VOLUNTEER. IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERN ABOUT A PARTICULAR CHILD, INCIDENT OR PROCEDURE WHILE INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM, PLEASE DIRECT YOUR CONCERNS TO THE TEACHER.

HELPFUL HINTS:

When you become a volunteer in the Early Childhood Centers program:

- Be dependable. The teachers are counting on your assistance.
- Check-in at the main desk for a volunteer badge. Remember to bring your ID.
- Come prepared to play and sit on the floor. Wear something comfortable and washable.
- Arrive early so that you may review the day's plans with the teacher and understand your responsibilities.
- If you have ideas for projects, share them with the teacher. Together you may plan on how to best fit them into the program.
- There must be an adult with the children at all times. Do not leave children unattended.
- **You will never be left alone with the children; another staff member will be present at all times.**
- Refer questions from visitors or parents to the teacher.
- When you have a specific assignment, be responsible and stay with it. If you are assigned to an area that you are very uncomfortable in, let the teacher know. She will make a note for future planning.
- **Speak in positive terms** to the children.
- Speak with the children at their eye level, using a soft voice.
- All adults in the classroom are role models for the children. Please refrain from drinking pop or hot beverages that may burn a child.
- During meals and snack time please eat only the food that has been served to you. Please do not share with your child.
- Cell phones must be turned off when on the school grounds.

- Smoking is not permitted on the school grounds. If you must smoke please go off the school property.
- Notify the teacher prior to leaving.

MCSD RE-1J EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MCSD RE-1J Early Childhood Centers Policy & Procedures and Head Start Performance Standards Notebooks can be found at all 3 sites and may be accessed by parents and families of preschool children at any time.

ACCIDENT & INJURIES

The Montrose County RE-1J Early Childhood Centers staff will report and document all accidents of any child that takes place while at the center or on a bus. School personnel will give emergency care as needed for children who are injured or become ill during the school day. Parents will be contacted for injuries or illnesses. Parents must make arrangements for a sick or injured child to be picked up as soon as possible.

ACTIVE SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

The Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers Staff and Educators are responsible for making sure that no child is left unsupervised. Educators (All staff who care for children) position themselves so that they can observe all of the children: watching, counting, and listening at all times. They also use their knowledge of each child's development and abilities to anticipate what he/she will do, then get involved and redirect them when necessary. Our school follows multiple safety guidelines, regulations, policy and procedures to ensure that our students are attended to and actively supervised. This constant vigilance helps children learn safely. Safety contributes to children being accounted for in all environments.

The Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers Support Staff and Educators are responsible for making sure that no child is left unsupervised. Children are never left unattended. Our classrooms often have more than the required adult/child ratios due to each classroom having one teacher, one paraprofessional, Support Staff and Classroom Volunteers.

All children must be signed in and out of the classroom daily, and by an authorized Pick-Up Person (s). All staff who care for children position themselves so that they can observe all of the children: watching, counting, and listening at all times.

ADMISSION OF/ REGISTRATION OF CHILDREN

Registrations are held throughout the school year by appointment only and two mass registrations are held in March and August of every year. Parents & guardians are responsible for providing the Family Service Center staff with all necessary support documentation to register their child. The following items will be needed to begin the registration process:

*All families must complete the UPK application at upk.colorado.gov

- *Child's birth certificate or hospital record signed by physician
- *Current well-child exam (valid for one year)
- *Up-to-date Immunizations or signed exemption;
- *Previous 12 months income tax return or Employment Verification form for all employed adults residing in the home; check stubs for the last 30 days (preferred but not required for children with disability);
- *TANF, SSI and/or Child Support if applicable;
- *Medicaid/ CHP+ or insurance card if applicable

Parents & guardians will participate in interviews with the Family Service Center staff to provide insight into their child and to assure placement of their child in the program option that best meets the family needs.

ANIMALS

Rules and Regulations Governing the Health and Sanitation of Child Care Facilities in the State of Colorado state:

The following animals are prohibited in childcare facilities:

- * Psittacine birds, ferrets, and primates;
- * Poisonous animals inclusive of spiders, venomous insects, venomous reptiles including snakes and venomous amphibians;
- * Stray or wild animals; and
- * Aggressive animals

Live poultry including adult birds, chicks, ducklings, reptiles and amphibians shall be prohibited from:

- * The premises of facilities caring only for children under the age of five;
- * Classrooms with children kindergarten age or younger or communal areas that these children use in facilities that also care for children over the age of five.

Because infections from these animals spread via fecal-oral transmission (hand to mouth behaviors), use of these animals in other classrooms where older children engage in frequent hand to mouth behaviors is discouraged.

School board policy allows for animals in classrooms as long as it is approved by the administrator (which include other coordinators in the director's absence).

ATTENDANCE

We strongly encourage regular and on-time attendance. Eight (8) consecutive absences may result in the child being withdrawn from the program. Extended absences will require prior administrative approval. The children's time at school is a valuable learning experience, which can be disrupted by frequent absences.

AUTHORIZED PICK-UP

At home visits our parents are asked to provide our school with a minimum of two persons (age 18 or older) to call in case of an emergency. Please list all possible persons permitted to pick-up your child. Authorized pick-up people must be at least 18 years old. Your child will not be released to any unauthorized individual. If someone not on your authorization list will be picking up your child, you must send a signed and dated note giving your permission. This individual will be asked to provide picture identification.

BITING AND SPITTING POLICY

Children attending the MCSD RE-1J Early Childhood Centers will not be allowed to endanger staff members, volunteers or other children by biting or spitting. Biting and spitting will not be allowed at school. A child who bites or who spits will be removed from the situation. Positive Behavior Guidance will be used to encourage the biting to stop.

BUSING

Transportation services are not available. Buses may be used for field trips. All children will practice bus emergency evacuation drills.

CELEBRATIONS, HOLIDAYS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

The staff of the Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers knows that holiday celebrations are an important part of each child's family life. However, Head Start has a 'non-discriminatory policy.' At the Early Childhood Centers we do not celebrate holidays, or any religious events in the classroom. Instead, we emphasize what is important in each child's family, school and community.

In meeting with parents, staff gather information about what makes your family special, such as your ethnic background, pets, food choices and interests. This information is used to plan for your child in the classroom or home environment. You may be asked to come in and share with your child's class. Additionally, you as a family, have the opportunity to share what is important to your family.

Your ideas on curriculum, family activities and training are important to us. We ask for your ideas during home visits, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Policy Council meetings, Colorado Preschool Program/Education District Advisory Council and at Parent-Driven Activities meetings. Let's be creative as we recognize occasions that are important for children and families. It may be of great importance to share a favorite story, the birth of a brother or sister, moving into a new home or the first daffodil of the season!

We do recognize children's birthdays. You are welcome to bring a special snack on your child's birthday. The school district has a policy regarding healthy food. We ask that the snack be healthy, store made and that you provide enough for all children in the class.

Please do not ask us to distribute invitations to a birthday party for your child unless all children in the classroom will receive one. We cannot provide you with last names or addresses.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are to be turned off and not used in the parking lots, classrooms or buildings. We have students that are medically fragile, and ringing cell phones are also disruptive. If you are expecting a phone call, please make sure the caller has the school number and the secretary will get a message to you.

CHANGE IN POLICY OR PROCEDURES

Parents/Families will be notified of any changes made to the MCSD RE-1J Early Childhood Centers Policy & Procedures. All Policy and Procedure changes will be presented to the ECC Policy Council for review or approval. Changes will be posted to our website, social media sites, in our Record of Communications Notebook, and by flyer.

CHILD SIGN-IN

All children must be signed in and out of the classrooms by an authorized adult, 18 or older, when delivered or picked up and the time noted.

COMMUNICATION

The school frequently sends notes and bulletins to parents to keep them informed of activities and events that will be of interest. Occasionally, parents are asked to sign or fill out forms that are required for routine records at school. Please return such forms promptly to avoid loss or omission of pertinent information. A monthly newsletter may be sent home with information of events and activities for that month. Please check backpacks daily. Families providing an email address may be contacted about upcoming events via email. Additionally, information will be posted on the school district website: www.mcsd.org. Go to the "Schools" tab and click on "Early Childhood Centers". Announcements and upcoming events are also listed on our Facebook page at [EarlyChildhoodMontroseOlatheCO](https://www.facebook.com/EarlyChildhoodMontroseOlatheCO)

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

All forms and information on the children are considered confidential. Information will not be released to any other agency without prior written consent of the parent or legal guardian. Records are kept in an individual folder inside a locked file cabinet.

DISCIPLINE & POSITIVE BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Children face many challenges throughout their lives including learning acceptable behaviors and being able to regulate their own behaviors in different social and emotional situations, or when interacting with their peers and adult. The staff and volunteers at the Early Childhood Center will use appropriate strategies to guide children to recognize, manage and learn from their behaviors and express emotions in a positive, non-threatening way. At ECC our staff follow a simple but effective form of behavior guidance which allows the child to learn from their inappropriate behavior without use of punishment.

Because children are individuals, and do not always learn the same, many different methods of social and emotional intervention support are needed. Our center utilizes the social and emotional curriculum "Second Step" that helps each child to identify their own emotions and to develop an empathetic response to others. There is a licensed Mental

Health professional available to any child or family that needs individual support. Families and children may be referred to other agencies and specialists as needed.

Discipline in our Early Childhood program is an on-going process of guiding the children using Prevent Teach Reinforce For Young Children (PTRYC), positive instruction, supporting positive behavior, discipline and consequences. Each center has a consistent routine and simple rules for the children to follow; the 3B's:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe (Teaching Matrix).

The children, with the teacher's help, make the rules to follow in the classroom and outside on the playground. These rules are posted in the classroom for the children to review and for the volunteers to know what is expected of the children.

Physical force is NEVER used in our classrooms, and we expect volunteers to follow this guideline!

Discipline in the classroom is the teacher and Para's responsibility. If you have a question about a child's behavior, please talk to the classroom teacher.

DRESS CODE/ PROPER CLOTHING

Unless the weather is too severe, children will go outside during Outdoor Playtime for fresh air and exercise. Sudden changes in weather conditions are to be expected. Please make sure that your children wear appropriate, adequate clothing and shoes (not sandals) for seasonal variations. Please remember to label your children's clothing. The MSCD RE-1J Early Childhood Centers abide by the school district dress code. Please provide a change of clothing for your child in case of accidents, spills, etc. Do not send shorts or tank tops. Sweat pants, underwear and socks are appropriate and preferred. Exchange clothes as children outgrown them.

EARLY ARRIVAL OF CHILDREN

Children are not to arrive at school before their scheduled class time. Teachers need the time before class starts to make preparations for the day.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The school must have a current telephone and address on file. Please update this information as changes occur. Your child's doctor's name and telephone number must be on file and up-to-date as well.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

In the unlikely event that weather or other emergency situations should require that school be closed, information would be sent to area radio and television stations by 6am. The 24 hour hotline will be updated and can be called to

receive information. The Hotline number is 240-6444. Parents who have provided our school with emails and have given consent to contact will be notified via email.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The Montrose County School District RE-1J is committed to equal opportunities for all persons regardless of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, marital status, handicap, national origins, or ancestry, and that no person shall suffer discrimination with respect to employment, recruitment, selection, retention, promotions, educational programs, classes, services, or activities. This shall be applicable to employees, potential employees, parents, patrons, and students. GBA-1 GBA-2 Compliance officers are:

Deputy Superintendent
Human Resources

Director of Exceptional
Student Services

930 Colorado Avenue
Montrose, CO (970)249-7726

930 Colorado Avenue
Montrose, CO (970)249-7726

EXPULSION OF PRESCHOOLERS

Our staff are well trained and work hard to identify the social, emotional and the developmental needs of each child. However, there are times when children may need additional care that our staff are not able to provide. If we feel that your child’s behavior endangers the safety of the other children, adults and/or self; we will notify the parent and begin with a parent meeting. To better accommodate your child we would like to work with the family to develop a plan of action. During that time, if the child is a danger to themselves, other children, or staff, we may choose to remove your child from the classroom setting until a plan has been developed. If a plan is necessary to support the child’s learning of a new skill, MCSD RE-1J ECC will utilize the Prevent, Teach, Reinforce for Young Children (PTRYC) model. Parents will be encouraged to be part of the plan development. Please refer to our discipline policy for more information regarding steps that are taken by staff to work with children who display challenging behaviors. Expulsion is prohibited by Head Start Program Performance Standards. It is our hope that we will be able to help you and your child through the development of new skills develop a plan that is as individual as your child.

FEES

There are no costs to attend any of our part day sessions. MCSD RE-1J Early Childhood Centers does reserve the right to charge Full Day families a \$5.00 charge per every 15 minutes late picking up. Payment will be required at the time of late pick up. If payment is not rendered at the time of pick up, the student’s Infinite Campus account will be charged and remain until paid in full.

FIELD TRIPS

Regular field trips that are age appropriate, fun for children, and that expand the children's understanding of the world will be used as an extension of learning to give children opportunities to explore, be active, and as an extension of our curriculum. Occasionally students will participate in field trips that require the use of a bus. All children will practice Bus Emergency Evacuation Drills. Parents will be notified of field trips in advance. Teacher-to-Student ratios are enforced at all times. Parents are encouraged and appreciated to attend field trips. Volunteers for field trips are asked

to follow the same check in procedure as all other volunteers. Parent that arrive late to the center and their class has left on a field trip will be given the choice to a) wait for their classroom teacher to return or b) will have the option to be dispersed into another classroom when possible.

FILING A COMPLAINT

The Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers in conjunction with Policy Council, the Governing Board, staff, parents, and focus groups establishes and implements this procedure to address any concerns or complaints any person may express in regards to any aspect of the Montrose, Olathe, and Johnson ECC Programs.

The complaint must be in writing and signed by the individual initiating the complaint. This must be done within five (5) days of the incident.

The written report must include the following:

When: The date of the complaint;

Who: Identify the individual (s) the complaint is about;

What: Describe the circumstances surrounding the complaint;

Where: Location of the occurrence of the incident.

If a complaint is made against an employee of ECC, the Supervisor of that employee will be informed and the grievance procedure will begin with him/her. If the Supervisor is unable to resolve the matter, then the Director and/or the Policy Council or both will be required to resolve the matter.

If the matter is brought against ECC, then the Director will receive the complaint and attempt to resolve it. If the Director is able to solve the problem to the satisfaction of the individual bringing the complaint, then the individual will be required to sign the agreement of resolution. When a resolution has been reached the Director will report the resolution to the Policy Council at the next regularly scheduled meeting. If the Director is unable to resolve the complaint, then the issue will be brought before the Policy Council.

If the complaint is brought before the Policy Council for resolution, the President shall either call an emergency meeting or put the grievance on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled meeting. This decision whether to schedule a meeting or to wait will be based on the severity of the complaint and the immediacy of the complaint. The individual may be required to attend the Policy Council meeting to express his/her point of view regarding the complaint. The final decision of the Policy Council shall be binding and the individual, the Director and the President of the Policy Council, shall sign an agreement.

The Director will keep any written complaint and agreement of resolution brought against ECC on file.

The Human Resources Offices will handle records of personnel complaints.

HEAD LICE PROTOCOL

A child suspected of having head lice will be examined privately. The parent/guardian of a child found to have a lice/nit infestation will be contacted by phone and staff will explain what has been observed from the head lice inspection. The student must be picked up promptly after notification and begin treatment as soon as possible. The child may return to class 24 hours after one medicated lice shampoo treatment.

HOME VISITS

Home visits are a means by which we are able to, informally, visit with the families to help meet child and family needs. Either the classroom teachers, Family Advocate, Coordinator's Assistants or Coordinators will arrange a minimum of 2 home visits per school year with each family. Please notify the teacher or Family Service Center in advance if you will not be able to keep your scheduled home visit.

ILLNESS

Young children frequently become mildly ill. Infants, toddlers and preschoolers experience a yearly average of six respiratory infections (colds) and can develop one to two gastrointestinal infections (vomiting and/or diarrhea) each year. Sometimes it is necessary for a child to remain at home. The guidelines for infectious diseases provided by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment will be followed. Each classroom has the guidelines available for reference.

Children with a temperature of 100 degrees or more or a contagious infection or illness should not be sent to school. A child must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications before returning to school. Parents will be called to come and get their child if they are ill. Parents must notify the school by phone each day their child will not be in attendance. During an illness outbreak, the symptom-free period may be increased to 48 hours.

Staff/Volunteer Illness: In addition to children, staff and volunteers should also be excluded from the facility under certain circumstances, including if they are suffering from certain infectious diseases. A staff member/volunteer means any person working or volunteering to perform duties in our preschool. The Director is responsible for observing the staff/volunteers for signs of illness throughout the day. Staff members and volunteers have the responsibility of reporting to the Director any signs of infection or illness that may pose a hazard to the health of children and other staff members. Special attention is given to staff members and volunteers that handle food for our children because many illnesses are spread through food from an infected person. Staff and volunteers that handle food must notify the Director if they exhibit any of the following symptoms: Vomiting; diarrhea; jaundice; sore throat with fever; or any open or draining wound that is not covered with water proof bandages and is on the hands, wrist, or exposed arms.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

The Colorado Board of Health specifies that school children must meet immunization requirements for DTaP, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, HIB, Chicken Pox, PCV (Pneumonia), and Hepatitis. Legal exemptions from immunizations include medical, religious, or personal belief exemptions. Admission to school will be denied to those who do not comply. FILE: JLCB-R

As is allowed by state law, some of our children have not been fully immunized for all of the childhood diseases. There is a possible risk of the spread of preventable disease. Parents that have chosen to opt out of some of the required vaccinations have been informed that in case of an outbreak of a preventable disease, they may be asked to keep their child at home during the incubation period of the disease.

LATE ARRIVAL OF CHILDREN/TARDIES

Please have your child at school on time. Late arrivals and early departures must check in at the office. Arrival time and mealtimes are important learning experiences for the children. If your child will be tardy on a regular basis, please contact your child's teacher. We will try to work with you to resolve the problem when possible. Parents who arrive late to the center and their class has left on a field trip will be given the choice to a) wait for their classroom teacher to return or b) will have the option to be dispersed into another classroom when possible.

LATE PICK UP

A child is considered a late pick-up when the parent is 10 minutes or more late in picking up their child from the end of class time. Parents are encouraged to call the school if they are going to be late in picking up their child. This information will be forwarded to the classroom teacher/paraprofessional by the staff member taking the call. In the event of inclement weather the late pick-up will not be recorded. In the event of a documented major traffic accident on route to school children will not be recorded as a late pick-up. In the case of habitual late pick-ups (four (4) or more consecutive times or a consistent pattern of late pick-ups) the Family and Community Partnership Coordinator or Colorado Preschool Program Coordinator will contact the parent either by phone or in person to determine a cause and possible solution to the problem. Parents unwilling to remedy late pick-up issues may face the consequence of their child being removed from the program. In the event staff members are unable to reach a parent or authorized emergency contact to pick-up the child, the staff member will wait a reasonable amount of time (45 minutes minimum) for an authorized pick-up to arrive. In the event the child is not picked-up the staff member will notify the Director. The Director will notify the appropriate authorities and develop a plan for the care and safety of the child.

LEGAL CUSTODY OF STUDENTS

A legal document with appropriate court signatures and dates is required to support any questions of custody between divorced or separated parents. Unless the Director is informed otherwise, both biological parents will have equal access to their child's file (and/or request dismissal of a student.)

LOST AND FOUND ITEMS

Lost and found articles are located in the office. Parents should check periodically for lost items. Please have clothing and other possessions labeled to avoid delay in their return. All unclaimed items will be turned over to a local clothing bank at the end of each quarter.

LOST / UNACCOUNTED FOR CHILDREN

The Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers Support Staff and Educators are responsible for making sure that no child is left unsupervised. Children are never left unattended. Our classrooms often have more than the required adult/child ratios due to each classroom having one teacher, one paraprofessional, Support Staff and Classroom Volunteers.

All children must be signed in and out of the classroom daily, and by an authorized Pick-Up Person(s). All staff who care for children position themselves so that they can observe all of the children: watching, counting, and listening at all times.

MEALS AND SNACKS

MCSO RE-1J Nutritional Services ensures that menus and cooking styles take into account cultural and ethnic practices, comply with Head Start and Departments of Agriculture and Health & Human Services (USDA/HHS) recommendations and requirements, and fully use community food resources. AM sessions are served breakfast and a snack, PM sessions are served lunch and a snack. Full-Day classes are served breakfast, lunch, and a snack.

Families are welcomed to provide sack lunches for their children as long as they are healthy and nutritionally sound.. When providing a sacked lunch for your child please include a non-sugary beverage. Milk is available for purchase.

We are a NUT AWARE SCHOOL. This means that we want all parents to be aware that some children in our school have severe, life-threatening food allergies to peanuts/tree nuts. Ex: Tree nuts such as cashews, pecans, walnuts, pistachios, almonds, etc. and food products that contain these ingredients, peanuts and products that contain peanuts such as granola bars with nuts, crackers with peanut butter filling, cookies with nuts or peanut butter filling. We're asking that parents use discretion and consideration for students with potentially fatal/severe food allergies when sending your student with lunches, snacks and/or food for parties and activities.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

School personnel cannot accept or administer any form of drugs or medicine including aspirin to pupils without a Permission for Medication form signed by the physician and parent. These forms are available in the office. The medication must be in the original prescription container labeled with the child's name, dosage, administration instructions and date of expiration. The medication must be given to the ECC Health Tech to be kept under lock. Children may not transport medication. FILE: JLCD

School personnel will give emergency care as needed for children who are injured or become ill during the school day. Parents will be contacted for injuries or illnesses. Parents must make arrangements for a sick or injured child to be picked up as soon as possible.

NAPS/ REST PERIODS

Naps/Rest periods are required for our Full Day Sessions only. The center must provide a rest period with rest equipment of at least thirty (30) minutes for all preschool aged children remaining in the center for more than five (5) hours. Quiet activities are permissible during the thirty minute period. Children must not be forced to sleep. Children who do not sleep after the 30 minute rest period must be allowed to move to another area and be provided with quiet toys and equipment to play with such as puzzles or books. Children must be allowed to leave their napping area within ten (10) minutes of waking.—Colorado Childcare & Licensing Administration (7.702.54) & Head Start 1302.31 (e)

OUTDOOR TIMES AND INCLEMENT WEATHER

Children will go outdoors on a daily basis. A child can not be left indoors for any reason. If the child is too sick to go outdoors, he/she should remain at home. Indoor supervision is not available at these times. If weather does not permit the children to go outside, alternate physical activities will be provided in the classroom. Indoor activities may include yoga, dancing, indoor obstacle courses or I am Moving, I am Learning activities.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences between parents and teachers are very helpful in creating understanding regarding educational goals and objectives, in solving problem situations, in developing plans for helping the child at home, and to inform parents of their child's progress at school. Conferences are held during the first and third quarters. School is dismissed for conferences. Progress reports are sent home quarterly.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND MONEY OF CHILDREN

The Montrose County School District RE-1J Early Childhood Centers asks that each preschool child bring a backpack and extra change of clothes to school. All personal items are to be labeled and placed inside the child's backpack. Due to the choking hazard, money is not allowed in the classroom.

PHYSICALS

Licensing requires that all children have a current physical on file at the school within thirty (30) days of enrollment. Physicals are provided to the ECC staff by parents at the time of Registration. If accepted the Early Childhood Center Health Tech will track and follow up on all expiring physicals. Proactive letters will be sent out in an effort to keep all physicals up to date.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

It is the policy of the Montrose Early Childhood Centers and Montrose County School District to comply with the "Child Protection Act." Any school district employee, or official who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in neglect or abuse, shall immediately report to the county department of social services or call local law enforcement agencies.

STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL-RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES SUCH AS FIRE, TORNADO, AND LOCKDOWNS

A critical ingredient in the safe school recipe is the classroom response to an incident at school. Weather, events, fire, accidents, intruders and other threats to student safety are scenarios that are planned and trained for by students, teachers, staff and administration.

Our school and all schools throughout our school district, participates in the safety program called the Standard Response Protocol (SRP). The SRP is based on these four actions. Lockout, Lockdown, Evacuate and Shelter. In the event of an emergency, the action and appropriate directions will be called on our school's PA.

Fire drills, lockdown, shelter in place and evacuation drills are conducted monthly so that the children are prepared in case of the actual event. Exiting and emergency procedures are located on the classroom bulletin boards.

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak or exposure, please consult the Infectious Disease Control Plan on the MCS D website.

SUNSCREEN POLICY

Licensing requires the application of sunscreen to children in a childcare setting daily, and to be reapplied every 2 hours. All exposed skin areas will have sunscreen applied. Sunscreen (Rocky Mountain Sunscreen SPF 30) will be provided in each classroom or parents may choose to use their own sunscreen (labeled with the child's name). If a parent's preference is for their child not to have sunscreen applied, the parent will ensure that their child has clothing and other accessories that will cover ALL exposed areas daily. If a parent refuses the use of the center's sunscreen, fails to provide sunscreen or protective clothing for the child, a staff member WILL apply sunscreen to the child. No children will be allowed to stay indoors due to lack of sun protection. The classroom teacher will discuss the sunscreen policy and consent with parents during the initial home visit.

TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Drivers, please obey all traffic regulations and signs posted near the schools. Every precaution must be taken to ensure the safety of the children. **Parents must hold their child's hand in the parking lots.** Please remind your children that they need to remember they are crossing a road when they walk

through parking areas. Having children walk between parked cars is extremely dangerous. Please look both directions at the crosswalks.

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

MCSO RE-1J Early Childhood Centers does not have or use a company vehicle nor does it contract transportation services for the daily transportation of children to and from the Center. Parents and/or guardians are responsible for their child's transportation to and from the Center. A transportation service or bus company will be used to transport children on field trips.

VISITORS IN THE CENTER

All visitors must check in at the schools/centers front office. Visitors must sign the Front Office Sign-In sheet that will include the visitor's name, address and the purpose of the visit. At least one piece of identification must be inspected for individuals who are strangers to personnel. Visitors that enter into a classroom must sign the Classroom Visitor Sign IN sheet and be scanned through our Raptor V-soft software. The software helps track visitors and volunteers at our schools. The scan provides alerts on public sex offenders.

WITHDRAWAL

Any parent that finds that they need to withdraw their child from our program can do so by signing a withdrawal form at the office. Parents will be given the choice to place their child on the waitlist or withdraw completely. The withdrawal will take effect according to the date on the form. Parents should be aware that they are responsible for any unpaid tuition or lunch fees.