

## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the South Central Early Learning Program (ELP). We are glad that you are a member of the staff. The following handbook is provided to you as a reference and to assist you in carrying out your duties. The policies and procedures listed in this handbook are specific to the ELP. In addition to this handbook, you need to be familiar with and to follow the policies and procedures included in the *SCC Classified Personnel Handbook*, the *SCC Elementary Teacher and Staff Handbook*, and applicable Board of Education policies. All ELP employees will be given a copy of the three handbooks. The book of Board policies is located in the school office and can be accessed at any time upon request.

## **ORIENTATION AND TRAINING**

You will be provided with an annual orientation prior to the start of each school year. Associates hired after the start of the year will be given an orientation by the principal and teacher to whose classroom they have assigned

You will be paid for both the orientation and training sessions at your hourly rate. On occasion, you may be asked to attend teachers' meetings, staff inservices, or student meetings. You will be given at least one week's notice and will be compensated for no less than ½ hour at your regular wage.

## **EMPLOYEE WORKDAY**

Your status sheet lists the specific hours you have been hired to work. Your lunch break is paid time if you are required to eat with students. If you have a duty-free lunch period, you will be paid for that time only if you remain in the building and available for duty if needed. If you choose to leave the building for your break, you must clock in/out and will not be paid for that time. Additional procedures relative to contract hours, time-cards, and leaves of absence are specified in the *SCC Classified Personnel Handbook*.

Every effort will be made to schedule breaks during the day. Because of the demands of the job, it is important that you take brief breaks. Ideally, you will have a 15 minute break for each 4 hours worked. However, the needs of the students come first, and it may not always be feasible for you to take a break at the scheduled time. In fact, there may be days when breaks are not possible at all. Employee snacks and beverages should be saved for break time. While in the classroom, you should not eat or drink anything other than what the children are offered

## **STANDARDS FOR CONDUCT**

As a member of the ELP staff, you contribute to the educational climate of the classroom and the overall culture of the school. It is important you assume a positive attitude, a pleasant disposition, and a kind demeanor toward children, families, and co-workers. Above all, you must be concerned about the best interests of the children in the

ELP program. This includes accepting their limitations, respecting their individuality, and assisting them in their social, emotional, and intellectual growth.

As a teacher associate, you must recognize, respect, and yield to the authority of the classroom teacher. This includes completing tasks as assigned and honoring the teacher's decisions.

Good communication is essential in the role of teacher associate. It is important that you share your observations, concerns, and questions with the teacher. You are a valuable member of the ELP team, and your input is critical.

You will have an opportunity to interact with parents and other visitors and should do so cordially. However, in most cases, it will not be your role to share information with or ask questions of parents unless directed to do so by the teacher.

It is imperative that you protect the privacy of students and families. This includes protecting the confidentiality of student records, of classroom events, and of conversations among ELP staff members. You cannot repeat information about individual students or events. Violating confidentiality of students or families is grounds for termination.

ELP students must be supervised at all times. When assigned supervisory duties, you should be vigilant and attentive. Under no circumstances may you leave children unattended.

If an ELP employee suspects the abuse of a student by a caretaker, he/she is encouraged to report the suspicions to the teacher. All ELP staff members are required to take the Mandatory Reporting training.

## **WORKING WITH CHILDREN:**

**Hygiene:** Upon arriving in the classroom, both you and the children must wash hands. Hand washing must also be done before snack, before and after water play, after using the restroom, and any time there is contact with bodily fluids. In addition, the tables used for snacks must be sanitized using *Clorox Anywhere* and paper towels and allowed to air dry before being used.

**Discipline:** When disciplining a student, do so in accordance with the teacher's directions. The primary goal in the area of discipline is to teach children *how to behave*. Methods used will be instructive rather than punitive. Adults will work together with children to problem-solve situations. If a child becomes out-of-control or disruptive to the rest of the class, they may be taken to a mat until they regain control. At that time, the adults will discuss the behavior and alternative ways to behave. Each episode should end on a positive note. Corporal punishment is not allowed. Only under certain circumstances, as directed by the teacher, will associates physically restrain

students. Physical contact is further governed by Board policy. Inappropriate discipline and/or physical contact is grounds for termination.

**Mealtimes and snack:** Sit down with the children. Encourage conversations with children to promote language, social skills, and personal skills. Allow children to guide the conversation. Encourage good manners. Give each child an opportunity to ask for snack or lunch. Non-verbal children may need to use sign language or pictures to make requests. Encourage self-help skills.

**Outdoor play:** Safety is our utmost concern. Be vigilant as accidents with your children happen quickly. If a child is doing something unsafe, remind them of the rule one time. If it happens again, take the child's hand and keep him/her at your side for one minute. Then talk about the problem and what can be done differently. The playground rules are:

- Do not climb on the fence.
- Go down the slide on your bottom.
- Treat your friends kindly. Don't push or tackle them.

**Center time:** During center time, you should encourage language and social interactions. You may be asked to do one of the following during center time:

- work with an individual child
- supervise a particular activity
- take data on an individual student or group of students
- keep an eye on the group at large and help as needed

**Group time:** When the students are all together as a group, you should join the group unless the teacher has asked you to do something else. If the children are sitting on the floor, sit right behind a child. While in the group, be a model for participation and good listening. If a child is having difficult attending, redirect them non-verbally or with a whisper so the whole group is not disturbed.

**Dismissal:** All staff must be certain that the person that the child leaves with is an adult authorized to pick him/her up by the parent either in writing or verbally. When a parent verbally authorizes someone to pick up his/her child, a note should be written and posted so that all staff members may see it. If there is a restraining order that says an estranged parent or other person cannot have access to a child, you will be informed. If in doubt, ask the teacher.

**Health concerns:** The school nurse issues medical alerts for some students. You will be shown copies of these alerts if you will have contact with the student. The teacher may also inform you on any pertinent medical conditions. This information must be kept confidential.

**Bathroom procedures:** Please keep the door to the bathroom slightly ajar at all times. If any surface in the bathroom becomes contaminated, it should be cleaned and sanitized. Please wear gloves when doing the cleaning and sanitizing. Paper towels that

were used in the cleanup should be put in a plastic bag and tied. For changing a child, please follow these procedures;

- Wear gloves when changing soiled clothes or diapers.
- Change all children while they are standing up.
- Dump contents of diaper or underpants into the toilet if it's possible to do so without touching any surface.
- Put wet or soiled diapers and wipes in a plastic bag and tie. Take soiled diapers and wipes to the outdoor dumpster as soon as possible.
- Do not wash out any clothes. Soiled clothing should be put directly in a plastic bag, tied, and placed in the child's book bag.
- Remove gloves and wash hands when finished.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of an emergency, the ELP classrooms follow the same procedures as the rest of the school. These procedures are posted in every room, explained in the *SCC Elementary Teacher and Staff Handbook*, and are summarized here.

**Fire:** In the event of a fire, a continuous, high-pitched siren will sound. The blue fire doors in the hallway will automatically close, and the fire lights in the hall will flash. Students will be evacuated from the building according to the route posted in each classroom. Students will stay with their class. Each class will report to their designated area on the east side of the blacktop and remain there until given further directions by the principal or designee. Students will not be released to their parents without the teacher's notification.

**Tornado:** In the event of dangerous weather, an alarm consisting of three short blasts will sound. Students will be evacuated to the designated shelter area. Children will kneel on the floor near an interior wall and will cover their heads. Students are not to leave the shelter area until directed to do so by the principal.

**Bomb threat:** In the event of a bomb or similar threat, the announcement will be made over the intercom that, "Mr. Black is in the building." Upon this announcement, students will be led out the nearest exit, away from the building, and to an alternative site. Students will not be released to parents without the teacher's awareness.

**Intruder:** In the event that a person enters the building with the intent to do harm, the announcement will be made over the intercom that, "Mr. Green is in the building." Upon this announcement, all students and staff members will remain in their classrooms. The doors and windows will be closed. Students will be directed to sit away from the doors and windows and await further direction.

## **PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

An evaluation of your performance will be conducted at least every other year but may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the building principal. At the annual

orientation or upon being hired, you shall be made aware of the criteria for evaluation as defined by the evaluation form (see attached). Your supervising teacher shall provide the principal input relative to your evaluation. You will have an opportunity to meet with the principal to discuss the formal evaluation. The teacher may also be present.

*It is the policy of the South Central Calhoun Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equity Coordinator Wendi Geno, 1000 Tonawanda, Rockwell City, IA 50579, 712-297-7222, wgeno@scc.k12.ia.us.*