

# Casa Grande Elementary School District Preschools

Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC), Center for Online and Innovative Learning (COIL) Preschool, and Desert Willow Preschool



# CGESD Preschool Parent Handbook



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# **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS**

The Casa Grande Elementary School District's (CGESD) Preschools are inclusive, joyful, learning environments where young children participate in fun, engaging, learning activities. Our preschool staff is focused on providing learning experiences that build all five areas of development: cognitive, communication, motor, social/emotional, and adaptive/daily living. As early childhood educators, we are play artists and engineers, we believe play is the work of children, and our job is to craft meaningful, purposeful learning environments. Our learning experiences are guided by the Arizona Early Learning Standards and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (ECERS-3). Our language-rich developmental approach to learning provides hands-on experiences to meet the needs of all preschoolers. We welcome and recognize families as partners in early learning and encourage active participation and healthy communication.

CGESD's Preschools have a variety of options to support the needs of all children and their families. These include full-time, part-time, and special needs services. We believe that our classrooms should resemble our diverse communities and families and that we are better when we learn together.

Children enrolled in CGESD Preschools will develop the following:

- Reading readiness, number sense, and beginning writing skills;
- Communication skills, both receptively and expressively;
- Executive Functioning skills;
- An understanding of a healthy lifestyle during indoor and outdoor physical activities;
- Empathy, patience, a sense of sharing, and other social and emotional skills;
- An appreciation of science and social studies in the world around them;
- An appreciation of fine arts through music, song, and dramatic play; and
- A foundational love for learning!

## **STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

Tuition students must be three, four, or five years of age and have mastered toileting routines. Five-year-old children who are not eligible for Kindergarten may attend the CGESD Preschools.

If a child qualifies for special education services, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be written and reviewed annually with the parents and preschool team. As outlined by the IEP, children will receive identified services within the preschool classroom in the areas of need.

### **Registration Consideration Priorities**

Students will be admitted to CGESD Preschools based upon the following priorities:

1. Students who are residents of the District and who were enrolled in the school the previous year and any sibling who would be enrolled concurrently with such student.
2. Students who are residents of the District but were not enrolled in the school the previous year wishing to attend CGESD Preschools.
3. Students who are not residents of the District who were enrolled in the school the previous year and any sibling who would be enrolled concurrently with such student.
4. Students who are not residents of the District and who were not enrolled in the school the previous year wishing to attend CGESD Preschools.

## Scholarship Enrollment Priorities

All students applying for a scholarship, when available, must follow the above enrollment priorities first. Students are eligible for one year of scholarship payments. Families cannot combine scholarships with other discounts or subsidies; your child will only receive one tuition discount. However, if your child qualifies for multiple discounts or scholarships, we will work with you to ensure we are utilizing whichever discount provides the greatest financial relief.

## Application Procedure

Applications for enrollment will be accepted each Spring for the following year. Applications will be taken on a first-come, first-serve basis. Notification of acceptance will be given when the application has been completed and turned in. A waiting list will be created for applications in the order they are received. Each application must be complete with the following:

- Birth certificate
- Updated immunization

**No child may enter school without a birth certificate and current immunization record.** Vaccinations may be obtained at the Pinal County Health Department, 820 East Cottonwood Lane, Casa Grande, Arizona 85122; (520) 836-5931.

- Proof of residency
- \$50 non-refundable registration fee

Copies of the above documents will be placed in the child's student file, which will transfer with the child throughout his/her academic career.

Once the application is complete, following enrollment priorities, students will be placed into classes in the order the registration was received. It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to notify CGESD Preschools of any changes in the application such as addresses or phone numbers. Please contact the ECLC front office if we can help with enrollment procedures.

## PROGRAM STAFF

CGESD Preschool staff includes the Director of Early Childhood Learning, Early Childhood Coordinator, Administrative Assistant, School Psychologist, Speech/Language Pathologists and Speech/Language Pathology Assistants, Occupational Therapist and Occupational Therapist Assistant, Physical Therapist, Teachers, and Teaching Assistants.

## CURRICULUM

CGESD Preschool uses Teaching Early Literacy and Language (TELL) by Arizona State University which encompasses a thematic-based curriculum as well as a math pacing guide aligned to the Arizona Early Childhood Standards. The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), and Arizona State Licensing Regulation are also used as guidance. The program's flexible plan develops oral language, vocabulary, listening comprehension, print concepts, phonological awareness, letter recognition skills, as well as math and number sense skills. Concepts are presented through language, art, music, motor, and readiness activities, and may include storytelling, songs, finger play, crafts, and games. Activities and explorations address social and emotional development, physical development, science, social studies, and art. Each child's individual needs will be considered to help assist them in developing their abilities. Please ask the teacher where lesson plans will be posted for family information and viewing.

# PRESCHOOL LOCATIONS, SCHEDULES, and TUITION FEES

Our Preschools offer diverse learning opportunities for our various learners. Our campuses have Early Intervention classrooms and Community classrooms.

**Early Intervention (EI):** Early Intervention classrooms primarily support students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), as well as some tuition-paying students.

**Community (CC):** Community classrooms primarily support tuition-paying students, as well as some students with IEPs.

Campus	Address	Days	Hours	Tuition
ECLC	390 E Lakeside Parkway Casa Grande, AZ 85122 (520) 876-0045	CC Full-time: M, T, W, Th	7:00 am - 5:00 pm	\$600 per month
		EI Part-time: M, T, W	9:15 am-12:15 pm or 1:15 pm-4:15 pm	\$300 per month*
COIL	1000 N Amarillo Street Casa Grande, AZ 85122	EI Part-time: M, T, W	9:15 am-12:15 pm or 1:15 pm-4:15 pm	\$300 per month*
DW	2172 N Arizola Road Casa Grande, AZ 85122	CC Part-time: M, T, W	9:15 am-12:15 pm or 1:15 pm-4:15 pm	\$300 per month*

\* Students with an IEP do not pay tuition for part-time classes.

**Please see the tuition schedule for amounts and due dates.** There is a 10% discount for children of employees and for families with two or more children enrolled.

## Arrival and Dismissal

Parents are responsible for signing their child in and out daily through our Brightwheel App. Staff members will be with your child upon arrival to preschool and during dismissal.

For full-time classrooms, we recommend you drop your child off between 7:00 am and 8:30 am and pick your child up between 2:00 pm and 5:00 pm. As a convenience to working families, tuition-paying students will have the opportunity to be on campus for learning sessions during fall, spring, and modified summer breaks for an additional charge equivalent to their tuition rate. These special sessions may be canceled due to lack of student enrollment.

Children must be picked up promptly at their scheduled pick-up time. A five-minute grace period is given. At six minutes past the hour, a \$1.00 per minute late fee will be assessed. All invoices will be due at the time of delivery.

Children transported by bus will have a staff member present when they get off the bus as well as when it is time to go home. Children who ride the bus will be signed in and out by preschool staff.

All children are required to have a completed emergency card on file. Any person authorized to pick up or drop off your child must be listed on the front of the emergency card. We must have a written notice or an in-person request to release your child to any person not listed on the emergency card. These individuals will be required to provide identification before a child is released to them.

## **Invoices and Late Fees**

Monthly tuition payments are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. An invoice will be presented to you through the Brightwheel app approximately five days before it is due. Brightwheel will also send a text message reminder to your cell phone. Please make sure that any changes to address, email address, and/or persons paying the tuition bill are updated as soon as possible. There is a grace period between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. A \$10.00 late fee will be assessed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of each month for late payments. Cash, check, or money order payments can be made at the ECLC office, if needed. If you have questions regarding tuition, please speak with Shannon Hamlein at the ECLC. **Parents are responsible for the full tuition, regardless of absences; no refunds will be issued.**

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

It is one of our goals to build a growing relationship between parents/guardians and the preschool program to better meet the needs of all children. Parents are encouraged to participate in classroom and school-wide activities. Newsletters will be sent home at least quarterly to keep you updated on the activities and events occurring in your child's classroom and school. A volunteer application should be filled out if you plan on spending time in your child's classroom.

### **Open House**

Open House sessions will be scheduled prior to the first day of school. This event is an opportunity to meet the teacher and receive information about the school year including: current curriculum, special events, program information, and children's daily schedules. Students are invited to attend with their parents/guardians to explore the classroom, meet the teachers, and meet some classmates.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year. The conferences are scheduled in September and in February. Scheduled appointments to discuss a child's developmental progress with families can also be made upon request at any time during the school year.

### **Family Concerns**

One of our goals is to resolve all parent concerns to everyone's satisfaction. Should you have concerns about our preschool program and you feel the office staff or teachers have not addressed the matter appropriately, please contact the Director of Early Childhood Learning at (520) 876-0045.

### **Visitor Sign-in and Sign-out**

CGESD Preschools are closed campuses. Classroom visitations will be subject to District guidance related to community health metrics, etc. All visitors, including parents spending time with their children, must sign in and sign out at the front desk in the main office. You will be given a visitor's badge that must be worn the entire length of your stay and you may be escorted to the correct area(s).

## **DISCIPLINE**

In CGESD Preschools, all classrooms support a positive learning environment for everyone. We strongly believe that learning routines and classroom procedures should be taught and practiced. We also believe that behavior is a form of communication and will work to understand the need behind the behavior. When a negative behavior occurs, teachers and staff will work with families to understand why the behavior occurred and reteach the behavior as needed. We have three expectations of all children and staff:

- Bee Kind
- Bee Safe
- Bee Playful

Showing kindness is important for all staff, students, and guests on our campus. We will do our best to treat others with kindness every day. We also expect children and staff to be safe and minimize chances for harmful or dangerous incidents. Lastly, we expect children and adults to be playful. The best learning happens when we are willing to try new things with an open, curious, and playful attitude.

Children want and need to know what is expected of them. When a problem arises, the child is encouraged, under the teacher's guidance, to address it appropriately and successfully while classroom expectations are given as a reminder. For continued negative behaviors, staff will reach out to families and work together to establish behavior interventions. When all attempts to correct the negative behavior have been made and exhausted, withdrawal from the program may occur.

## **CHILD ASSESSMENT**

All registered children are assessed with a 45-day screener. A legal parent/guardian can call to make a Child Find screening appointment if they believe that their child may have developmental delays. The Child Find screenings are done approximately every 45 days. The Child Find Schedule is posted in the lobby of each preschool campus and located on our website. Children who are observed in the Child Find screening needing further evaluation will be set up with an appointment with the school psychologist and possible related service providers. This evaluation will give the team information to determine if the child qualifies for special education services. A MET meeting is set up after the evaluation to go over the results with the families.

## **KINDERGARTEN TRANSITION TIMELINE**

Each spring the District holds Preschool to Kindergarten transition meetings for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) to update their paperwork to reflect support and services needed for Kindergarten. The IEP team will contact each parent to schedule their child's transition meeting.

Outgoing Kindergarteners and their families are invited to visit CGESD elementary schools during Kindergarten Round-Up events that usually take place in late April or early May at each elementary school. The Kindergarten Round-Up event will offer parents and families an opportunity to visit Kindergarten classrooms, take a tour of the school, and meet the staff. Please reach out if we can help with the Preschool to Kindergarten transition in any way.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## Administering Medication

Under certain circumstances and when it is necessary, the District will cooperate with the family physician and administer medication on campus. When medication is on campus, the following requirements must be met:

- At **NO** time is **ANY** medication to be left in a child's backpack.
- There must be written permission from the parent to allow the school to administer the medication. This form will state the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, and the time it is to be given. Appropriate forms are available from the school office.
- The medication must come to the school in the prescription container or, for over-the-counter medication, in the original container with all of the warnings and directions intact.
- The trained staff member will administer and log medication.
- Sunscreen is included under this umbrella of the administration of medication. If you would like your child to have sunscreen applied before outdoor play, please speak with your child's teacher and complete the medication consent form.

## Emergency Medical Procedures

In case of a medical emergency, staff on duty will call 911 and give appropriate treatment until help arrives. The parents will be called immediately. If a parent cannot be located, a relative or friend who is listed on the emergency card will be contacted.

## CGESD Preschool's Health Policy

Children who are ill should ***not*** come to school. If your child will be out ill, please call (520) 876-0045 or report the absence to Shannon Hamlein or to your child's teacher through the Brightwheel app. It is school policy that a child be fever-free for 24 hours, without fever-reducing medication, before returning to school. If a child becomes ill at school, a parent will be called to take the child home. A notification letter will be sent to parents if there is an outbreak of any communicable disease.

Reasons for a child being sent home:

- \* Fever at or above 100.4
- \* Red/itchy/goopy eyes
- \* Unexplained rashes
- \* Vomited/vomiting
- \* Repeated diarrhea

## TRANSPORTATION

It is the parent/guardians' responsibility to transport their child to and from school. Bus transportation is provided only to those homes and daycare facilities within the Casa Grande Elementary School District attendance boundaries *and* only for those students who have transportation as part of the requirement in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). If bussing is available, parents must have children outside and ready when the bus arrives. If children are not ready by the time the bus arrives, the bus cannot wait. Car seats, safety vests, and wheelchair-accessible buses are provided by the School District when needed. When the child is returned home on the bus, an adult who has been authorized to remove the child from the bus ***MUST*** be waiting outside for them. The bus driver will not let a child off the bus if there is no adult present. This adult must be on the blue emergency card and may be required to give a photo ID. The transportation department requires a three-day written advance notice prior to changes in your permanent pick-up and drop-off points.



## BACKPACKS AND FOLDERS

Please provide your child with a full-sized backpack labeled with his/her name to be used for transporting your child's folder, projects, and special items. We ask that you keep your child's backpack in a special place so it will be readily available when he/she prepares to come to school. A great deal of learning takes place as your child assumes the responsibility for his/her own backpack. Please go through your child's backpack daily with your child. There may be important papers, a reading log, soiled clothing, or a note that needs to be tended to.

## SCHOOL ATTIRE

Please dress your children in play clothes for school activities including: painting, exercising, and playing. Make sure your child wears flexible clothing and comfortable, rubber-soled shoes. For your child's safety, sandals may be worn but only if they have a heel strap. Please write your child's name in all: sweaters, jackets, backpacks, and lunchboxes brought to school. A change of clothing, which includes a shirt, pants/shorts, socks, and underwear, must be sent in a zip-lock bag labeled with the child's name to be left in case of an accident. All individuals coming onto school grounds must adhere to the District's dress code and behavior policy. CGESD Preschools are not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## MEAL OR SNACK TIME

If your child is with us as a full-time student, we ask that you send a nutritious lunch from home. Candy and soda are not allowed. All sessions will receive a morning and afternoon snack provided by CGESD. Ice packs are required in all lunch meals from home, we do not have refrigerator space for lunches. We can reheat food home items during lunch if necessary; however, items must take **90 seconds** or less to heat.

We ask that you send a refillable water bottle with your child that is clearly labeled with your child's name. Drinking fountains are available on campus to refill the bottle. We recognize the importance of staying hydrated and will do our best to have your child drink plenty of water. We do ask that bottles contain water only. Do not fill the bottles with juice, milk, etc.

Should you wish to provide a special snack or birthday treat, please notify your child's teacher in advance. We ask that you provide enough so that each child has at least one serving. Special snacks and treats must be in store packaging and/or individually wrapped.

## OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

CGESD Preschools encourage outdoor learning and play for all children. We have several outdoor learning spaces and a large shaded playground. Playground equipment should be used appropriately. Teachers and staff will work with children to learn playground expectations. Safety is a high priority and is evident in the supervision and engagement between staff and children on the playground.

## FIELD TRIPS

CGESD Preschools do not take field trips at this time. If this changes, parents will be given written notifications as well as a permission slip to sign and return to the teacher.

## **PESTICIDE APPLICATION**

CGESD Preschools will provide notice of pesticide application during a regular school session to students, employees, and parents/guardians in a form reasonably calculated to provide a warning at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to such application.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

FERPA is a Federal Law that protects the privacy of student education records. Annual notification to parents regarding the confidentiality of student education records and designation of directory information is issued.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE**

The Casa Grande Elementary School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

Robert Quinones, Assistant Superintendent  
Casa Grande Elementary School District  
220 West Kortsen Road  
Casa Grande, Arizona 85122  
(520) 836-2111

## **INSURANCE LIABILITY**

The Casa Grande Elementary School District carries full general and vehicle (bus) liability insurance as required by Arizona State Law.

## **LICENSING INFORMATION**

CGESD Preschools are licensed and regulated by the Office of Child Care Licensing, a department of the Division of Licensing Services of the Arizona Department of Health Services. This site is inspected at least annually. All inspection reports are on file at the front offices of each campus and are available for public review upon request.

Office of Child Care Licensing  
400 West Congress, Suite 400  
Tucson, Arizona 85701  
(520) 628-6541