



Columbia Gorge Education Service District
Preschool Handbook
2023-2024 School Year

Dear Families,

Welcome to Columbia Gorge Education Service District (ESD) Early Learning Programs!

We are so excited that you have chosen Columbia Gorge ESD Early Learning to be a part of your child's emerging educational journey. Here at Columbia Gorge ESD Early Learning we offer two great educational programs:

- Sunshine Kids Preschool
- Sunshine Kids Bilingüe
- Sunshine Kids Petersburg

Please contact us if you have suggestions, questions or concerns. Together let's make this a great year in your child's life!

Sincerely,

Columbia Gorge Education Service District Early Learning Staff

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Philosophy & Mission Statement

Columbia Gorge Education Service District (CGESD) Early Learning Programs are designed to offer high quality early learning experiences. We believe children grow best when staff and programs are dedicated to your child's growth and development using the best methods we know of. We believe our programs should be neighborhood-based and school connected. CGESD Early Learning Programs review data and work with parents and staff to make the best decisions to meet the needs of the children we serve. Partnering with committed parents and local leadership, we make sure children are growing in all areas of development.

We believe that parents are more than partners, they are our most valued consultants. Our commitment to equity and parent voice is reflected in the expansion of inclusive programming Sunshine Kids Bilingüe to assure children learn developmentally appropriate skills in their first language. Our inclusive programs directly teach social and learning skills to all children regardless of their strengths and abilities. In partnership with North Wasco County School District, CGESD Early Learning programs work to assure students are prepared to enter kindergarten.

Columbia Gorge ESD Early Learning:

- aligns with Oregon's Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines for school readiness and is based on early learning theory.
- serves both preschool and pre-kindergarten children of all abilities.
- supports parents and families.
- is an inclusive program following the Learning Experiences and Alternative Program for preschoolers and parents (LEAP) preschool model.
- offers dual language development and strategies that support dual language learners.
- provides an enjoyable and fun learning environment and supports children's social and emotional needs.

OUR PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS:

How to stay connected with your teacher:

Monthly newsletters are sent home along with a variety of informational letters and flyers to share community events with your family. Your teachers use ClassDojo to communicate with you and other families. At Petersburg, the site is piloting Procure to communicate with families.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Teachers will schedule parent-teacher conferences with families twice a year: November and March. For students who participate in an Individual Family Support Plan, teachers will discuss progress at your IFSP meeting. Petersburg conferences will be scheduled prior to the end of the school year.

LEAP Classrooms

LEAP (Learning Experiences An Alternative Program for Preschoolers and Parents) was founded in 1981 and developed by Dr. Phil Strain. LEAP Preschool reflects both a behavioral and a developmentally appropriate approach for teaching children with and without disabilities within an inclusive early childhood environment. Learning activities are selected based upon the needs, interests, and developmental levels of individual children within the classroom. An integrated curriculum approach (i.e., designing learning experiences that promote children's skill development across multiple domains) is used to provide opportunities related to all areas of development (e.g., social/emotional, language, adaptive behavior, cognitive, and physical). Snack time is a great opportunity to practice social skills. Snacks are provided, but donations are greatly appreciated.

Curriculum

- Highscope - designed to address the needs of preschool students with varying degrees of developmental readiness; optimizes opportunities for students to learn and grow from each one another's strengths
- Conscious Discipline - is a trauma-informed approach to social emotional learning
- Learning Without Tears - hands-on curriculum that engages young minds through purposeful play, active engagement, and custom manipulatives
- Estrellita - Offered at the Bilingue program. Complementary, accelerated, beginning Spanish reading program within our Bilingual classrooms; teaches individual sounds through a combination of whole language, phonics-based strategies that are developmentally appropriate and fun for young children
- Montesori - Offered at the Petersburg program. In a Montessori Early Childhood classroom, teachers create a customized environment crafted to their unique abilities, interests, and learning style. This approach to learning is "hands-on." Dr. Maria Montessori believed (and modern science has affirmed) that moving and learning are inseparable.

1) Sunshine Kids Preschool Classes - 1721 West 10th Street

In this program, students will gain experiences within their environment, inside and outside, with students with diverse needs, following the LEAP program to support all learners.

Classroom	Days	Time	Tuition
Class B, Mornings	Monday - Friday	8:45 AM to 11:45 AM	\$240 per month*
Class B, Afternoons	Mon, Tues, Thur, Fri	12:45 PM to 3:45 PM	\$200 per month*

Requirements prior to the first day of school

- completed application
- current immunization records

For Sunshine Kids Tuition Paying families:

Invoices will be provided at the first of each month. Tuition is due by the 10th of each month, starting in September and the last payment being in May. If payment is not received by the end of the month, you will receive a reminder phone call to set up payment arrangements. If no payments are received within 6 weeks, your child may be removed from the program. In this case, staff will reach out to help support you in applying for Head Start or Preschool Promise programs.

Payment options

- A. Mail check or money order in the envelope provided to:
Columbia Gorge ESD Early Learning
1721 West 10th Street
The Dalles, OR 97058
- B. Drop your cash, check or money order in the envelope provided in the **drop box** located on the door of the Columbia Gorge ESD's Early Learning office building next to the preschool building (blue/gray house, address is 1721 West 10th Street).
- C. Use your **Bill Pay** account to automatically send your payment to Columbia Gorge ESD.

Withdrawal Policy

Families may choose to remove their child from the program at any time, however, families will continue to be charged tuition two weeks (14 days) from the date of written notification or two weeks (14 days) from the student's last day of attendance. Written notice may be given to your child's teacher, the administrative assistant or program administrator. See your classroom teacher for the program [withdrawal form](#).

2) Sunshine Kids Bilingüe - 922 Chenowith Loop Road

Sunshine Kids Bilingüe is a full day inclusive Dual Language Immersion program funded through Oregon's Preschool Promise program. Ninety percent of this program is taught in Spanish. There is no charge for qualifying families. Families in the Chenowith School zone are given priority although the program is open to all qualifying children living in the state of Oregon.

Class Schedule

Classroom	Days	Time
Chenowith Elementary	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri	9:00 AM - 3:15 PM
	Wednesdays	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

3) Sunshine Kids Petersburg - 3855 Fifteen Mile Road

Sunshine Kids Petersburg is a full day program funded through Oregon's Preschool Promise program. There is no charge for qualifying families for children living in the state of Oregon.

Class Schedule

Classroom	Days	Time
Petersburg Site	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri	9:00 AM - 3:15 PM
	Wednesdays	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Enrollment Process for Sunshine Kids Bilingue and Petersburg

Parents must complete an application as part of the intake process. Four Rivers Early Learning and Parenting Hub (541-965-8319) will determine eligibility for each student within **(14) days** of receiving the application. A parent may appeal a determination of non-eligibility by submitting a written request to Four River Early Learning Hub.

- Children must be at least three years old by September 1st, but not older than five years of age. Age-eligible children may participate in the program for up to two years.
- Income Eligibility: Children must be members of families whose income, at the time of enrollment, is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

- Residency Requirement: Children participating in the Sunshine Kids Bilingüe program must be Oregon residents.
- For Sunshine Kids Bilingüe: The maximum number of children in the classroom is 19. Transportation will be provided by North Wasco County School District #21 within the Chenoweth Elementary boundary. Meals are provided by North Wasco County School District.
- For Sunshine Kids Petersburg: The maximum number of children in the classroom is 18. Transportation this year is provided by North Wasco County School District. There will be 2 pick-up/drop off locations. Please ask your child's teacher or our Administrative Assistant for more information on transportation. Meals will be provided by MCCC.

GUIDANCE:

Attendance

At Columbia Gorge ESD Early Learning, we believe it is important to attend school on-time, every day. This is a basic foundation for academic achievement and social development. We believe these patterns for success begin in preschool. Reach out if you need assistance; we have many tools to help!

Columbia Gorge ESD Early Learning may approve a leave of absence of up to 30 days, for an enrolled child due to family vacations or other situations that may arise.

An absence of 14 consecutive days without an approved leave will be considered a vacancy. Your child will be placed in inactive status unless you request to reactivate the child's status in the enrollment system.

Our goal: "Every Student, Every Day . . . When you miss school, we miss you!"

When should my child stay home?

If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep your child at home:

- Fever of 100+
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Cough: deep, barking, congested, or producing colored mucus
- **For the above symptoms, your child must be symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medication prior to returning to school**
- Eye Infection
- Severe headache
- Rash (according to doctor recommendation)
- Communicable disease
- Any symptoms that impair the student's participation in classroom activities

Please notify the office or teacher if your child will be absent.

Drop-off and Pick-Up Policy

With consideration of our teachers' limited break and preparation time, **please do not drop off your child more than five minutes before their class begins**. For example, if your child's class starts at 12:30, please do not drop off your child before 12:25.

If you drop off late, please check in with the office and staff will take your child to the class.

When picking up your child, please follow the same five-minute guideline to respect teachers' time and efforts. For example, if your child's class ends at 3:30pm, they should be picked-up no later than 3:35pm. While we understand emergency situations may arise, calling to explain you (or your designated pick-up person) are 'running late' does NOT excuse a late pick-up.

For chronic late pick-up issues, students may be removed from the program for three or more occurrences of late pick-up (exceeding five minutes) in a 30-day period

For the safety of your student, when dropping off and picking up your child, you will be asked to record the sign-in & sign-out sheet (time and initial).

Parking for drop-off and pick-up:

To drop-off and pick-up your child, you may park in the '10 minute' parking spaces or other open parking spaces. Please do not leave children in the car unattended. Also please avoid parking in handicap-labeled parking spots or areas not clearly labeled. These may be bus routes or pedestrian walkways.

Inclement Weather

Columbia Gorge ESD Early Learning Programs follow North Wasco County School District's inclement weather policy.

1) Sunshine Kids Preschool

- If North Wasco County School District (D-21) is **CLOSED**, then Sunshine Kids Preschool will also be **CLOSED**.

- If D-21 has a **2-HOUR DELAY**, then
morning Sunshine Kids Preschool classes will be **CLOSED** and
afternoon Sunshine Kids Preschool classes will be **OPEN**.

2-3) Sunshine Kids Bilingüe (SKB) and Petersburg

- If North Wasco County School District (D-21) is **CLOSED**, then these two classrooms will also be **CLOSED**.
- If D-21 has a **2-hour delay**, then these two classrooms will also have a **2-hour delay**.

On rare occasions when weather worsens during the course of the school day and the morning classes are open, the CGESD Superintendent may make the decision to cancel the afternoon preschool classrooms. In this event, attempts will be made by program staff to contact each family either through Thrillshare or individually.

To find out if school is closed due to inclement weather:

- Look for a ProCare message.
- Listen to your local radio stations
- Watch your local TV stations
- Check North Wasco County School District's website

Immunization Policy

Sunshine Kids Early Learning Program is committed to each student's success in learning. To comply with Oregon school immunization laws the following immunizations are required: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, Varicella(chickenpox) and Hib.

Medication Policy

If medication is needed for your child, while at school, we can assist. There is a form to complete and medication needs to be in the original medication bottle. All medications need to be given to your child's teacher and will be placed in a locked, secured location. Please do not place medication in your child's bag or backpack.

Social Media

We, as a program, take pictures to share with families on a private Facebook group and to send home in the newsletter. If you do not want your child's image in this media format, please contact the office.

Behavior General Procedure

Sunshine Kids Early Learning Program is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness.

Each student at Sunshine Kids Early Learning Program has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. We approach children with challenging behaviors by teaching them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When correction is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying.

We are trained and well versed in keeping your child safe, however bites, scratches, falls and scrapes are all a part of early childhood development. We will send home ouchie reports when this occurs and hold meetings within our staff to see how a type of injury can be prevented in the future.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is not used nor permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may support a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary to maintain control of the situation. Staff are trained in this area through the Safety First program.

Notification of Behavioral Concerns to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Can I volunteer in the classroom?

YES! Parents are more than welcome to volunteer in the classroom.

NOTE: Parent volunteers are required to have a Criminal History Background Check.

*Please keep in mind, if there is a resurgence of COVID or other unforeseen events, it might inhibit volunteers in the classroom.

Please contact your child's teacher for more information.

Parent Committee

The Parent Committee is made up of, and led by, parents. It offers an ideal opportunity to meet with other preschool parents and to help plan fundraisers and other fun activities for children throughout the year. Spanish interpreters are available.

Office Number:

Teresa Manzo, Administrative Assistant 541-506-2242



Date: _____

Please sign and return to your child's teacher.

I have received and read the *Columbia Gorge Education Service District Early Learning Parent Handbook*.

Student Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____