

Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP Preschool



Parent Handbook



2023-2024



Dear Families,

Welcome to Huskie Pups, the Early Childhood program offered by Atlanta Community Schools! This program is the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) funded by the State of Michigan. We are counting on you to be a full partner in every aspect of your child's experience with GSRP. You will have opportunities to set goals for your child and your family, learn new ways to be the very best teacher for your child, and meet other families.

Please take some time to read through this Handbook to get answers to many of the questions you may have about your child's program and our policies. Keep it handy to refer back to throughout the school year.

We encourage you to be involved in your child's program through keeping up to date on the classroom activities and communication with the teachers.

Once again, welcome to Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP Preschool and best wishes for a successful, exciting year with your child!

Sincerely,

Tawny Hisscock
Atlanta Community Schools Principal

Tony Suszek
Atlanta Community Schools Superintendent

These materials were developed under a grant awarded by the Michigan Department of Education.

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Huskie Pups Full Day GSRP School Calendar

***Dates listed are subject to change.**

Mon-Thur	Aug 21 - Sept 8	Home Visits
Monday	Sept. 11 & 12	Parent/Child Days
Wednesday	September 13	First Full Day for Students
Wednesday	October 19	No School - Teacher Work Day
Wednesday	November 15	Safety Break - No School - Teacher Work Day
Wednesday	November 22&23	No School: Thanksgiving Break
Thursday	Nov. 30 & Dec. 1	No GSRP: Conferences
Thursday	December 21	No School: Winter Break Begins
Tuesday	January 2	School Resumes
Monday	January 15	No School - Martin Luther King Day- Teacher Work Day
Monday	February 19	No School - Presidents Day - Teacher Work Day
Thursday	Feb. 29 & March 1	No School GSRP- Parent Teacher Conferences
Monday	March 18	Spring Break Begins
Monday	March 25	Classes Resume
Wednesday	April 22	No School - Teacher Work Day
Thursday	May 16 & 17	No School GSRP-Parent Teacher Conferences
Thursday	May 23	Students Last Day GSRP

We will follow Atlanta Community Schools closings for weather and other unforeseen events.

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is Michigan's state-funded preschool program for four-year-old children with factors which may place them at risk of educational failure. Program quality requirements and other guidelines are included in the GSRP Implementation Manual. All policies and information within this Handbook also pertain to the

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Great Start Readiness Programs. The program is administered by the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Great Start.

Philosophy

- Atlanta Community Schools Huskie Pups Great Start Readiness Program provides a developmentally appropriate program in a safe and nurturing environment, which promotes social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth. Our goal is to foster a positive self-concept, develop socialization and school readiness skills for our students. Various experiences, geared to the age group; as well as individual needs of each child are provided. Long-lasting partnerships between school, family, and community are initiated.

The goal of the Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP is to provide every preschooler with the best educational opportunities through a child-centered, hands-on curriculum in a rich learning environment created through our families, community and professional staff. Our goal is to provide all children with a foundation and a developmentally appropriate, whole-child preschool experience to prepare them for kindergarten.

We believe that young children learn to the best of their ability when given:

- A safe, healthy, nurturing environment
- Teacher-child relationships in combination with strong family-teacher relationships in which all are valued
- Many opportunities for play and learning through play experiences
- Opportunities for families to be involved and work together to help their child
- Activities geared toward their current skills and interests

Decisions are made from a child-centered focus which includes looking at the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Preschool, the curriculum, assessment information, feedback from parents and the diverse social, economic, cultural and family needs that exist within the classroom.

WELCOME TO PRESCHOOL TIPS

If you have ever made a move from one location to another or separated from friends, you know how hard a transition can be. Going from a familiar, comfortable environment to one that is different can be stressful.

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As a parent, your attitude is important. You can show with both words and actions that school is important to your child now and in the future. School is your child's "JOB" so encourage them to relax and enjoy learning!



Here are Some Tips:

- Make sure your child is rested. Ten to twelve hours of sleep are recommended for preschool children. A tired child does not learn as well as one who is well rested and ready for the day. It is important that you and your child get up early enough so there is time to get ready.
- Plan your morning schedule so you do not have to rush out the door. You can get some of the things ready the night before.
- Be sure your child's body and clothing are clean before leaving for school.
- Sick children cannot function and endanger the health of other children in the classroom. If your child is sick, please read the programs **Illness/Injury/Accident Protocol** (see page 18) and keep him or her at home. Please let us know when your child will not be in school.
- Unless ill, children need to be in school every day so they don't fall behind or miss important activities.
- Set aside time each day for you and your child to enjoy some fun learning activities together. Talk to your child's teachers for ideas on what you can do. Turn off the television during this time.
- Read to your child each day to help lay the foundation for future success in school.
- Send your child to school with a smile, a hug and an encouraging word each day. Check your child's backpack for newsletters and other information daily. Ask your child about their day at school.

Connect 4 Learning®

- Connect 4 Learning® combines literacy, mathematics, science and social emotional learning into early childhood prekindergarten curriculum based on research in those four areas. It uses a project based approach in which children work toward a larger goal. High-interest learning centers that support and extend children's growing understandings in social-emotional skills, science, literacy, and mathematics are a fundamental part of

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daily lessons. Observation opportunities and individualized instruction strategies are also built into the curriculum.

- Staff will connect with parents to exchange information about how the curriculum supports their child's development through conferences, home visits, newsletters, and informal conversations.

Criteria for Admission

- For admission visit nemcsa.org to start the application process and to see if your family qualifies, according to guidelines set by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). If more families apply than there is space available, children with the greatest need (per the MDE guidelines) will be admitted first. Subsequent openings will then be filled, according to need, based on MDE guidelines.
- Children in the 4 year-old program must be at least four years of age, and less than five years of age, by September 1, 2020.
- Copies of the following documents are required: birth certificate, immunization records, current health appraisal (within the last year), proof of residency, and proof of income. Paperwork must be provided prior to acceptance. Health appraisals must be updated annually.
- Proof of Immunizations are required as follows:
4DPT, 1MMR, 3 Polio, 3 Hepatitis B, HIB series, PCV series and Varicella (chicken pox) unless the parent signs a waiver with the local Health Department. A copy of your child's immunization records must be on file at the preschool. If your child has not yet received all required vaccinations, a schedule of appointments to receive age appropriate vaccinations must be provided. Failure to comply will result in the child's removal from the program.
- Additional items may be requested as evidence of the Michigan Department of Education's at-risk factors (i.e., proof of income, doctor's notes for health risks or, IEP's, etc...) and will need to be provided.
- Necessary enrollment and registration forms must be completed prior to the beginning of school. This includes the Emergency Contact and Consent Card (Child Information Record). The Health Appraisal needs to be completed and in your child's file within 30 days of enrollment. Failure to do so will result in an inability for your child to attend until their file is complete.

Nondiscrimination Policy

- Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicant for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements are notified that Alcona Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national

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origin, sex, age, religion or disability in its admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs, activities, or policies.

Confidentiality Policy

- Information presented to Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP will remain confidential and not be disclosed to parties other than Atlanta Community Schools, AMA ESD staff members, and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) without written consent of parent(s) or guardian(s). You will be asked to sign a release of information so that your child's records can be shared with his or her next school.
- Per the Release of Information Consent form filled out during enrollment, the GSRP program will share the Child Information Card with Atlanta Community Schools office staff for safety and emergency purposes. It will also be shared with the child's bus driver.
- Children can ONLY be released to those listed on the Child Information Card. A listed adult must put them on the bus and take them off the bus, or drop off and pick up the child at the school. Bus drivers are not authorized to release a child to anyone not listed on the Child Information Card.
- All information regarding children in the classroom is to be kept confidential and not be shared outside of the classroom by families as they get to know the other students and families in the room.

Licensing Notification

- GSRP preschools follow all licensing rules and regulations required by the State of Michigan Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Bureau of Community Health Systems.
- All child care centers must maintain a licensing notebook which includes all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans (CAP). The notebook must include all reports issued and CAPs developed within the preceding 5 years until the license is closed.
- Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.
- Each center's licensing notebook is available to parents during regular school hours.

Weekly Schedule and Attendance Policy

- Children in Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP will attend 4 days per week, Monday-Thursday.
- Children are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Excessive absences may result in termination from the program. An absence of 5 consecutive days without contact with the school staff will be presumed as a drop from the program.
- If a child must miss school, please notify the teacher with a reason for absence.
- Your child's teacher will attempt to make contact if they do not hear from you when your child is absent.
- Regular attendance is essential to benefit your child's development. We will work with families to support your child in any way we are able to ensure they are in the classroom.

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Daily Routine Components

Welcome and Read-Aloud - This is our first large group of the day. Everyone gathers at the carpet and we sing a welcome song. We go over any announcements and introduce any new classroom elements. A new book is read each day. We introduce the text, read the text and guide conversations about the text in a meaningful way.

Plan - Each student is given the opportunity to indicate what center they plan to play in and what they plan to do in that area during choice time.

Choice Time - Students are able to explore and play in every center throughout the classroom independently, in groups, or with a teacher. They can move freely from one area to the other during this time.

Clean-up - Teachers and students work together to clean-up what they were working with during free choice time and put everything back where it belongs.

Recall - The students discuss with a teacher where they decided to play, what they did, and if they made anything while exploring the various learning centers.

Connect - This is another large group learning opportunity. Here we will introduce or review concepts and games that will be featured in Small Group. This whole group learning time typically contains two lessons that are implemented back-to-back.

Small Groups - During small groups, a teacher will meet with 5-6 students at a time while the other children are engaged in limited choice activities. Small group lessons include many games and fun activities for the teacher and students to work on together. Assessments may happen at this time as well. All students are rotated through the groups so everyone gets a chance to play and learn.

Outdoor Time - Students remain in the designated area and play independently or in groups with the sandbox, wagons, wheelbarrows, balls, etc. Teachers make sure that the students are playing safely.

Lunch - We have a family-style lunch; the students pass the food and serve themselves each item on the menu. Teachers and students eat together and enjoy conversations to build stronger connections. When they are finished eating, each person is responsible for cleaning their area of trash and putting away their dishes.

Rest - Students lay down in an attempt to sleep; after 20 minutes, if a student is not asleep, they will be given a book to look at or an activity to work on quietly while the other students sleep. Soft music is played to help keep their minds and bodies calm.

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Fast Focus - These are short lessons that help to reinforce the learning from each day. These lessons often feature math and phonological awareness or alphabet knowledge. They include many fun games, songs, and gross-motor activities.

Schedule of Operation

- Hours of Operation of the Staff: **7:15 am - 3:15 pm**
- Hours of Operation for the Students: **7:40 am - 2:50 pm**
- We follow the calendar of Atlanta Community Schools for holidays and breaks.
- School/Snow Day Cancellations: Please check local news and radio stations for weather related school closings. If Atlanta Community Schools are closed or delayed, so will the Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP Preschool class. You will be notified via the parent communication platform.

Withdrawal Policy

- If you withdraw your child from the preschool, please provide notice in writing.
- A child may no longer be included in the program if:
 - They have excessive absences
 - They do not meet the health/licensing requirements by the required deadlines
 - The parent fails to follow program policies
 - The program is determined to be an inappropriate setting for the child after multiple other options are exhausted

Communication

- Teachers avoid answering the phone during class hours so the focus can be on your child. We ask that you limit phone calls to only emergency situations. You can call 989-785-4842 and ask to speak with someone in Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP.
- For non-emergency situations, such as change in pick-up or drop-off plans, teachers utilize the app Remind to share information. Parents can send private messages to the teaching staff. Your child's teacher will share more information on how to access their classroom page.
- For students with parents that are separated, all classroom communications will be shared with both families. This includes Remind, information, newsletters, and any special activities.
- Staff will gladly take a few minutes at the end of the day to communicate with you when they are not responsible for students. If the communication will take longer than a few minutes, teachers can set up a phone call, email, or conference with you.
- Newsletters will be shared each week as well as important information posted on a parent board in the classroom. Please take time to stay informed about what is happening in your child's classroom.

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Rest/Quiet Time Policy

- Students attending a full day program will participate in a rest/quiet time daily. Children will be provided with a cot to lie on. Children will not be required to rest for more than 60 minutes and alternate quiet activities will be provided for those children who do not sleep. Children who are sleeping and do not wake up independently will be gently awakened using soft touches, opening of the blinds, and conversation. Children are expected to assist with putting away their sleeping materials.
- Children wishing to use a pillow or blanket may bring one from home. These items will need to be laundered on a weekly basis. Children who do not have a blanket may be provided one. Teachers will send home any nap materials to be washed on the last day of the school week. Parents will then need to return the items with their child on the first day of the school week.
- Children will transition into rest time by assisting with putting cots and mats out, getting their own blankets and transition items, turning off the lights and turning on soft music. Adults will assist by moving among the children in an unhurried fashion, and having quiet conversations.

Transportation Policy

- Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP students will have the choice of bussing if decided by parents. Students will be walked to and picked up from the bus door by one of our teaching staff. Children are allowed two alternate bus locations (i.e., home and day care).
- An adult must be physically present and able to assist their child getting on and off the bus. The bus will not stop if an adult is not waiting with the student at the appointed pick up time and waiting for the student at the appointed drop off time.
- If an in-home daycare provider is putting a student on the bus and getting them off the bus, the person's name, phone number, and emergency contact number must be provided in the *RELEASE OF CHILD ONLY* section of the child's emergency card.
- If the above guidelines are not followed, transportation will not be provided.
- Students must be 4 years old to ride the school bus.
- Parents and teachers will work together to teach appropriate bus riding skills for your child such as sitting in the seat, facing forward, quiet voices, etc.

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Pick Up/Drop Off Policy

- If your child does not ride a bus, please walk them directly to the Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP teaching staff at the designated drop off location.
- When picking up your child you will meet your child's class at the classroom door. You will have to sign your child out before taking them home for the day.
- If dropping off or picking up your child outside of the regular hours, please notify the teacher as soon as possible. You will then need to follow the school's visitor policy and walk to the classroom to sign your child in or out with the GSRP teacher.

Safe Ways to Dress for School and the Weather

It is great when children wear comfortable play clothing that they can get dirty. We do lots of messy, fun things in preschool.

- Leggings, shorts or pants should be worn under dresses and skirts for active play both indoors and outside.
- For playing outside in winter months, it is important to wear a snowsuit, hat, mittens and boots every day. Sending extra pairs of mittens is highly recommended.
- Shoes must be worn to school. Shoes that tie or fasten with Velcro will help prevent accidents. Sandals and flip-flops can be dangerous.
- Clothes that are easy for your child to fasten and unfasten help them to be more successful using the bathroom independently.

Outdoor Exposure

- Children who are in a full day program will receive a minimum of 60 minutes per day of physical outdoor activities. Outdoor time is held on a daily basis unless there is inclement weather or special circumstances.
- Children need to have weather appropriate clothing for participation in outdoor activities. Limited items will be provided by the teaching staff if a child does not come prepared.

Discipline/Guidance Policy

- The GSRP uses discipline as a learning opportunity. As a result, we implement guidance that is caring, but firm. Consequences are short, consistent, immediate and logical. Emphasis is placed on providing affection, order, security, and unconditional positive regard for every child. Because a positive self-image is our main concern, any form of negative procedures or consequences will not be used. This includes shaming, threatening, depriving, or corporal punishment.
- Enrollment will not be denied and children will not be excluded based on challenging behavior, disability, or the need for individualized planning and intentional teaching.
- Our Discipline Policy includes:
 1. Redirecting or distracting a child from the unacceptable activity to a constructive one.
 2. Planning ahead to prevent problems.
 3. Encouraging, teaching and modeling appropriate behavior.
 4. Setting consistent, clear rules.

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5. Talking to the child about the feelings he/she is having.
 6. Offering alternative solutions to the problem.
 7. Involving children in solving problems.
 8. Tailoring the method of discipline to the individual child.
 9. Removing the child from the source of conflict.
 10. Family contact if additional actions are necessary
- Conflict Resolution Steps:
 1. Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions
 2. Acknowledge the children's feelings
 3. Gather information
 4. Restate the problem
 5. Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together
 6. Be prepared to give follow-up support

Fee Policy

- The Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP is funded by the State of Michigan through the Michigan Department of Education. If your child does not meet the GSRP requirements, tuition will be charged based on a sliding scale approved by the Michigan Department of Education. You will be notified in writing if you will be required to pay tuition and it will include information on how, when and where tuition will be collected.

Parent Involvement

- Parent engagement is crucial to positive child outcomes. The Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP program provides a variety of opportunities for parents to become involved in the program and regularly seeks input from parents.
- Some things you can do at home include:
 - Establishing family routines
 - Promoting positive discipline
 - Creating a language and experience-rich home environment
 - Reading or engaging in other literacy based activities every day
- **GSRP Advisory Committees.** Each Educational Service District (ESD) is required to have GSRP parent representation on the regional Great Start Collaborative (GSC), Great Start Parent Coalition (GSPC), working with other committed parents to support quality early childhood practices in the community. These GSRP parents, in turn, act as liaisons to local Parent Advisory Committees (PAC), sharing ideas and activities in person, virtually (e.g., Zoom) or through emailed reports. Another opportunity involves participation in a School Readiness Advisory committee that includes classroom teachers, parents or guardians of program participants, community, volunteer, social service agencies and organizations. The advisory committee annually reviews and makes recommendations regarding the GSRP components. The advisory committee also makes recommendations to the GSC regarding other community services designed to improve all children's school readiness. Information will be sent home on these meetings. Please contact your teacher for details.
 - Members will be welcomed and walked through what will occur at each meeting.

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- o Meeting minutes will be provided upon request.
- o Meals and childcare may be provided at meetings if they are in person. See flyer or ask your teacher for more information.

Sibling Policy

- We welcome parent involvement in all aspects of the program; however, the environment and/or activity may not be appropriate for younger siblings. Decisions on including siblings will be made by local staff on a case-by-case basis. Please contact your child's teachers with any questions.

Field Trips

- Classroom teachers have the opportunity to plan field trips throughout the year. Community awareness for children is important. Programs may have community visitors, educational walks, parent talent/hobbies, and family outings. For these to be fun learning experiences, parent involvement is essential. Your help in planning, participating, and discussing the activity with your child will contribute to a positive learning experience. We also look forward to each activity and the opportunity to work with you and your child in these exciting adventures. Parents are notified before each field trip and must give written permission before each trip.

Home/Center Visits

- Parents play an integral role in their child's development. A strong partnership between staff and families is crucial to a child's success. Families in the GSRP program will participate in two home visits and two center visits during the program year. Visits help maintain an open communication between the staff and families.
- The initial home visit serves as an orientation opportunity for the child and parents and helps us get to know each other. The second home visit will happen in the winter and will be designed around the individual child and parent needs. These visits will run for at least an hour.
- Center visits are held a minimum of two times throughout the program year in the fall and spring to discuss overall development, child strengths, areas of concern, and results of assessments. These visits in the classroom will run for at least 45 minutes.
- Parents are provided with activities to help foster kindergarten readiness.

Assessments

- Children in the Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP program are assessed for academic and developmental progress. The assessments provide information across domains identified in the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten* (ECSQ-PK): social and emotional development, intellectual development, language and early literacy development, creative development, physical development, health; early learning in math, science, social studies; and use of technology. Assessments are done in a 1:1 ratio with a familiar adult. Results of the assessments will be shared with parents during center and home visits, as considered necessary by the teaching team, and upon parental

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request. Recommendations for further developmental evaluation will be discussed and parental permission obtained prior to referrals.

- Assessments include, but are not limited to: the Brigance Screener and Creative Curriculum Teaching Strategies Gold. For more information about these assessments, please contact the Lead Teacher.
- All results will be handled confidentially between families and classroom staff.

Referral Policy

- A referral is when a student may need extra assistance. Referrals are dictated by the development, behavior and/or actions of a student. The student will then be observed to determine what further services may or may not be needed.
- Staff will contact the family of a student to request permission for an observation to be done.
- Parents will be informed of the results of the observation through phone calls, letters, emails, or conferences.
- Staff will have access to a resource directory with information for families who may need extra medical, mental health, food, clothing, or housing assistance. They will reach out to the Early Childhood Specialist to support families as needed; this will remain confidential between families and staff. The families will be treated equally and fairly.

Staff/Volunteer Policy

- The Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP staff are employed by Atlanta Community Schools. The Lead Teacher is highly qualified as outlined by the Great Start Readiness grant. Additionally, Atlanta Community Schools will fingerprint all employees and screen all staff through IdentiGO/MorphoTrust (a nation-wide electronic fingerprint network screening tool) and the local police department for any possible criminal or substantiated child abuse history.
- A staff member will not be employed if he or she has been convicted of child abuse/neglect or a felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual within 10 years immediately preceding the date of hire.
- Parents and Volunteers shall not have unsupervised contact with children within the Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP. Employed staff will supervise volunteers at all times.
- For volunteers in the classroom for more than 4 hours a week, additional steps need to be completed. Please contact the Atlanta Licensing Coordinator for more details.

Staff Training

- Staff within Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP have current certification in infant, child, and adult CPR and First Aid. Additionally staff complete training on bloodborne pathogens, mandated reporting, crisis prevention institute training, child development, curriculum, assessments, health/safety, nutrition, and licensing rules. Staff complete a minimum of 16 hours of additional training each year.

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Abuse/Neglect Policy

- Staff at Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP are aware that abuse and neglect of children is against the law. As teachers/child advocates, Child Protection Law requires us to immediately report suspected abuse and neglect of children by calling Centralized Intake at 855-444-3911. The staff reviews the Child Abuse and Neglect reporting procedures annually.

Child Custody Policy

- In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (i.e., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP must be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.
- In the absence of a court order on file with the Great Start Readiness Program, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Great Start Readiness Preschool Program cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, the Great Start Readiness Preschool Program suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access.
- Children will not be left alone with anyone other than a GSRP staff member.
- Students will only be released to persons authorized by the parent and listed on the emergency card.

Concerns about Child Development

- If a parent has concerns about their child's development, they should begin by contacting the Lead Teacher. They will initiate the Response to Intervention process. If further interventions are needed a team will be formed to discuss how to best meet the child's needs. The team may include: parents, the teachers, the building principal or agency head, the AMA-ESD Early Childhood Specialist, or other special education staff.
- If a child is already receiving services for a disability, the Atlanta Huskie Paws GSRP staff will join the IEP team and continue services.
- For information about referring your child for a developmental evaluation please contact the principal, Tawny Hisscock at 989-785-4842 Ext. 1184.

Serving Children With Special Needs

- The Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP provides all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs, a supportive and safe environment to learn. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff are aware of the identified needs of individual children and they are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. Teachers will share information with families face-to-face, with phone calls, messages on SeeSaw, and through emails.

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Parent Complaint/Grievance Policy

- If a parent has a concern about their child, the classroom, or the program, the concern should be discussed with the Lead Teacher and make them aware of the situation first.
- If this does not remedy the situation the parent can contact the Atlanta Community Schools Principal, Tawny Hisscock, at 785-4842 Ext. 1184 or the Atlanta Community Schools Superintendent, Tony Suzek, at 989-785-4842 Ext. 1192.
- Should additional assistance be needed outside of Atlanta Community Schools, the parent may contact the AMA-ESD Early Childhood Specialist, Danielle Hansen, at 989-354-3101.
- The next step would then be to contact the AMA-ESD Coordinator of Early Learning and Instructional Services, Shellie Gohl, at 989-354-3101.
- Parents are also strongly encouraged to attend the Parent Advisory Council Meetings if they would like to make suggestions about preschool policies and programming.
- In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.
- Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.
- To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Multi-culture and Diversity in the Learning Environment

- All children deserve an early childhood education that is responsive to their families, communities, and racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Culture influences all aspects of a child's development.
- Family is the root of our program in which we involve the whole family in all aspects of our program and what we do for their children.
- We actively involve parents and families in the early learning program.
- We will focus on incorporating the diverse cultures of our families, community, and the city they live in.

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- All staff will have training opportunities yearly to further their knowledge of enhancing their daily communications and curriculum planning.
- Materials in the classroom are developmentally appropriate, clean, safe, foster learning and are to reflect the home and community cultures and special needs of children in the program. Materials depict a wide range of non-stereotyped role models and cultures.
- The home and community cultures of each class are used to choose materials included in the classroom. Materials reflect children's interests, parental hobbies, employment and community traditions.
- Teachers will share a weekly newsletter with families with activities families can do at home that are culturally appropriate. They will also share information on an app called Bloomz.

Program Evaluation

- An Early Childhood Specialist, using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) tool required by the State of Michigan, evaluates the Atlanta Huskie Paws GSRP program 1-2 times per year. The Early Childhood Specialist is employed through the AMA-ESD.
- Michigan Child Care Licensing also requires sites to be inspected randomly by the area Licensing Consultant yearly to ensure they are following all expected licensing rules and regulations.
- Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP is required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to measure the effect of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). Information is sometimes collected about GSRP staff, enrolled children, and their families. Program staff or a representative from MDE might:
 - Ask parents questions about their child and family.
 - Observe children in the classroom.
 - Measure what children know about letters, words, and numbers, etc.
 - Ask teachers how children are learning and growing.

Information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law. Questions? Please contact:

- Your classroom teacher
- The MDE Office of Great Start, Preschool and Out-of-School Time Learning at:
 - mde-gsrp@michigan.gov,
 - 517-241-7004, or
 - 608 W. Allegan, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909.

Health Care Plan

- The following policies/procedures will help ensure a healthy and safe environment for children enrolled in the Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP Preschool.
- The classroom will keep on file the Health Appraisal form provided by the State of Michigan. The form will be complete, including the signatures of both the parent/guardian and a health care professional.
- Immunization records will be monitored to ensure each student is up to date unless there is a signed waiver provided.

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- See the classroom parent board which includes newsletters, lesson plans, daily schedule, calendar, parent resource information and assessment guidelines.

Daily Assessment of Children's Health

- Children's general health will be assessed upon arrival daily. If a child shows any sign of illness, he/she will be evaluated further and staff will determine if a parent needs to be called.
- Communicable diseases will be reported within 24 hours to the Health Department orally or electronically. Families will be notified as soon as possible by sending home appropriate health letters and communicable disease information handouts.

Illness/Injury/Accident Protocol

Our goal is that every child will be safe while in our care.

Illness Care Plan

When a child shows signs of illness such as cough, nausea, or lethargy a call will be made to the parent for transportation home. If unable to reach a parent, the next person on the emergency card will be notified.

- Students with fever above 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea or constant cough will be sent home. Students must be symptom free for a 48 hour period without the administration of medication, prior to attending class.

Accident Care Plan

For minor injuries such as small cuts, bruises or abrasions:

- Student will be given immediate first aid care by the preschool staff in accordance with their first aid training. Parents will be notified in writing or by phone.

For more serious injuries such as open skin wounds, bloody noses or bumps to the head:

- Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP staff will provide immediate medical care. Parents will be immediately notified by a phone call and staff will remain with the student until the parent provides further directions for care and/or pick up.

For major emergencies such as seizure, suspected breaks, unconsciousness or other severe injuries:

- 911 will be called from the nearest phone. Parents will be notified immediately by phone. Program Serious Accident/Illness Emergency Plan will be followed. A copy of this can be obtained from the Great Start Readiness staff.

Administration of Medication to Students

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- The administration of medication by Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP staff shall be authorized in writing and only performed in exceptional circumstances when administration by the parent at home is impossible or extremely difficult. Only authorized Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP personnel will administer medication. This authorization to administer medication shall be issued only in compliance with the following conditions:
 - A. The Request of Administration of Medication form must be signed by the student's parent/guardian.
 - B. Written instructions signed by the parent/guardian and the student's physician must be furnished and shall include:
 - 1. Student's name, address, telephone number;
 - 2. Physician's name, address, telephone number;
 - 3. Pharmacy name, address, telephone number;
 - 4. Name of medication, beginning date of administration;
 - 5. Prescribed dosage, frequency and duration;
 - 6. Parents shall be responsible for informing the district if the child has experienced side effects from the medication the child is to receive;
 - 7. Termination date for administering the medication;
 - 8. Special handling and storage instructions.
 - C. Medication for students in preschool must be brought to school by an adult and in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. Refill of the medication is the sole responsibility of the student's parent/guardian.
 - D. Staff will keep a record of the administration of the medication, which will include: date, time, and dosage and person administering the medication along with the initials of an adult witness (this witness can be any school employee/or adult).
 - E. Keep medication in a locked cabinet.
 - F. Return the unused medication only to the student's parent/guardian (a student may return his/her inhaler).
 - G. Any medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of the school year.
 - H. The student's parent/guardian assumes responsibility to immediately inform the GSRP staff of any change in the child's health or change in the medication, including the discontinuation or modification of the medication.
 - I. In no instance are GSRP staff allowed to administer an initial dose of new medication to any student.
 - J. Forgotten doses of home medication will not be made up at school.
 - K. Student self-possession and/or self-administration of medication for preschool are prohibited unless the student's health is endangered by this prohibition.
 - L. No staff member will be permitted to dispense non-prescribed medication (OTC) to any student without a doctor's order. This includes cough drops, Tylenol, essential oils, etc.

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Children and Staff Hand Washing

- Hand-washing has long been established as one of the most important things we can do to prevent the spread of illness. Hand-washing may occur more frequently throughout the day as deemed necessary.

In our preschool, hand washing recommendations for workers are as follows:

- Upon arrival at school/center
- Before and after setting up snacks/food for student consumption.
- Before and after helping students use the bathroom.
- After handling items soiled with body fluids such as blood, drool, urine, stool, or discharge from nose or eyes.
- After handling an ill child.
- After using the bathroom or taking care of other personal needs (i.e, nose wiping), and eating.

In our preschool, hand-washing recommendations for students are as follows:

- Upon arrival in the morning.
- After using the bathroom.
- Before and after eating food.
- After they have touched a child who may be sick or who has handled soiled items.
- After blowing/wiping their nose

Recommendation method for hand-washing is as follows:

- Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm water and soap.
- Wash between fingers and back of hands and wrists.
- Rinse hands well under running water and dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.
- Turn off water using a paper towel instead of bare hands. This helps prevent acquiring new germs on already clean hands.

Hand Sanitizer

- Hand Sanitizer will only be used if a sink with hot and cold water is not readily available.

Handling Children's Bodily Fluids

- In preschool, universal precautions shall be observed in order to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM). Gloves will be worn for all tasks that may cause exposure to blood or OPIM shall be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual.
- After removing gloves, preschool workers will wash their hands as recommended in our hand-washing policy

Cleaning and Sanitizing of all Equipment, Toys, and Surfaces

These materials were developed under a grant awarded by the Michigan Department of Education.

- Tabletops will be washed before and after food is served and as they become soiled.
- Toys will be washed when they come in contact with a child's mouth or saliva.
- Equipment will be washed weekly or as needed. Process for sanitation:

There shall be a 3 Step Process for Sanitation

1. Clean with soap and water
2. Rinse thoroughly
3. Spray with an approved disinfectant.

Process for sanitation while on field trips:

- Bleach wipes will be used while on field trips and out of the proximity of running water.

Controlling Infection, Including Universal Precautions

- In order to prevent the transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B and other blood borne pathogens, the center will use universal precautions. Universal precautions are defined as: Guidelines designed to protect workers with occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens. Medical examination does not always identify all persons infected with HIV or Hepatitis B, or other blood borne pathogens, therefore, the center will consider all blood and body fluids infectious and will follow the following universal precautions as pertaining to school environments when coming into contact with blood or bodily fluids:
 1. Gloves will be worn for contact with blood, body fluids, mucous membranes, or open wounds, and for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or bodily fluids. Approved latex or vinyl gloves should be worn. Gloves are never to be washed and reused.
 2. Hands and other skin areas must be washed thoroughly if contact with blood or body fluids occurs. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed.
 3. Saliva is not considered by the Center for Disease Control to transmit HIV but it is a body fluid and mouth-to-mask ventilation devices will be available for resuscitation and shall be used by trained personnel.
 4. Designated First Aid caregivers shall be required to attend training or review video material on the following yearly:
 - a) Universal precautions
 - b) HIV/HBV infections/transmissions
 - c) Handling of infectious waste

Exclusion Policy

- Children will be excluded from the program if there are injuries or contagious illnesses that endanger the health and/or safety of others.
- Children will not be excluded because of the need for additional support, assistance with toileting, or disabilities.

Health Related Resources

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The following is a list of resources available for preschool staff and parents who have questions concerning health related topics:

Comprehensive School Health Unit
Michigan Department of Public Health
www.michigan.gov.mde
(989) 373-7247

Centers for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov

Michigan Childhood Immunization Registry
www.MICR.ORG
(888) 243-6652

Teacher's Resources
www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2.htm

School Health
www.Schoolhealth.org

Smoking/Vaping/Drug/Alcohol Policy

- Smoking tobacco, vaping, e-cigarettes, consuming alcohol, and/or using/possessing legal or illegal drugs are prohibited in and outside of the preschool at all times, including field trips.

Fire/Tornado/Lock-down Drill

- Fire drills are a necessary precaution for safety. They will be performed at a minimum 3 times a year, once per quarter.
 1. There will be no warning signal.
 2. As the bell sounds, all students should form a line ready for exiting.
 3. No Talking.
 4. Move quickly, without running.
 5. Go where directed
- Lock-down drills will be conducted at least twice per school year. When in “lock-down” only law enforcement and emergency personnel will be permitted to enter or exit the building.
- Tornado drills will be conducted at least twice per school year. Students are to follow classroom instructions and remain silent while the drill is taking place.
- In the event of an evacuation, families will be contacted by program staff with information on picking up their child.

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- Students with special needs will be accommodated by classroom staff during drills and evacuations.
- For more information on these and more please see your child's Class Safety Plan.

Pesticide Notice

- In accordance with state law, Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP is required to provide you with advance notice in the event that a pesticide will be used in your child's classroom. The notice must be given at least 48 hours prior to the application of the pesticide. Notice will be given in two different ways:
 1. A sign will be posted at all entrances.
 2. Staff will phone all families or send a note home with your child.

Please contact your child's teacher if you would like to receive the pesticide notice in this manner. It is your option to keep your child home during the time the pesticide is being used. Under state law a pesticide cannot be used in a childcare center or classroom unless the room will be unoccupied for not less than 4 hours (longer if required by the pesticide label).

- Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions. If you have a question and/or concern regarding certain pesticides, you may contact Poison Control at (800) 222-1222.

Nutrition Policy

- Young children need to develop healthy eating and physical activity habits early on. Children pattern habits after parents and caregivers. Good role models are important.
- Preschoolers need healthy foods to meet their growth and developmental needs. These can be met by following national and/or local food guide recommendations.
- The Great Start Readiness Preschool Program follows the guidelines of the DHHS Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing. Foods served reflect the home and community cultures and are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt.
- Menus are provided in paper form, posted on a classroom parent board, and/or posted on the school's website and posted in Bloomz.
- Snacks/meals are provided free of charge to Atlanta Huskie Pups GSRP children. Parents are required to complete a free and reduced lunch form and/or a CACFP application.
- If your child has food allergies or the need for a special diet, please provide the staff with a written plan from your child's doctor.
- Parents who have concerns about the food provided should work first with teaching staff/Early Childhood Specialist and then with program administration to improve food choices. Concerns can also be addressed at the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings.
- Additionally, some families have chosen to adopt specialized diets; in this case, parents may elect to provide food from home for their child, although this is not expected or encouraged. The food provided from home must also meet CACFP or NSNP requirements except when documented food allergies or intolerance or family beliefs

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prohibit. Families will be required to fill out a Parent Request to Provide Food form. Please see your child's teacher to get a copy of this.

Classroom Birthday Parties

- If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday in class we ask that you bring enough snacks for all the children. We also ask that they are prepackaged, store bought snacks. Please check with your classroom teacher for a head count and to be made aware of any allergies in the classroom.

Meal Service

Meals and snacks must meet the USDA meal pattern requirements listed below.

Breakfast	Lunch and Supper	Snack (serve 2 from the 5 food groups below)
Milk Fruit, Vegetable, or combination of both Grain	Milk Vegetable serving Fruit serving (or second vegetable serving) Grain Meat or Meat Alternate	Milk Vegetable Fruit Grain/Bread Meat or Meat Alternate

MDE is required to verify the enrollment, attendance and meals/snacks typically consumed by children while they are in care. MDE staff may contact you regarding your child's participation in our preschool program.

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