

**College Heights
Early Childhood Learning Center
Parent Handbook
2019-2020**



917 S. McDonough Street * Decatur, Georgia 30030 * (404) 370-4480
<http://eclc.csdecatur.net/>

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College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center

Overview

College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center (CHECLC) offers comprehensive services as a public school for children birth to age five residing within the boundaries of the City Schools of Decatur. The school was founded for the purpose of closing the achievement gap by providing a high quality early childhood program. The importance of early intervention and a supportive learning environment in the early years along with the benefits of having a diverse and inclusive setting to provide this intervention are priceless benefits for the children that attend College Heights, as well as their families and the community as a whole.

College Heights has three (3) infant, four (4) toddler, four (4) preschool, and nine (9) Pre-K classrooms. College Heights has an enrollment of 342 students enrolled using multiple funding streams (general funds from taxpayers, tuition from parents, Head Start, Early Head Start, federal special education, Decatur Education Foundation scholarship funds, and Georgia lottery for pre-K). CSD partners with Head Start to provide forty-five (45) slots to children who are economically disadvantaged and/or children with special needs in learning environments that ready children for their transition to kindergarten.

College Heights offers services to children, 3 to 4 years old, who have a variety of special needs. The preschool special education program is inclusive with the general education preschool/Pre-K program as specified by the individual education plan (IEP). We believe that including children with special needs in general education preschool classrooms offer them the opportunity to model the social, language, and play skills needed to succeed in school. The preschool and Pre-K inclusion classrooms enrich the lives of all children by bringing them together in an environment that teaches acceptance, respect, and the appreciation of individual differences.

Each year administration, teaching staff, and advisory council members work together to develop a School Improvement Plan (SIP), which serves as a guide and focus for the school. We encourage you to visit the school website (<http://eclc.csdecatur.net>) to view additional information about our school's learning community. We look forward to another successful year with our students and families and invite you to engage in your child's school and classroom and experience quality early childhood learning at its best.

Our Mission

College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center cultivates an atmosphere where children take their first steps in building an authentic love of learning through developmentally appropriate practices in an environment that fosters family and community involvement.

Beliefs

- We believe in an ongoing partnership between children, teachers and parents.
- We believe in regular communication between parents, teachers and administrators.
- We believe in creating a safe school environment by implementing consistent school-wide expectations for students and staff.
- We believe in fostering the physical development of all children by providing regular physical activities, rest times, and healthy meal choices.
- We believe in planning differentiated instruction in order to implement developmentally appropriate and engaging learning experiences for all children.

School District Information

Dr. David Dude
Superintendent

The Board of Education
Mr. Lewis Jones, Chair
Ms. Tasha White
Ms. Heather Tell
TBD
TBD

Requirements for Entrance

Families must meet one (1) of the following criteria in order to enroll their child at College Heights.

- You must reside within the boundaries of the City Schools of Decatur with your child, and your child must be at least six (6) weeks old.
- You must be an employee of CSD

Program Information:

0-3 Program: your child must be at least 6 weeks of age. Parents must complete and submit an application packet along with the applicable registration fee (\$50.00) to the CHECLC office.

Pre-K program: your child must be 4 years old by September 1, 2019, in order to be eligible for the Pre-K program. Parents must complete and submit an online Pre-K application (www.csdecatur.net). A lottery is held in March to determine children awarded pre-K slots. Children not selected during the lottery will be placed on the waitlist.

Head Start (HS) program: your child must be 3 years old by September 1, 2019, and your family must meet specific Head Start guidelines in order to be eligible for the Head Start program. CHECLC Head Start program is blended within the CSD preschool program and there are seventeen (17) slots available in the preschool classrooms that are dedicated to families eligible for the head start program.

Early Head Start (EHS) program: your child must be 2 years old and your family must meet specific Early Head Start guidelines in order to be eligible for the Early Head Start program. There are eight (8) toddler slots available in the toddler classroom that are dedicated to the EHS families.

Required Documentation for Enrollment: Parents must provide a certified birth certificate from the county or country where the child was born, proof of the child's immunization (DHR Form #3231), two (2) proofs of residence in City of Decatur, picture ID of the parent/guardian, and a copy of the child's social security card.

Waitlists: CHECLC maintains a 0-3 and a Pre-K waitlist for each program. We give sibling preference on the waitlist and a 10% discount on the 2nd child (and any additional child) when both children are enrolled in the 0-3 program. The discount is applied to the older child enrolled in the program. Children enrolled in the preschool program at College Heights and the Frasier Center at DHS automatically matriculate up to the Pre-K program the following year.

Student Check-in & Check-out Procedures

All parents and community visitors to the school must report directly to the front desk in the reception area to sign in and obtain a parent and/or visitor's pass before going elsewhere on the school campus. It is the responsibility of all school personnel to inquire as to whether or not a visitor has a visitor's pass. If

he/she does not, he/she should be informed to report to the front office to obtain one and the front desk staff should be notified of the person's presence on campus.

Children enrolled in the 0-3 program must be escorted to the classroom by an adult when being dropped off or picked up at school. If toddler or preschool children arrive in the morning while the class is eating breakfast in the cafeteria, parents must transition them by dropping-off personal belongings in the classroom before walking to the cafeteria.

Dismissal for the children enrolled in the Early Head Start and Head Start program begins at 2:20 pm. Parents may not walk to the classroom to pick up their child early. Children will be brought to the front lobby area to be dismissed. Parents and/or guardians will be asked to sign-out each child before leaving the building.

After School Program

The After School Program (ASP) operates between 2:30 pm - 6:00 p.m. while following the City Schools of Decatur school calendar. In order to be eligible for the ASP students must be enrolled in the College Heights ECLC pre-K program. Parents must complete and submit an enrollment packet, along with a \$50.00 registration fee, in order to be considered for the program. Available ASP spots are selected through a lottery process. College Heights ECLC maintains a waitlist for the ASP. Students will be offered spots throughout the year as they come available.

The ASP staff is experienced and trained in the areas of curriculum, health, and safety standards. Background checks are completed on each staff member prior to the first day of school. The ASP is directed by Ms. Elecia Fulton. Please refer all questions, suggestions, and concerns to Ms. Fulton at efulton@csdecaur.net.

After School Program Curriculum

The ASP implements the SPARK Early Childhood Physical Activity Curriculum. SPARK is a research-based, public health organization dedicated to creating, implementing, and evaluating programs that promote lifelong wellness. The focus of SPARK is to develop basic movement, manipulative, social, and personal skills at an early age. Children will have many opportunities to practice movement and object control skills while participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity. The SPARK curriculum has eight major objectives:

- To develop a variety of basic movement and manipulative skills so children will experience success and feel comfortable during physical activity pursuits.
- To develop positive social skills and the ability to get along with others in movement environments.
- To engage motor neurons that will lay the foundation for easier acquisition of skills later in life.
- To develop and maintain acceptable levels of physical fitness through increased moderate and vigorous physical activity.
- To increase kinesthetic awareness and be more confident and safe movers.
- To demonstrate improved problem solving and movement creativity while using a variety of manipulatives in many situations.
- To receive opportunities to interact with new stimuli and situations, thus broadening their experiences.
- To enjoy and seek out physical activity for lifelong wellness.

After School Tuition

Children must have a completed registration packet on file prior to attending the ASP. The following must be received on site before the child can begin: completed registration enrollment form, tuition payment form, and registration fee. The tuition charge is as follows:

Full time	\$310/month
Part time	\$190/month (2 days/week or less)

Camps (Pre-K Only)

College Heights offers camp services for fall break, winter break, and summer break (month of June only) to Pre-K children enrolled at CHECLC. Summer camp includes meals, snacks, field trips, and weekly swim sessions at McKoy park. Registration packets can be obtained through the website or at the school's front desk 4 weeks prior to camp start date.

College Heights ECLC Curriculum and Instructional

The 0-3 and Pre-K programs implement the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) following a framework based on several scientific research-based instructional programs:

- Opening the World of Learning
- Montessori Approach to Early Childhood Education
- Inquiry-Based Learning

Opening the World of Learning

Opening the World of Learning (OWL) (<http://www.pearsonlearning.com/microsites/owl/main.cfm>) is a comprehensive curriculum that covers all developmental domains of early learning. The content of each unit is built around the carefully crafted daily routine within an activity-centered day. Themes, skills, and concepts are developed through sophisticated children's narrative story books and informational trade books. The consistent format and features in every unit makes it easy for teachers to use and children to learn. The OWL curriculum does the following:

- provides guidance for preschool and Pre-K teachers with a variety of materials to implement six thematically organized units: Family, Friends, Wind and Water, The World of Color, Shadows and Reflections, and Things that Grow;
- develops language and literacy skills through rich, integrated content in all developmental domains of early learning;
- incorporates favorite children's books, songs, and poems; and
- supports teachers to individualize instruction by providing an ongoing assessment tool.

Following the comprehensive OWL curriculum and adjusting it for our early learning program alignment to the GELDS, teachers incorporate favorite children's books, songs, finger plays, and nursery rhymes while implementing the following monthly thematically organized units: School Community, World of Colors, Family, Friends, Pets, On the Farm, Family Celebrations, Winter Weather, Feather Friends, Growing Things, and Creatures of Water.

Montessori Approach to Early Childhood Education

Young children learn best in a playful environment and through the manipulation of toys. The Montessori approach to early childhood education is a method that introduces problem solving, independence, and sensory perception through reality oriented learning materials. This scientifically research-based approach encourages development through all of the domains as teachers facilitate imaginative play using real life lessons. As a result, young children grasp concepts that otherwise are foreign to them.

Inquiry-Based Learning

Students are encouraged to ask questions about what they notice in their world. Teachers engage students in longer investigations developed from students' authentic questions. Beginning with scientific activities, students learn how to generate meaningful questions. Teachers scaffold students in ongoing inquiry based projects and in shorter inquiries into everyday situations. Children have the opportunity to engage in research, collect data, and develop theories about their world.

Schoolwide Social Emotional Learning Environment

College Heights ECLC implements Conscious Discipline, which is a comprehensive self-regulation program that integrates social-emotional learning, and discipline. Conscious Discipline integrates classroom management with social-emotional learning, utilizing everyday events as the curriculum and addressing the adult's emotional intelligence as well as the child's.

Conscious Discipline uses 7 skills to transform everyday discipline issues into teachable moments. These moments are our opportunity to teach children the social-emotional and communication skills necessary to manage themselves, resolve conflict, and develop pro-social behaviors. The 7 skills are:

1. Composure
2. Encouragement
3. Assertiveness
4. Choices
5. Empathy
6. Positive Intent
7. Consequences

Conscious Discipline was developed by Dr. Becky Bailey. Her philosophy is dedicated to creating positive environments for children, families, schools, and businesses. For more information, please visit Dr. Becky Bailey's website at: <https://consciousdiscipline.com/>

Teacher/Student Classroom Ratios

College Heights follows the National Association for the Education of Young Children recommended guidelines for teacher/child ratio. To the extent possible, the program follows these guidelines.

- Infants (birth through 18 months) 1:4 with a class size of 8 children
- One's (18 months-24 months) 1:4 with a class size of 12 children
- Toddlers (24-36 months) 1:6 with a class size of 12 children
- Preschoolers (three years of age) 1:9 with a class size of 18 children
- Pre-Kindergarten (four years of age) 1:11 with a class size of 22 children

Program Calendars

Please refer to the 0-3 school calendar and the Pre-K school calendar for closings during the school year. School calendars are posted on the school and district website.

Arrival and Dismissal: Hours of Operation

School Program	Age of Children	Start Time	End Time
CSD 0-3 Tuition Program	6 weeks to 3 years old	7:00 a.m.	6:00 p.m.
Early Head Start Program	2 years old	8:00 a.m.	2:30 p.m.

Head Start Program	3 years old	8:00 a.m.	2:30 p.m.
Pre-K Program	4 years old	8:00 a.m.	2:30 p.m.
Preschool Special Education	3 & 4 year olds	8:00 a.m.	2:30 p.m.
After-school Program	Pre-K	2:30 p.m.	6:00 p.m.

CHECLC opens every morning at 7:00 a.m. for children enrolled in the infant, toddler, and preschool tuition program. All Pre-K, Head Start, and Early Head Start students attend classes six and one-half hours daily.

Chex Mix, an afternoon enrichment and social activity time, begins at 2:30 p.m. Preschool tuition students are divided among the three (3) CSD preschool classrooms for Chex Mix time. These students are engaged in child-directed experiences, language and literacy enrichment activities, and outdoor exploration until parents arrive to pick up, at or before 6:00 p.m.

CHECLC parents whose child/ren attend school between 8:00 am and 2:30 pm and provide their own transportation must have students at school promptly by 7:55 a.m. and need to be picked up promptly at or before 2:30 p.m. This will help your child establish a set school routine and will reduce interruptions in the classroom.

Pre-K Attendance Policy

The Pre-K program is a full-day, Monday through Friday, program, which follows the City Schools of Decatur K-12 calendar. Children are expected to attend on a regular basis. Attendance regulations are determined by the City Schools of Decatur (csdecatur.net) and The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (decal.ga.gov).

1. After Three Absences
 - Excused Absences: The three-day notification letter will be sent by the Director’s designee to the parent or guardian.
 - Unexcused Absences: The attendance designee will mail the three-day notification letter to the parent or guardian.

2. After Five Absences:
 - Excused Absences: The five-day notification letter will be sent by the Director’s designee to the parent or guardian.
 - Unexcused Absences: The five-day notification letter will be sent by the Director’s designee to the parent or guardian. A telephone call will be made by a member of the school’s attendance committee to the parent or guardian to schedule an attendance intervention meeting to address the unexcused absences and to remediate the problem.

3. After Seven Absences:
 - Excused Absences: The seven-day notification letter will be sent by the Director’s designee to parent or guardian.
 - Unexcused Absences: The seven-day notification letter will be sent by the Director’s designee to parent or guardian. A referral will be made from the school’s attendance committee to the district’s school social worker for further interventions and monitoring.

4. After Ten consecutive absences the student will lose his/her Pre-K spot.

Excused Absence –

A Pre-K child who is absent from school for an entire day shall bring a signed note or email from his/her parent/guardian explaining the reason(s) for the absence. A child shall be counted present if in attendance at least one half of the required instructional time. The Director shall determine whether or not the absence will be excused or unexcused on the basis of the Bright from the Start rule indicating that absences from school may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school endangers a child's health or the health of others. Appropriate documentation is required upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is excused.
2. A serious illness or death in a child's immediate family necessitates absence from school. In the event of a serious illness in a child's immediate family, appropriate medical documentation regarding the family member will be required upon return to school for the purpose of validating that the absence is an excused absence.
3. A child whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of five school days per school year, for the day or days missed from school to visit with his or her parent or legal guardian prior to such parent's or legal guardian's deployment or during such parent's or legal guardian's leave.
4. Observation of religious holidays necessitates absence from school.
5. Conditions render attendance impossible or hazardous to child's health or safety.

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of the attendance/truancy protocol is to increase academic achievement and reduce truancy among children in the school system in compliance with the mandates of Bright From the Start.

Teachers will keep a daily record of each child's presence, absence, tardiness, and early departure. An absence, tardy, or early departure will be entered as "excused" or "unexcused" along with the stated reason. Parents must provide written documentation for all absences from school within three (3) days of the child's return to school. If no written documentation is received, then these absences, tardies, or early departures will remain unexcused and appropriate attendance procedures will be followed.

Tardy Policy

Excessive tardiness is not permitted. The City Schools of Decatur and the Bright From the Start Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning define chronic tardiness as late arrival or early departure more than once per week. Inability to resolve the problem after assistance has been offered will result in a referral for dismissal to the Bright from the Start Office of Early Care and Learning.

Tardies/Early Check-out:

1. After eleven or more unexcused tardies: A letter will be sent from the school administrator to the parent or guardian regarding missed instructional time.
2. After fifteen unexcused tardies: The school administrator will contact parent to set up a conference to discuss reasons for tardies and to review the Bright From the Start excessive tardiness policy.

Parents of Pre-K: If you arrive after 8:00 a.m., you must stop by the reception desk, sign the Pre-K tardy sheet, and pick up a late pass before walking your child to the classroom. Your child will be considered tardy for that day. Classroom teachers begin their daily routine by starting with morning

meeting. Excessive tardiness will not be tolerated. A child's enrollment may be jeopardized if tardiness, early departure, or late pick-up issues are not corrected.

Parents are expected to pick-up their child promptly at 2:30 p.m. Children who remain in the building after 2:40 p.m. are considered late pick-ups. The following is our policy for late pick-ups:

- The 1st time a parent or an authorized supervising adult is not present to receive their child, a verbal warning is given.
- The 2nd time this occurs, the parent must meet with the child's teacher to discuss the issue.
- The 3rd time this occurs, the parent must meet with the Director of College Heights ECLC to discuss the issue and possibly complete an after school program registration form, along with a \$50.00 registration fee.

Parents of 0-3 year olds must escort their child/ren to their classrooms when dropping them off at CHECLC. All children must be signed in and out daily in their classrooms by an authorized individual. Parents of toddlers (2 year-olds) and preschoolers (3 year-olds) are strongly encouraged to have their child/ren at school by 8:30 a.m. every day in an effort to establish a consistent, daily routine with limited interruptions.

Pre-K Drive-Thru

A drive-thru service is offered to Pre-K parents in the morning and in the afternoon. The morning drive-thru is open between 7:30 am and 7:55 am. The following procedures are in place in order to ensure the safety of all of our families and students:

- The drive-thru closes promptly at 7:55 am and a sign stating "Pre-K drive-thru is Closed" will be placed in the front of the school. Parents who arrive at the school on or after 7:55 am must park and walk their child/ren into the building and to their classrooms.
- Please do not drop your child off at the front door when school staff is not on duty. Children must be escorted to their classrooms by an adult except when drive-thru is open.
- Please display your child's number when using the afternoon drive-thru to pick up your child/ren at dismissal.

Park and Walk Agreement

- If you are walking your child to his or her classroom, park in the lower lot to the right upon entering the school driveway.
- YOU MAY NOT park in the handicap spaces unless you have a current handicap sticker displayed in your vehicle.
- YOU MAY NOT park in the fire lanes at any time.
- YOU MAY NOT park behind another vehicle that is parked in a parking spot in the parking lot.
- Please do not park in any assigned spaces in front of the building.
- For safety reasons, please drive slowly through the parking lot at all times.

Pre-K Bus Transportation

City Schools of Decatur provides transportation for Pre-K children who live more than a mile from the school. For information concerning your child's school bus route, please go to the City Schools of Decatur's website to access bus route information. There may be several pages listed so please scroll down until you locate your address.

The City Schools of Decatur requires that a completed transportation request form be on file for each child who rides the bus. A transportation request form was provided to each parent at Pre-K registration. However, if you did not complete a request form and need to do so, please contact Cynthia Andrews at CHECLC (404-370-4480).

If you have any questions concerning your child's transportation, please contact the transportation director, Ms. Lowanda Bowman, at (404)371-6677 ext. 4010 or by email at lbowman@csdecatur.net

Tuition Payment Policy

Upon enrollment, parents are required to complete the 'Payment Options and Procedures Agreement,' which outlines the financial agreements made between the parent/guardian and the City Schools of Decatur. Please refer to the agreement for payment methods, options, and consequences for non-and late payments. Tuition rates are subject to change from year to year. If College Heights is closed due to unexpected weather or safety issues (snow, ice, loss of electricity, etc.), our staff still get paid therefore payment is expected for missed school days. Receipts and account summary are provided upon request. Please make all requests to Caretha Hall (cahall@csdecatur.net).

Late Pick-up Fee

Children attending the infant, toddler, and preschool programs or the after school program must be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. If a child is picked up one minute past 6:00 pm, a \$1/per minute late fee must be paid before the child/ren can return to school the following business day. Late fees may be paid in cash or by check at the time of pick up.

Field Trips

Due to car seat safety laws, only Pre-K children participate in educational field trips that require a bus for transportation during the school year. Families may be asked to help chaperone children on several of these trips. At times, the staff may ask families for donations towards these field trips, however, no child will ever be denied the opportunity to participate due to inability to pay. Staff must have a signed field trip permission form for each child prior to the child leaving the building.

Student Support Model

College Heights ECLC program recognizes children's development will vary greatly and is committed to supporting those who are identified as "at-risk" in language, pre-academic, physical, and social-emotional development. Staff effort to assist these children may range from informal collaboration to formal group interventions. When varied and repeated efforts to support children are not successful, teachers may begin the Response to Intervention (RTI)/MTSS process by meeting with the instructional coach to begin planning, identifying areas of need, and developing new strategies for the classroom teacher to implement.

Joint Instructional Planning: Teachers meet on a weekly basis to plan instruction, review children's work, and discuss data. The purpose of these meetings is to share children's work and assist teachers in planning instruction for all children, especially children experiencing pre-academic, language, social/behavior, physical, or health-related issues or to plan strategies to enhance and challenge others.

RTI/MTSS Referral Meeting: Teachers may request an RTI/MTSS referral meeting with the Director and Instructional Coach. During this meeting, the teacher presents the child's strengths and area of concerns and share data and work samples as evidence of areas of concern. The RTI Coordinator will schedule a follow-up RTI team meeting.

RTI/MTSS Team Meetings: After the child is referred and the teacher is in consultation with parents, the RTI/MTSS team will meet to discuss child's performance in the classroom. As part of the process, goals will be identified and implemented to assist child in meeting CHECLC expectation for proficiency. The plan shall identify the desired levels of performance in the child's specific areas of weakness and the teacher will provide frequent monitoring of child's progress.

School staff efforts to differentiate instruction at the Tier I level and provide different and/or more intensive interventions at the Tier II and Tier III level will be documented in Infinite Campus, along with supporting data. All Response to Intervention functions and data will also be documented in Infinite Campus.

Program Classroom Transitions

College Heights promotes continuity of learning in all aspects of what we do; our regular, close communication with you will ensure we work together and that your child is ready for the next step in his/her development. The classrooms are designed to prepare your child with the developmental skills necessary to be successful.

Children remain in their assigned classroom throughout the year. Every August children matriculate into their new classroom based on the child's age. Prior to the start of the child's new classroom, staff prepares the children to transition to their new learning environment. Pre-K children visit their K-3 school during the month of May and parents attend a parent orientation in the evening to receive important information for their rising kindergartener. 0-3 staff dedicate the month of July to classroom transitions. As part of this process, children take part in transition sessions three (3) times a week at various parts of the day with a small group of their peers. The children will be accompanied by their teacher who will be present to provide any support needed.

Child Find

Child Find is a requirement by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) that the school district identifies young children with disabilities. It includes efforts both within the school and outside the school. Parents who feel that their preschool child may need some early interventions and support may contact the school and schedule their child for a preschool screening that will be held at CHECLC on the following dates:

- August 23, 2019
- October 18, 2019
- December 13, 2019
- March 6, 2020

All children will be screened by specialists in the following areas:

- Speech and language
- Motor development
- Pre-academic skills
- Play and social skills

This information may lead to specific strategies in any developmental area. These interventions can be implemented by private childcare center staff and/or parents and supported by College Heights preschool special education staff. Children enrolled at CHECLC will be supported by the school's Student Support Model process.

Progress Reports and Parent Conferences

Parents receive written and verbal progress reports during the school year. Progress reports are intended to keep parents informed of their child's growth and development. Two parent-teacher conferences are scheduled, one in December and one in May.

During conferences, student developmental profiles will be shared with parents to show the student's progress made during the first half of school year. Teachers will offer ideas on how to support and enhance a child's academic experience. Parents are welcome and encouraged to arrange additional conferences with their child's teacher at any time during the year.

All children receive a developmental screening within six weeks of entering the program. The formal assessment points are cumulative and occur twice a year, allowing 90 days between the pre- and post assessment. Developmental assessments of all children occur in their natural learning environment in the classroom, on the playground, in the cafeteria, and other learning areas in the school. Student assessments are based on a collection of the following data:

The Preschool Evaluation Scale (PES) is used with all children (birth to Pre-K). The PES collects data in the developmental areas of physical, expressive language, cognitive, adaptive behavior, and social-emotional development.

Work Sampling Online (WSO) is used with all Pre-K children and is an ongoing assessment based upon observation of student's academic performance and behaviors. The teacher observes and records data in the following areas: language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, creative expression, social-emotional, and physical development.

Parents will be informed of the assessments being conducted on their child and will have the opportunity to provide input at anytime concerning their child. Student assessment records are electronically recorded in the City Schools of Decatur student information system, Infinite Campus, and used to assist in determining overall program effectiveness and to guide the school improvement plan.

Home and School Communication

Teachers welcome the opportunity to talk with parents concerning their child's growth and development. Parents may leave messages for teachers during the school day with the CHECLC receptionist at (404)370-4480, or contact the teacher via email. Student work and all other written communication from the school will be sent home on Thursday in your child's folder.

Upon enrollment, parents are automatically subscribed to the District's communication system, *Blackboard*. All district and school communication, including school newsletters and announcements, will be sent through the Blackboard system to your contact information you have provided upon enrollment.

Parent Portal

The Parent Portal gives parents and guardians access to Infinite Campus, CSD's student information system. Parents can check balances, tardies, and absences. Parents will receive portal login information during Meet and Greet. You only need to sign up once; passwords stay the same year to year.

Emergency Safety Drills

The school practices safety drills throughout the school year. Safety drills include: fire, tornado, and lock down drills. Evacuation routes are posted in the classrooms. A fire drill is held twice in the first month of school and then once every month thereafter. Children are expected to file out of the building in an orderly manner without talking or running. Classes will remain on the grounds until the "all clear" signal. All schools participate in the state-wide tornado drill, and each school has a safety plan for other emergencies.

School Closings

City Schools of Decatur will use an automated calling service to notify families of emergency dismissals. The calling service will utilize the phone number(s) that have been provided to the school through your child's registration materials. It is your responsibility to notify the school of any change in contact information.

Outdoor Exposure on High Pollution Days

Exposure to air pollution can cause short term and long-term health effects. Children are at increased risk of these health effects because they tend to be more physically active, their lungs are still growing, and they are more likely to have asthma or acute respiratory illnesses which can be aggravated when pollution levels are high. The Air Quality Index (AQI) was designed by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is used to determine how clean or unhealthy the air is. Its levels help the public determine when air pollution reaches unhealthy levels. Outdoor activities may be restricted if AQI levels are high. The level of physical activity and level of pollutants are taken into consideration when making restrictions. Since our intentions are to keep the students and staff in the safest environment possible, it is our policy that hallway and corridor doors of the school shall be kept closed at all times. According to the US EPA an AQI of 151-200 is "unhealthy" for the general public and therefore children should avoid prolonged or heavy outdoor exertion. Therefore scheduled outdoor times will be modified to low intensity activities and/or shorter time periods. The US EPA classifies AQI levels above 200 as "very unhealthy". At this level all scheduled outdoor time will be held indoors.

Health and Nutrition

As part of the CSD School Health Program, CHECLC has a full time school nurse on site. In addition to the information and guidelines below, we follow district-level health and nutrition guidelines. If your child has any special medical needs, you may contact the school nurse by phone at CHECLC (404)370-4480.

Immunization Form

All children enrolled at CHECLC must provide a current immunization record (form 3231) or supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Immunization must be submitted within the first 30 days of enrollment. All children without current immunization records will be dismissed from the program under updated records are provided.

Eyes, Ears, and Dental

All children enrolled in the pre-K program at CHECLC must provide a completed Georgia Department of Public Health Form 3300. Form 3300 must be submitted within the first 90 days of enrollment.

Health History Information

Each child must have a completed health information form on file. The health form will be sent home with your child/ren during the first week of school. The form is updated every year. If your child has special health needs (allergies, asthma, diabetes, seizures), please contact the nurse within the first two (2) weeks of school. The health information form and medical care plans can be downloaded and printed from the School Health webpage (<http://csdecatur.net>). Click on Parents>Forms/Downloads.

Medications

College Heights medication procedures adheres to the policy set forth by Bright from the Start and Head Start:

- No stock Over the Counter (OTC) medications are kept at the school. When a child needs any OTC medication (including Tylenol, ibuprofen, Benadryl, or dietary /herbal supplements) a

written, signed and dated authorization to administer medication to a child must be obtained from the child's parent or legal guardian;

- OTC medication should be brought to school in the original manufacturer's container. The label must include name of the medication and strength of medication. The child's name should be written legibly on the label.
- Prescribed medications are in the original prescription container and are not out of date; medications are labeled with the child's name, specific dosage and times the medication is to be administered to the child;
- The parent/guardian has provided the school with instructions on the methods of administration. Documentation of administration is maintained in the child's file and a copy provided to the parent/guardian.

For chronic conditions such as asthma, severe allergies, seizures or diabetes that require rapid response with prescribed medication a plan outlining the procedure signed by the physician will be kept on file with the medication and a signed parental permission.

Sick Policy

College Heights ECLC adheres to the sick policy set forth by Bright From the Start and Head Start. The staff maintain an environment that promotes health and wellness through frequent, thorough hand-washing, cleaning/sanitizing surfaces, and individualized assessment of children who appear ill. Parents can help with infection control by including frequent and thorough hand-washing in the daily routines at home, especially before and after eating, after diapering or toileting, handling bodily fluids, contact with animals, playing in dirt, sand or on playgrounds. Children should be excluded from the program for the reasons outlined below:

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than faculty can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
- Fever 100°F or higher .

- Diarrhea — two or more stools with blood or mucous, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting — two or more times during the school day
- Undiagnosed rash, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Pertussis (whooping cough), until five days of treatment with appropriate antibiotics

For children’s comfort and to reduce the risk of contagion, children should be picked up within 1.5 hours of parent notification. Children should remain home for 24 hours without symptoms before returning to school, unless the nurse receives a note from the child’s physician stating that the child is not contagious and may return. In the case of a (suspected) contagious illness or continuing symptoms, a doctor’s note may be required before returning.

Required Conditions for a Child To Return to School:

- When he or she is fever free (without the aid of fever-reducing medication), vomiting, and diarrhea for a full 24 hours
- When he or she has been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours (unless otherwise specified)
- When he or she is able to participate comfortably in usual program activities, including outdoor time

Meals and Snacks

CHECLC is a nut-free school environment. Menus are accessible on the school and district websites at the beginning of each month. Please inform the school if your child has any food allergies by contacting the school nurse, who will develop and monitor a special program to meet the student’s needs.

Parents are welcome to provide lunch for their child/ren from home. The administration requests that all parents honor our nut-free environment by not sending in nut products such as peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, peanut butter crackers, almond milk etc. Please send food items that do not need to be refrigerated or heated as the classrooms are not equipped to keep them hot or cold. The cafeteria offers a vegetarian option everyday as a choice for students.

Pre-K parents receive information on meal prices at the beginning of each school year. Families may apply for free/reduced meals at the beginning or anytime during the school year. For more information about the School Nutrition program, including how to pay for your child’s meals online, please visit Nutrition Department website at <http://www.csdecatour.net/nutrition/>

Breakfast is served in the infant classrooms beginning at 8:00 a.m. Toddlers eat breakfast in the school cafeteria and lunch in their classrooms. Preschoolers and Pre-K children eat breakfast and lunch in the school cafeteria. Please be sure to check your child’s schedule for breakfast and lunch times.

For PreK students, breakfast will be served in the cafeteria between 7:30 am and 7:45 am. Students should go directly to the cafeteria upon entering the building if they wish to eat breakfast. Staff will be on duty to accommodate and supervise Pre-K students to and from the cafeteria.

Potty Training

Once children demonstrate the following signs of readiness, potty training may begin:

- Child’s diaper stays dry for 2-3 hours between wettings

- Child has a desire to use the potty (takes own diaper off and sits on the potty independently)
- Child understands toileting process by using language or gestures to use toilet when feeling full or tummy aches

Children are completely “potty trained” when they can consistently, accurately, and independently perform the following tasks:

- Pull pants up and down;
- Verbalize the need to go to the bathroom; and
- Take care of toileting needs with minimal assistance – this includes wiping self, flushing toilet, and washing/drying hands.

Potty Training Process

Once children demonstrate signs of readiness, staff will begin discussing the potty training process with parents. Consistency with students and flexibility with the teachers are most important in this process. Teachers take children to the potty at regular intervals within the classrooms daily schedule.

At CHECLC teachers use the following procedures:

Children begin to wear underwear underneath pull-ups and are taken to the potty at 1 ½ to 2-hour intervals. If a child’s underwear is constantly wet, he/she is not ready for step 2. The staff does not recommend the use of pull-ups without the panties/underwear because they feel and act just like a diaper. Teachers continue to take children to the bathroom supplying words to them for toileting. Teachers offer praise and encouragement for effort and success until children are completely independent.

Family Engagement Opportunities

CHECLC is committed to engaging all families in their child’s education through a variety of school events and classroom opportunities. Parents, family members, and community members are always welcomed at the school. The Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) provides financial support to selected activities that contribute and support the school’s mission and school improvement plan. By joining the PTA you are providing funds for classroom materials, field trips, professional learning, and instructional programs. See our fundraising page for details on how we raise money and how those funds are used. To join, and view additional information on PTA officers, please complete the PTA form on our school website <https://www.csdecatour.net/ECLC>

Family Engagement Events

The PTA board plan yearly events which provide family engagement opportunities. Some of the events include: Read-to-me-a-thon, Silent Auction, Buddy Program, Curriculum Night and school-wide picnics.

There are a variety of ways to become engaged in your child’s education through the Advisory Council and the PTA organization. Teachers and staff are always seeking parent support in the following ways:

- Chairing a PTA committee and/or function
- Helping to prepare classroom materials/activities
- Reading a story
- Leading an activity and/or event for the school
- Chaperoning a field trip

Any parent interested in volunteering at CHECLC, contact the school at (404) 370-4480 for more information.

Early Head Start and Head Start Family Advocate

The Head Start Family Advocate is housed at CHECLC. The advocate is available to offer support to all Early Head Start and Head Start families. The Advocate regularly communicates with parents and teachers about student progress and any other concerns. The Head Start Family Advocate meets as needed with parents to discuss issues or answer questions concerning children's needs and how to better support his/her educational experiences. Meetings can be scheduled to occur at the parent's home, workplace or at school.

The Head Start Family Advocates is available to make referrals to local agencies that assist families in addressing specific needs such as obtaining furniture, food, clothing, housing, health and dental care, counseling, job training, education, employment, finances, and other services. Any information shared with the staff is strictly confidential and will not be shared without written permission.

Advisory Council

An Advisory Council was established at CHECLC to function at the level of an advisory body to the administration and stakeholders. The purpose of the council is to link communities, schools, and parents together in efforts to solve difficult education problems, to improve the quality of teaching and learning, to provide support and guidance to staff and administrators, and to provide an avenue for parents to be a part of the decision-making process.

The advisory council has very specific roles:

- advise and make recommendations on matters related to school improvement and student achievement
- assist in maintaining a school-wide perspective on issues
- act as a link between the advisory council members and the community and parents
- assist in creating the school budget
- assist in the hiring process
- analyze data and make recommendations towards school programs
- assist in creating school calendars
- assist in creating the School Improvement Plan

Official meeting minutes will be published on the school website. Parents and community members should contact advisory council members on matters related to student achievement, school improvement, school process and procedures, school budget priorities, school-community communication strategies, methods of involving parents and the community, and school discipline and attendance.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What do parents need to send to school with their child?

All materials are provided by the program. Children sometimes have accidents, so an extra set of clothing with the child's name on each item should always be kept at school. Backpacks are helpful in transporting materials. Please check with the teacher about other items such as blankets or large towels for nap-time.

2. How should children dress for school?

Children should wear casual, comfortable clothing that allows them to be active. Clothing should be washable so that children can comfortably engage in activities such as painting and playing on the playground without being concerned about "getting their clothes dirty".

3. When can parents call teachers?

Please call any time between 7:30 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. or between 2:45 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. If you must call during class time, please leave a message so the teacher can return calls after class time.

4. Will there be a rest time?

Yes, mats or cots will be provided for each child. You may send a light blanket or a large towel to cover your child during this time. Please refrain from sending stuffed animals. For children sleeping in a crib, blankets are not permitted. Parents may send in a store-purchased wrap or swaddle with Velcro or zip closures.

5 How will parents know how their child is doing?

CHECLC staff has an open door policy. Parents may observe in their child's classroom, however, 48 hour notice is required and the observation will not exceed 45 minutes. Please check with the teacher about the best time for observations.

6. Can parents bring a treat to school for their child's birthday?

Sharing your child's special day is great; however, the administrative staff asks that parents follow these simple guidelines:

- Contact the teacher 48 hours in advance to coordinate the celebration
- All food brought to the classroom must be store bought (not homemade) and meet the needs of any child with identified food allergies
- All food must be free of any peanut product
- For parties held outside school, do not distribute invitations in school unless you are inviting ALL of the children in the class.

7. May parents go on field trips with their child/ren (Pre-K Only)?

Many times parents are invited to join the class. The teacher will send permission slips and parent invitations home with the students. Parents (no siblings due to Bright from the Start regulations) may be allowed to ride the bus depending on available space, and they will be asked to pay for their own admission ticket if one is included in the field trip.