

917 South Dakota Street S.  
Shakopee, MN 55379

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Office: 952-496-5861  
Attendance Line (24 hrs):  
952-496-5863

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Administrator:  
Julie Ritter

Early Childhood  
Coordinator (ECFE and  
PACE): Kim Latterner

Pearson Early Learning  
Center Secretary and  
Screening Contact:  
Elaine Berens

# 2021/22 STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

*It's Always a Great Day to  
be a Saber Cub* 

**PEARSON EARLY  
LEARNING CENTER**

**Shakopee**  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**EDUCATION FORWARD**

## **Pearson Early Learning Center Contacts**

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Julie Ritter – Pearson Administrator/Principal and ECSE Supervisor 952.496.5860

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Evelin Hernandez-Morales - Hispanic/Latino Cultural Liaison 952.496.5814

Elaine Berens – Pearson Early Learning Center Secretary 952.496.5861

Angella Stern – Pearson Early Learning Center Office Assistant 952.496.5875

Lynette Monnens - Special Services Assistant 952.496.5870

## **Stepping Stones Phone Numbers**

Attendance Line 952.496.5863

Extended Care 952.496.5881

## **Table of Contents**

### **School Beliefs and Core Values**

### **Pearson Early Learning Center School-Wide Information**

4 Program Guidelines

10 Safety & Security

11 Parent Involvement

13 Health Information

16 Early Childhood Screening

17 School Calendar

### **Early Childhood Program Information**

18 Stepping Stones Preschool

21 YMCA Extended Care

22 Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) & PACE Family Literacy Program

23 Early Intervention & Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

## **Shakopee Public Schools Mission Statement**

Shakopee Schools, in partnership with our community, will educate lifelong learners to succeed in a diverse world.

## **Pearson Early Learning Center Mission Statement**

The Pearson Early Learning Center is a warm, welcoming community of learners. We are here to learn, explore and support one another.

## **Pearson Early Learning Center Core Values**

- We believe in educating and supporting the whole family.
- We believe students learn best through personalized approaches where student choice and differentiation are integral parts of learning.
- We believe in equitable learning experiences, defined by the characteristics of the children and families we serve.
- We believe in working collaboratively within and across our school community to support the development of the whole child.
- We believe setting high expectations for all will ensure students can achieve and reach their full potential.
- We believe students will succeed when we establish and maintain relationships of respect, trust, confidentiality, collaboration, and cooperation with families, colleagues, and community partners.

## **Pearson Early Learning Center Early Childhood Philosophy**

**Shakopee Public Schools early childhood programs are committed to provide:**

- A learning experience for all young children in a developmentally appropriate and nurturing environment taught by early childhood specialists.
- Curriculum that is research based, literacy focused, and developmentally appropriate.
- Classes that are taught by licensed early childhood specialists. The staff uses a collaborative approach to provide a consistent, nurturing, and positive classroom environment.
- An opportunity for every child to develop independence to be successful in school with respect to individual and cultural differences.
- Staff will collaborate, recognize, and foster family involvement in their child's learning

## PELC PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### Attendance and Absences

Regular attendance is expected as it allows your child to get the most out of the class. However, we know that emergencies come up. Please call the attendance line at 952.496.5863 when your child will be absent from class. State the child's name, date of absence and return date, reason for the absence, parent name and contact phone number. If your child attends YMCA Extended Care programming, please contact them as well at 952.496.5881

### Behavior Expectations and Guidelines

#### School-Wide Expected Behaviors

	Hallway	Bathroom	Playground/Gym	Cafeteria	Classroom
<b>CARING WORDS</b> 	Quiet voice	Quiet voice	Use caring words	Quiet voice Be polite	Quiet voice Use caring words
<b>CARING BODY</b> 	Walking feet Body to yourself	Wait your turn	Wait your turn Make safe choices	Sit down Tummy to the table	Body to yourself Whole body listening
<b>CARING HEARTS</b> 	Body in the group	Keep it clean	Be a caring friend	Keep it clean	Be a caring friend Keep it clean

### Behavior Expectations: Staff

All of the staff are trained in positive behavior intervention support. We believe that positive reinforcement, encouragement, offering of choices, redirection, limit settings, and joint problem solving are the most effective tools of discipline.

#### Staff will:

- Establish behavior expectations in a positive manner.
- Make adjustments to the classroom to accommodate the unique needs of each child.
- Teach, practice, model and reinforce the behavior expectation matrix throughout the building.
- Communicate with parents via newsletters, phone, email, and the Seesaw app.

- Staff will follow the appropriate steps in response to harmful or inappropriate behavior. (see In the case of harmful/inappropriate behavior appendix)

### **Behavior Expectations: Parents and Guardians**

The partnership between parents/guardians and program staff is fundamental to children’s current and future success and readiness for school. When parents/guardians and professionals work together as a team, children do better. While our staff have expertise in working with young children and child development, you are the expert on your own child. We encourage you to share your observations and ideas in order to create a positive behavioral plan that will best support your child while in school and at home. We are here to support you.

#### **Parents/Guardians will:**

- Call the attendance line any time your child will be absent at 952.496.5863
- Avoid absences for reasons other than illness.
- Keep your preschooler home when sick.
- Arrive on time for school drop off and pick up.
- Please communicate appropriately and respectfully with teachers, assistants, administrative staff, other school personnel, and other program parents.

#### **Parent/Guardian Resources**

- I-team - This team provides evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services. To refer your child, first start with your child’s classroom teacher.
- Social Worker- Sally Stockey- sstockey@shakopee.k12.mn.us
- School psychologist - Cortney Olson- colson@shakopee.k12.mn.us
- Scott County Health & Human Services- 952.445.7751

### **Behavior Expectations: Children**

It is our goal to promote a positive approach to all children and the management of behavior issues to create a safe learning environment.

- Building wide we use a school-wide behavior expectation matrix (see above) while also using tools and strategies to promote a positive learning experience.
- We proactively teach preventative behavior measures throughout the building using the Solution Toolkit from our Pyramid Model that promotes social and emotional awareness and problem solving.

### **Challenging Behaviors**

Sometimes a child may exhibit challenging behaviors in a group setting. We define challenging behaviors as an action that is harmful to self or others, is persistent, disruptive or destructive and interferes with the child’s and/or peer’s learning or safety.

#### **Behavior considered harmful and/or inappropriate**

- Behavior which threatens a person’s right to be safe.
- Any form of aggression including verbal, physical, or lack of self-control

- Inappropriate touching of a person's body or belongings.
- Inappropriate gestures.
- Bullying or bullying-like behavior (See bullying policy link below)
- Leaving the group or program area without staff permission.
- Complete disregard for building-wide or classroom expectations.
- Behavior which intentionally causes destruction of property and physical or verbal harm to others.

**If a child shows challenging behaviors in the classroom, we will use the following steps:**

1. Inform and communicate any inappropriate behavior to the parents/guardians.
2. Work with parents/guardians and staff to develop a positive behavior plan.
3. If the behavior warrants, the building's Behavior and Crisis Response Team will be consulted.
4. If the interventions created and implemented are not working for the child, we will refer to other supports such as Early Childhood Special Education or mental health resources
5. In rare cases, the child may be removed from the program.

**Dismissal from the program**

Removal of a student from the program is rare and the process is guided by Minn. Statue 121A. Dismissal is only considered if there is a serious safety threat that hasn't been reduced or eliminated with modifications and/or failure of the family to cooperate with planning or recommendations. This decision is made with the family, teacher, service providers, and program administration. Due to the nature of the situation, it may be determined that another setting is more appropriate for the child. As a team with parents and using resources available through the community, we will work together to find an appropriate placement for the child.

**Links**

Shakopee Public Schools Discipline Policy: [Shakopee Public Schools Discipline Policy](#)  
 Shakopee Public Schools Bullying Policy: [Shakopee Public Schools Bullying Policy](#)

**Pyramid Model**



The Pyramid Model is a multi-tiered framework that supports social competence and prevents challenging behaviors in young children. The model builds positive relationships with all children and families, creates supportive environments, provides for the intentional teaching of social skills, and focuses on individualized interventions when needed. The model supports World's Best Workforce Goal #1: All children ready for kindergarten by increasing the percentage of children who enter kindergarten with social-emotional skills that meet age expectations. The Pyramid Model lends itself to alignment with K-12 Positive Behavior Intervention Support Systems (PBIS). Research on implementation of the Pyramid Model shows that children have better social skills and less problem behavior.



## The Pyramid Model at Pearson Early Learning Center

The Pyramid Model is under the guidance of a Pyramid Model Implementation Team with support from the Minnesota Centers for Excellence.

### We believe that:

- Teachers are able to implement Pyramid Model practices better if they receive training.  
**At PELC, all certified and non-certified staff receive extensive training in Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 social/emotional support and strategies.**
- Teachers are able to implement Pyramid Model practices better if they receive training and practice-based coaching.  
**At PELC, all staff receive coaching from trained coaches.**
- Teachers should be provided the tools and strategies needed to promote and support positive behavior, prevent challenging behavior, and address the social needs of all young children.  
**At PELC, a scope and sequence of social/emotional skills has been developed for all age levels.**
- Data-based decision-making should be emphasized.  
**At PELC, several opportunities are used for collecting data useful for individual student, teacher, and classroom level support**
  - **TPOT/TPITOS:** standardized, observation-based classroom assessment tools used in ALL classrooms
  - **BOQ:** Implementation team assessment tool addressing building-wide Pyramid Model components
  - **BIR (Behavior Incident Report):** online data collection tool for individual behavior incidents
- Evidence-based prevention and intervention practices should be employed.  
**At PELC, we have adapted a building-wide, social-emotional curriculum called “We Thinkers”.**
- The intensity of the behavior intervention should be matched to the intensity level of behavior for children in need of support.  
**At PELC, we implement multiple strategies including calm down spaces to support emotional regulation and the explicit teaching of problem-solving skills for social situations.**
- A program-wide approach to support the social-emotional development of young children will decrease and eliminate challenging behaviors. **At PELC, the Pyramid Model supports and strategies are available to teachers of children birth-5, to children ages birth-5 and to families with information and support for implementing the Pyramid Model strategies at home.**

## **PELC PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

### **Dress**

Children should come to school dressed for play. We encourage students to wear tennis shoes, no flip flops or sandals please. Students will be painting, gluing, running, jumping, etc. We will be as careful as we can, but accidents can and do happen. Students go outside unless the wind chill is below 32 degrees. Rain and snow gear should be worn to school when the weather is inclement. Please be sure to label boots, hats, mittens, coats, etc. with your child's name.

### **Emergency Procedures (fire, tornado and lockdown)**

As a district school building, Pearson Early Learning Center is required to hold safety drills throughout the school year to ensure that families, students, and staff know what to do in an emergency procedure. Drill directions are posted in each classroom depicting where to go in case of a fire, tornado or lockdown. It is expected that ALL parents, students and staff follow the drill procedures.

### **Entering Pearson Early Learning Center**

We are a single point entry school. Please be flexible as we implement measures that prioritize the safety and security of our students, families and staff. Families may enter and exit through Door A. Please proceed to the front office after entering the building. A driver's license is required to sign in to our Raptor system. This is mandatory to ensure the safety of all at PELC.

### **Immunizations**

Required for participation in all programs. See the health section for more information.

### **Payment Policy**

Please see program sections for payment specifics.

### **Parking**

Please park in marked locations in the parking lot or on a city street and follow parking lot direction signage. The parking lot is a busy, crowded space. Park only in designated spaces. Do not park in fire lanes, next to or on any sidewalk. Please monitor your child and hold their hand as you walk to and from the building. Please stay with your child until the class time begins.  
**NEVER LEAVE A CHILD ALONE IN A VEHICLE!**

## PELC PROGRAM GUIDELINES

### Playground

The large playground located at PELC is rated for children ages 5-12. **This playground will not be used by programs at PELC.** The small playground inside the fenced area is suitable to the ages of our students. This is the playground we will use at PELC. If you wish to access any of the playgrounds or green spaces at PELC, please note that these are only accessible when there is not a class in those areas and that **Parent supervision is required.** Please do not leave children unattended.

### Release of Children

Children will only be released to authorized people listed on the child's emergency/registration form. For your child's protection, you must list two or more family members, neighbors or others, age 18 or older, to whom your child may be released. Emergency contact information must be current. Contacts must have working telephone numbers and be located nearby. Any child leaving class before dismissal time, will need to be signed out in the office. Please enter through Door A, let our office staff know that you are here to pick up your student early, acquire a visitor sticker using our Raptor system that requires a driver's license, pick up your child from his/her classroom and then sign out in the main office.

### School Closures/Weather Cancellations

In the event of severe weather or other emergency conditions, it may be necessary to cancel or delay PELC classes. Any cancellations or changes will be announced on local radio and television stations: WCCOAM 830, WCCO-TV Channel 4, KSTP-TV Channel 5, FOX9 Channel 9 and KARETV Channel 11.

- Emergency Information Line 952.496.5088
- If school is delayed 2 hours, there are no morning early childhood classes. YMCA before care will also be cancelled for that morning. Full day fours (FD4's) classes will begin at 11am.
- If the weather becomes severe late in the day, class cancellations will be announced on the school emergency line and parents will be called to pick up children in the preschool programs. In this event, YMCA after care will be cancelled for that afternoon.

### Student/Family Arrival and Departure

Exterior doors at PELC will be locked as much of the day as possible to ensure the safety and security of students and staff during learning and instructional times. Door A will be unlocked during heavy transition times, including 10 minutes before class or dismissal times for Stepping Stones. When the door is unlocked, staff will be supervising students and families as they enter or exit the building. Any family that arrives after class begins will have to enter through Door A and sign in through the office. If a suspicious person enters the building, call the office immediately (952.496.5861, 952.496.5875).

## **PELC PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

Throughout the school year, additional security measures may be implemented that may impact our arrival and departure routines. Parents and families will receive advance notice of any changes.

### **Shakopee School District Policies**

All of Shakopee Public School District policies can be viewed by visiting the district website at [Shakopee.k12.mn.us](http://Shakopee.k12.mn.us) or <https://www.shakopee.k12.mn.us/Page/3399>. Written copies are available upon request.

District policies are in place that address; drug-free and tobacco-free environments, field trips, harassment and violence, hazing prohibition, internet and network acceptable use policy, notice of directory information, photos-videos-interviews-social media, rights regarding surveys and other matters, school weapons policy, student discipline, student sex nondiscrimination, visitors to school buildgins/sites, bullying prohibition, wellness, health and safety.

## **PELC Safety and Security**

Maintaining a safe learning environment is a high priority of our district and building. As efforts are made to improve security, some security measures may be perceived as being less convenient to staff and/or families. However, we firmly believe that the safety and security of our students and staff outweigh any potential inconvenience that may arise. The Raptor system which requires a valid driver's license is used in our building.

If a parent or staff member has a question or concern about building security, please contact 952.496.5860 to speak to the Pearson Administrator.

### **Visitors to Pearson Early Learning Center**

A visitor is defined as a community member or parent or family member that will be staying longer than the drop-off/pick-up time for their child. All visitors must sign in at the front office and wear a visitor badge at all times. If a visitor is observed in the building without identification, please direct that person to the office immediately. Call 952.496.5861 or 952.496.5875 to notify them that a visitor is being sent to the office.

### **Safe Zones**

Schools are located in "safe zones." This means no drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons can be possessed by adults within 300 feet of Pearson Early Learning Center. There are increased penalties if this occurs.

## **PELC Safety and Security**

### **Weapons Policy**

It is of critical importance that we do everything we can to ensure a safe environment for all of our students. In order to do so, we must strictly enforce a "no weapons" standard for everyone, including the children. A weapon is defined as any item which is/can be dangerous, or is used in a dangerous manner. This could include anything such as (but not limited to), a pen if used dangerously, a gun, or a knife. This includes any toys from home to share for "show and tell" that resemble a weapon or could be considered dangerous. District policy is to individually review any incidents of weapons in school. Consequences can range from 1-15 days of suspension, to alternative placement or expulsion. Weapons will be confiscated, and in some instances, submitted to a law enforcement agency. To view the Shakopee Public Schools Weapons Policy, at [Shakopee.k12.mn.us](http://Shakopee.k12.mn.us) or <https://www.shakopee.k12.mn.us/Page/3399>

## **PELC Parent Involvement**

### **Advisory Council/PTO**

The Pearson Early Learning Center Advisory Council (PELCAC) is made up of parents, staff members and community members. The Parent Advisory Council is a great way to give back to our district early childhood programs, families, and the community. We hope you will join us. The Advisory Council works to support the Shakopee School District early childhood programs and services to families. We address policy, program fees, program services, and parents' perspectives on ways to improve quality and accessibility.

The council has been involved in organizing and sponsoring the Kids Stuff Sale, Community Baby Fair, Open Houses, Pearson Early Learning Center Diaper Bank, Rally Day at the Capitol and Week of the Young Child.

Fundraising for the early childhood programs and families who participate in the district early childhood programs is a responsibility of the council. In the past the council raised money for the PELC playground, shared equipment and center-wide embedded curriculum.

The council serves as a liaison to inform other parents, legislators and community members about early education, school district issues and other community concerns that affect children and families. The Parent Advisory Council meetings are held at the Pearson Early Learning Center. Meeting times are determined by the members each year. Childcare is provided. For more information contact the Pearson Administrator at 952.496.5860.

### **Diaper Bank**

PELC partners with Shakopee Community Assistance (SCA) to provide diapers to families. Please bring in diapers of all sizes whenever your child has outgrown a size or when you want to help out by donating diapers/wipes. A donation bin is located in the lobby area. If you need to use the diaper bank, please call SCA at 612.708.1668.

## **PELC Parent Involvement**

### **Helping Your Child Prepare for Separation**

Separation anxiety is a normal and natural experience for children and parents. To help children through separation, it's helpful to:

- Believe in your child's ability to separate from you.
- Let your child see where you will be when you are gone.
- Talk about the feelings he/she is having. Reassure your child that fear, sadness, anger, or loneliness are normal and predict a happy outcome.
- Always tell your child that you are leaving and that you will be back.
- Be consistent, once you say that you are leaving do not linger and do not attempt to "peek" through windows and doors.
- Allow your child to bring a comfort item to stay in their backpack.

### **Parent Communication**

A child's learning is enhanced when parents and teachers cooperatively work together to support each child's development. Please contact your child's teacher whenever you have a question or a concern. This can be done by phone, e-mail, or during drop off/pick-up time. It is critical that your child's teacher has current information regarding phone contacts if your contact information changes.

- **Preschool Conferences:** Parent/Teacher conferences are typically held in November and February/March.
- **Classroom Newsletters/Calendars:** Teachers will be send home updates on classroom learning either weekly or monthly. These will inform you of themes and concepts that are being taught. Newsletters and classroom calendars are also posted on classroom bulletin boards and may be shared on seesaw or via email.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

Shakopee Public Schools Early Childhood Programs believe parental involvement is vital to the education and development of children. Parents are responsible to complete all enrollment information. In addition parents are expected to:

- Pay fees on time (1st of each month for Stepping Stones Preschool Only).
- Be on time for class, especially for drop off and pick up of their preschool children.
- Provide current immunization record.
- Provide current emergency information.
- Provide student photo/video release.
- Register preschool aged children for preschool screening.
- Contact the PELC office if they will be absent. The office staff will notify your child's teacher of their absence.
- Support their child's learning and positive behavior at school and at home.
- Participate in parent involvement activities.

## **PELC Parent Involvement**

### **Parent Volunteers**

There are opportunities for parents to help in their child's classroom, school or program projects, and fundraising. Please let your child's teacher know if you are interested or contact the District Community Partnership Manager at 952.496.5128 with any questions you may have.

## **PELC Health Information**

### **Health and Safety Guidelines**

Healthy students are better learners. Health services are provided in the Shakopee School District to promote and maintain the health and safety of all students and staff.

**Children may not attend class...**if they are ill or exhibit symptoms of an oncoming illness. This includes:

- A temperature of 99 degrees orally (100 degrees rectally) in the last 24 hours.
- An undiagnosed rash; check with your child's physician before coming to school.
- Contagious stage of any communicable disease (check with your physician concerning infectious duration).
- Diarrhea
- Harsh or continuous cough
- A sore throat
- An ear ache
- Red eyes or discharge from the eyes. Yellow or green discharge from the nose.
- Vomiting within 24 hours prior to school
- If your child becomes ill in school or shows symptoms of illness, you will be notified and may be asked to take your child home. Please notify the office if your child will be absent from class.
- If your child contracts a communicable disease and has potentially exposed other children at the site, please call your child's teacher.

### **Accidents/Injuries**

In case of any injury or an emergency, the school always notifies parents so the necessary arrangements can be made. If it is not possible to contact the parents and the situation appears to be urgent, 911 is called.

## PELC Health Information

### Allergies

Shakopee Public School attempts to take reasonable measures to accommodate student's health needs in order to promote a safe environment for students with severe or life-threatening allergies. Parents who have children with severe allergies should contact their school health office about their student's allergy. Parents should also inform their child's teacher immediately of any allergies, medications or health issues, so we can properly take care of your child at school. Parents also need to ensure that the **Annual Health Update** form is accurate. Medical documentation from a Licensed Physician, Physician's Assistant, or Certified Nurse Practitioner will be required for accommodations to be made at school for your child. Forms related to allergies can be found on the Shakopee School District website at <https://www.shakopee.k12.mn.us/domain/41>

Successful management of severe allergies in the school setting requires the development of a plan that will best meet the needs of the child. We take all reasonable precautions to avoid nut products in the classroom to minimize the risk of an allergic reaction in children. We will also take similar precautions to minimize the risk of exposure to any other food allergy your child may have. Please contact the health office at 952.496.5864 with concerns.

### COVID-19 Responses: Health and Safety Protocols and Procedures; Notification of COVID-19 Exposure Processes

Information regarding Shakopee Public Schools response to COVID-19 can be found on the school district's website at <https://www.shakopee.k12.mn.us/Page/1>. Due to the need for continued vigilance and updates the most up-to-date information can be found on the school district's website.

The Pearson Early Learning Center's response to COVID can be found on the Pearson website at <https://www.shakopee.k12.mn.us/Domain/18>

### Head Lice

If it is suspected that a student may have (had) lice, the LPN, Licensed School Nurse will examine the student. If live lice are found, the following measures are taken:

1. The parent is notified and will be asked to treat the child before the child returns to school. Students with live lice do not need to be sent home early from school. They can stay in the classroom and go home at the end of the day, returning to school after appropriate treatment has begun.
2. The parent is asked if they want siblings checked. It is helpful to treat all infected family members at the same time. It is not recommended to treat family members who have no signs of lice or nits.
3. The parent is given instructions on recommended treatment. These instructions also include information on how to clean the home and personal objects.

## PELC Health Information

4. If there are three or more cases of head lice in the classroom, a letter is sent home with all students in the affected classroom. Preserving the confidentiality of each student/family is mandated.
5. Upon returning to school, the student is re-checked for live lice by the nurse.
6. Health services staff rechecks the student 6-7 days after treatment. It is very common that a second treatment is needed in 7-10 days.
7. The Licensed School Nurse follows up with parent(s) or guardians if a student continues to have active lice infestation after two treatments and offers additional assistance.

### Immunizations

In accordance with Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.15 and 135A.14, parents of all children who are enrolled in a Minnesota school must be immunized. Parents must submit proof of immunizations or submit a signed exemption form. No child, unless s/he meets allowable exemptions, is allowed to attend school if those records are not up-to-date. Allowable exemptions include either (1) medical exemption, signed by a physician, stating that the immunization is prohibited for medical reasons, or because an adequate immunity already exists or (2) a conscientious exemption, signed by the parent or legal guardian and notarized, stating that the child has not been immunized because of conscientiously held beliefs of the parents or legal guardians.

Minnesota law permits schools and clinics to share immunization information with each other. The health office personnel may also look up immunization records on MIIC (the Minnesota Immunization Registry).

### Medications

Shakopee Schools maintain a safe, effective medication procedure that is consistent with accepted standards. Generally, LPNs administer all medication in the school. In the absence of the LPN, other designated school personnel in each building who are in-service yearly and supervised by the district Licensed School Nurses may dispense medication. Medication must be brought to the school in an **original container** and appropriately labeled by the pharmacy with date, child's name, dosage, time intervals and any other key instructions. Over-the-counter medication will be administered only when the medication comes in the original container.

The "**Medication Permission**" form must be filled out completely and submitted in order for the school to administer medication to a student. The form needs to be signed by both the parent and the physician for all prescription medications. Only a parent signature is required for over-the-counter medication. New forms must be submitted each school year.

It is also helpful to let your child's teacher know if there are any health problems or medications needed by the student.

## PELC Health Information

### Toilet Training

Preschool students are required to be independently toilet trained before their first day of class. Accidents do sometimes occur so it is helpful to have extra sets of clothing in your child's backpack. Children will be guided to change their clothing independently. Toilet training resources are available upon request. Accommodations are made for our students with identified special needs.

Please note: If a child requires a pull-up or diaper to attend class, it is an indication they may not be independently toilet trained.

**Winter Wear** Unless the temperature or wind chill are below 32 degrees Fahrenheit, students may be outside during their school time. It is imperative that each child be dressed properly for the cold weather. A warm coat, mittens or gloves, hats, snow pants, and boots are "must" items.

## Early Childhood Screening

Early Childhood Screening (ECS) is a free developmental check-up required by the State of Minnesota for all preschool-aged children attending district early childhood programs and for children entering kindergarten.

### Screening appointments:

- Are for children between the ages of three to five, however optimal age for screening is between the age of three and four.
- Help identify any needs that may require attention before your child enters school.
- Involve playful activities that make it an enjoyable experience for your child, while providing valuable information about their development.
- Check your child's height, weight, hearing, vision and immunization records, coordination, large and small motor skills, speech, learning development, and social and emotional skills.
- The screener will discuss the results with you after the appointment and answer questions about development, learning, and preparing children for kindergarten.
- Last approximately 60 minutes.
- Provides information about community resources for young children and families.
- Contact the Pearson Early Learning Center's main office at 952.496.5861 to make an appointment. Or schedule online at: <http://www.shakopee.k12.mn.us/Page/6587>.

## **PELC School Calendar**

### **Pearson Early Learning Center 2021-2022 School Calendar**

September 7 & 8 Stepping Stones Connect and Celebrate Appointments

September 9 First Day of Stepping Stones Preschool

September 13 ECFE Classes Begin

September 13 PACE Classes Begin

October 20-22 No School/Fall Break

November 12 No School/Staff Development & Teacher Planning

November 16 & 18 Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences

November 24-26 No School/Thanksgiving Break

December 17 No School/Staff Development

December 22-January 2 No School/Winter Break

January 3 School Resumes

January 13 PELC Extravaganza - currently on hold but reserve this date....

January 17 No School

January 28 No School/Staff Development

February 18 No School/Staff Development

February 21 No School - Presidents' Day

March 1 & 3 Winter Parent/Teacher Conferences

April 1- No School/Teacher Planning

April 4-8 - No School/Spring Break

May 6 No School

May 30 No School/Memorial Day

June 9 Last Day of Stepping Stones Preschool

## **Stepping Stones Preschool**

**Stepping Stones Preschool** is a four-star, Parent Aware, preschool program that provides a warm, nurturing environment, designed to help each child grow and learn. An important goal of our program is to provide a positive introduction to the world of learning, and formal education for all children and their families.

Each school day consists of a variety of experiences and activities carefully designed to enhance a preschooler's learning. Children participate in fun, active and developmentally appropriate activities in preparation for kindergarten. The daily schedule includes large group activities, small group learning, free choice play, large muscle activities (either outdoors on the playground or indoors in the gymnasium), art activities and snack time. Each of the daily activities, as well as the classroom space, is designed to encourage development and to provide a range of intentional learning experiences for all children.

### **Assessment**

Stepping Stones Preschool uses Teaching Strategies GOLD for assessment of student development and learning. TS GOLD is an MDE, Parent-Aware approved assessment tool. Assessment information is shared with parents during parent/teacher conferences and at other times by parent request. TS GOLD is an authentic assessment tool, meaning that assessment is done in "real" time and through observations of students and is not meant to be a stand-alone "test" of student achievement. TS GOLD provides teachers with the information they need to ensure the learning activities they are creating meet the students' learning needs.

### **Curriculum**

All of our classrooms are literacy rich and use curriculum aligned to the Shakopee Public School's Core Curriculum and the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress, which are the state of Minnesota's Early Learning Standards. This literacy-rich curriculum employs evidence-based instructional practices that address all domains necessary to ensure the needs of the whole child are addressed. Each class uses a specific book as its theme for one to two weeks. Each day, the same book is presented and read in a different way. By the end of the unit, many children may be able to "read" or tell you the story. Activities are purposefully designed to relate to the concepts from the book and provide many learning opportunities for children. Each teacher sends information on the unit activities that are planned.

### **Class Cancellations/No Refunds**

If you need to withdraw from a class, please contact the District Office at 952.496.5029 as soon as possible, in order for us to accommodate other families on waiting lists. Preschool registration fees are not refundable.

## Stepping Stones Preschool

### Extended Care

We are excited to partner with the YMCA to provide quality early education and care. Families will contract for Preschool PLUS extended care adjacent to their child's preschool days for the entire school year. Students will receive a hot breakfast, snacks and hot lunch through the district's food service program which is included in the monthly tuition.

Families that need Extended Care during non-preschool days will contract separately in advance (2 weeks) if needed. **Breakfast and lunch will not be provided during non-preschool days and parents will need to provide a sack lunch.**

**Please see page 21 for more Extended Care procedures.**

### Late Pick-Up Policy

In the event that parents are more than 10 minutes late, and neither parent can be reached, one of the emergency contacts will be called to pick up your child. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged. All late pick ups will be given a late pick up form to insure appropriate billing.

### Payment Policy

Monthly payments are due by the 1st of each month for the upcoming month. Please be sure payments are on time. Failure to make payments may result in your child's dismissal from the program. If at any time you are experiencing a change in financial circumstances that makes it difficult to make payments, please contact the Pearson Administrator at 952.496.5860.

**Payments can be made in 4 ways.**

1. **Pay online:** You can pay your preschool and extended care tuition online. The billing clerk at the District Office can help you set up an online account.
2. **Pay in person:** Payments made in person must be done at the District Office, located at 1200 Shakopee Town Square.
3. **Automatic payment:** If preferred, please fill out the autopay form and return to the District Office. Your payment will be made automatically on or about the first of the month.
4. **Pay by Mail:** Make checks payable to Community Education 1200 Town Square Shakopee, MN 55379

### Program Eligibility

The Stepping Stones Preschool program is for all children. There are no residency requirements. Registrations are taken all year, based on space within the program. Space is limited therefore enrollment priorities are in place for the following children: children with disabilities, children who qualify for Pathway I or Pathway II scholarships, children of families who are designated as homeless, and families with other identified risk-factors.

## Stepping Stones Preschool

### **Snacks**

Children will have a snack each day provided by our cafeteria. Our classrooms are a peanut-aware environment and classrooms of students with known peanut allergies are peanut-free. We encourage nutritious snacks.

**Birthdays:** If you plan to celebrate your child's birthday with their class, please do not bring food items. Alternative choices could be pencils, stickers, etc.

### **STEAM Lab**

All preschool classrooms have weekly access to the Pearson STEAM Lab. Each month Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math skills are used in a fun and engaging themed curriculum.

### **The Pyramid Model**

The Pyramid Model is a conceptual framework of evidence based practices to promote social emotional growth in young children. With the support and assistance of coaches, extensive training, and research based materials, we utilize **The Pyramid Model** to increase the social/emotional/behavioral skills of young children and practice these skills throughout the year.

### **Toilet Training**

Preschool students are required to be independently toilet trained before their first day of class. We understand that accidents do sometimes occur. It is very helpful to have extra sets of clothing in your child's backpack or locker. When accidents occur, children will be guided by staff to change their clothing independently. Toilet training resources are available at the PELC main office upon request. Accommodations are made for our students with identified special needs. Please note: If a child requires a pull-up or diaper to attend class, it is an indication they may not be independently toilet trained.

### **Visitors During Lunch**

Parents and relatives are welcome to visit children who receive lunch. In consideration of children with allergies, please refrain from bringing outside food for yourself and your child. If you so choose, you may work with the District Food Service department to pay in advance and receive a lunch number or pay exact change to the cafeteria staff to eat the same meal your student is served. Upon arrival, enter through our main door (Door A), and visit the office to sign in to the Raptor system. You will need your driver's license or other identification and will receive a visitor badge. Our office staff will guide you to the cafeteria.

## Stepping Stones Preschool

### **YMCA Extended Care**

Extended day childcare is available for students adjacent to their school day from 7-9am, 11:30am-3pm, and 3-5:30pm. Students can only attend sessions for which they have pre-registered.

### **Extended Care Arrival and Dismissal of Students**

Starting before 9am or ending after 3pm, children should be dropped off and picked up through Door A. Families must park in legal parking spaces and must obey all traffic and parking signs. All transitions between extended care spaces and children's preschool classrooms will be supervised by extended day, or Stepping Stones staff.

### **Extended Care Contact Information**

The phone number for extended care is 952.496.5881. Parents/guardians are responsible for contacting extended day staff if their child will miss a session for which they are registered (e.g. student is sick).

### **Extended Care Registration**

Registration for extended care is required two weeks prior to the student's first day of attendance. Payment is due by the 1st of each month.

Full-day care is available on the following on some school release days when preschool is not in session. Students must be registered two weeks prior to the date needing care. For school release days, payment is due at the time of registration.

### **Extended Care - Changes to Contract**

Changes or cancellations to your extended care contract **must be submitted in writing two weeks prior to the first of the month being changed or canceled.** After that date, you are responsible for payment for all days for which you are contracted. Registration for extended care is done at the District Office, at 1200 Town Square, Shakopee.

### **Extended Care Snacks and Meals**

Students enrolled in before care (7-9am) will have breakfast included with their tuition. Lunch is included in the tuition for midday care (11:30am-3pm), and an afternoon snack is included for after care (3-5:30pm). Breakfast and lunch will follow a food service menu developed for Pearson Early Learning Center. It will be available on the Shakopee Schools website. PELC follows the lunch schedule for East Middle School.

## **ECFE and PACE**

### **Opportunities for You & Your Child to Learn & Grow Together in ECFE**

Contrary to the belief that raising children comes naturally, there is growing recognition that being a parent is extremely demanding and difficult work. **Early Childhood & Family Education (ECFE)** recognizes that parents are children's first, and most, significant teachers. It is our mission to strengthen families and enhance the ability of parents to provide the best environment for the healthy growth and development of their children. Please join us, and other parents, in supporting our district's youngest learners in preparing them for school success. For more information regarding any of our programs or services, **call 952.496.5875 or 952.496.5861.**

**ECFE** offers weekly classes for you and your child during the day, as well as during the evening. ECFE classes are for parents with children birth through age four. All classes include parent/child interaction time, and a parenting session. Some classes separate for parent education while others stay together for the duration of the session.

### **PACE Family Literacy**

The PACE Family Literacy program is a collaboration between Shakopee Schools, ECFE, and Adult Basic Education. Parents who are learning English as a second language, finishing their high school degree, or working on improving their work skills, may attend adult classes while their children participate in Early Childhood programming. Parents participate in weekly parenting classes as part of their curriculum.

### **Sibling Care**

Sibling Care is available for families who need care for their other young children while attending a class, or an event, with another child. Sibling care is available Monday through Friday, unless otherwise indicated. Sibling care is not available for children in elementary. Caregivers are school district employees, who have experience in child development and caring for children. There is a fee for Sibling Care and registration is required to ensure sufficient staffing. Please make sure to register, and include the fee for Sibling Care, when completing your registration materials.

### **Snacks**

Snacks are provided during ECFE and PACE classes. Our classrooms are peanut-free. We encourage nutritious snacks. If your child has a dietary restriction, please contact our office at 952.496.5861.

## ECFE and PACE

### Special Events

We offer a variety of special events including field trips, speakers, and community events such as: Family Fun Nights, child enrichment classes, and home visits. For more information, check out the ECFE catalog on our website at [www.shakopee.k12.mn.us](http://www.shakopee.k12.mn.us).

## Early Intervention and ECSE

Shakopee Public Schools provides specialized services to young children, age birth to kindergarten, who demonstrate a developmental delay or have specialized needs, in the general areas of:

- Cognitive skills
- Speech and Language skills
- Large and fine motor skills
- Adaptive/functional skills
- Vision or hearing losses
- Social/Emotional skills

### Referrals

If you suspect your child may have a developmental delay and or need additional support, you can do the following:

1. Talk with your child's teacher. They can support you as you determine the next course of action and access special education services by making a referral for an evaluation.
2. Sign-up for Early Childhood Screening. If your child has not yet received Early Childhood Screening; this is a great place to start.
3. Call the Pearson Administrator or Special Services Assistant. Either person can contact the evaluation team, who will then be back in touch with you to determine next steps.
4. Make a Help Me Grow Referral by filling out the information located at Help Me Grow website at [www.helpmegrow.org](http://www.helpmegrow.org)

### Evaluation for Special Education Services and Next Steps

After a child receives a formal evaluation to identify specific needs, trained teachers, and related service providers, will work with the parents and/or the child to reach his or her greatest potential. In addition to special programming some students may qualify for the related services of occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language therapy, and/or may demonstrate a need for assistive technology.

## **Early Intervention & ECSE**

### **Early Intervention (Birth to age 3)**

From birth to age three, Early Intervention services are provided to the child primarily in his or her home or childcare center. The Early Intervention process guarantees parental involvement every step of the way. From birth to age three, a child's education is outlined in the "Individual Family Service Plan," or IFSP.

### **Early Childhood Special Education (Age 3 to Kindergarten)**

From age three to Kindergarten, children receive Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services at Pearson Early Learning Center in collaboration with Stepping Stones preschool. After a child turns 3, the child's educational goals and objectives are detailed in his or her, "Individual Education Plan," or IEP. Parents are critical team members in developing the IEP.

### **The Early Intervention/ECSE staff supports children and their families by:**

1. Helping children reach their full potential through individualized program plans (IFSP and IEP) geared to promote development, based on each child's assessed level of function and need.
2. Supporting and educating families to help promote the abilities and working with the challenges of children who have special needs.
3. Providing parents with information about community-based experiences for their children.



**Thank you for choosing Shakopee Public Schools Early Childhood Programs located at Pearson Early Learning Center for your child's and your family's early learning experiences. We look forward to working with you and getting to know your family!**