BECKER SCHOOL

LEARN. GROW. THRIVE.

KINDNESS Grows Here

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Planting Seeds of Kindness, Learning & Love.

Texas Rising Star

four out of four star certification



2026-2027

PARENT HANDBOOK

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This handbook will familiarize you with Becker policies and procedures. We have included most, if not all, of the critical components of our operation and facility. Parents will be notified of any

policy changes on an immediate basis. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact a member of the Becker Administrative Team.

Our School Community

MISSION STATEMENT: Becker School provides a diverse environment rich with Jewish tradition and culture where children can grow and learn through experience and play. We encourage young children to grow socially, emotionally, intellectually, creatively, and physically as we build a nurturing and safe community for the entire family.

PHILOSOPHY: At Becker, we believe that children are strong, competent learners who are capable of growth through collaborative and creative constructs. We believe in using the environment as a teacher to foster not just intellectual development, but the imaginations of our students. The Becker School nurtures children within this environment to grow intellectually, spiritually, socially, emotionally, and physically through a developmentally appropriate curriculum and environment that respects each child with a Reggio Emilia inspired approach. We respect all others and the physical environment through the positive values of Judaism. We believe that young children learn through play and need the opportunity to investigate their interests in a meaningful way. Children's growth and development is enhanced by the respectful individualized relationships developed between the teachers and children, and teachers and parents.

LEARNING in a CONNECTED WORLD: We are committed to developing compassionate, ethical, and globally aware learners who are equipped with the skills needed to thrive in an interconnected world. Our diverse international faculty enriches the learning experience by bringing a wide range of perspectives, fostering cultural understanding, curiosity, and critical thinking. Our school community is further strengthened by families from many different countries, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds, whose traditions and experiences contribute to the richness of daily life at our school. This global perspective is woven throughout our community, creating an inclusive environment that prepares students to engage confidently and thoughtfully with the world around them.

FAMILY STRUCTURE: We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where all family structures are respected and valued. We recognize that families come in many forms—nuclear, single-parent, blended, foster, adoptive, same-sex parent, and families with non-biological caregivers. Every family deserves to feel included.

LICENSING AND ACCREDITIATION: Becker is licensed by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services and is accredited through Cognia. The director, assistant director, administrative staff, and teachers meet all requirements and standards set by the childcare licensing branch

of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Cognia, and a 4 Star facility through Texas Rising Star. Becker is affiliated with NAREA (North American Reggio Alliance) and the Houston Reggio Network.

You may ask the Director to provide the most up-to-date copy of Minimum Standards for this licensed Child Care center. A copy of the most recent licensing report is posted on the bulletin board by the elevator on the first floor and at **www.dfps.state.tx.us** (chapter 746 Child Care Centers).

CURRICULUM: The curriculum evolves as it prepares children to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. Our curriculum is Reggio Emilia-inspired, play-based, emergent, and guided by an understanding of Jewish values. The goals of the curriculum are to:

- Provide all learning in a developmentally appropriate manner.
- Develop an understanding of Jewish values and traditions within a synagogue setting.
- Emphasize social and emotional development.
- Promote the development of positive self-worth, self-esteem, and independence.
- Integrate curriculum objectives from Texas Standards and developmental guidelines in literacy and language, motor skills, math, and science into meaningful units of study that emerge from both children's interests and teacher-guided learning experience.
- Respect, involve and integrate the values, beliefs, experiences and language of our families.
- Facilitate and encourage a love of learning.
- Enable adaptations and accommodations to ensure access to the curriculum by all children.
- Enriching weekly activities: Hebrew, Dramatic Play, Studios, Garden, Library, and Music.

GROWING GOOD HUMANS - GOOD CITIZENSHIP: Our school-wide focus on teaching students to be good citizens and compassionate human beings emphasizes the development of core values such as respect, responsibility, empathy, integrity, and kindness. Grounded in Jewish values, including *derech eretz* (respectful behavior), *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), *chesed* (acts of loving-kindness), and *kehillah* (community), we encourage students to recognize their responsibility to care for themselves, others, and the world around them.

These values guide not only academic behavior but also social interactions by helping students navigate their personal and community relationships with fairness, compassion, and understanding. We integrate these lessons into all aspects of school life through classroom

discussions, community service projects, leadership opportunities, ethical decision-making experiences, and meaningful acts of kindness.

Our goal is to cultivate a strong sense of social responsibility and inspire students to contribute positively to their school, family, Jewish community, and the broader world. By focusing on the holistic development of each child, we create an environment where students learn to appreciate diversity, resolve conflicts peacefully, advocate for others, and take meaningful action to make a positive difference in their communities.

Programming

INFANT PROGRAM – Regular school day hours are 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Infant mealtimes and naptimes are determined by their individual needs. Intersessions are included.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM – Regular school day hours are 8:45 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., lunch is served at 12:00 p.m. and nap time is 12:30 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. There is a half day option for Young Toddlers thru 3's. The hours are 8:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. for our half day program.

ELEMENTARY PROGRAM – Regular school day hours are 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., drop off is from 8:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. and dismissal is from 3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Regular attendance is essential to a child's academic success, social development, and sense of belonging within the classroom community. Families are expected to make every effort to ensure their child attends school consistently and arrives on time. We understand that occasional absences may occur due to illness, family obligations, or other circumstances. If a pattern of excessive absenteeism develops, school administration may request a meeting with parents to discuss attendance concerns and develop a plan to support the student's success.

EARLY CARE - The before school program (7:30 a.m. - 8:40 a.m.) provides supervised care for our students prior to the school day. This program operates on all Becker school days.

EXTENDED CARE- The Extended Care program provides supervised care for our students after school hours. Extended Care operates from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on all Becker regular school days. There will be no Extended Care on the days when the school has an early dismissal.

SUMMER CAMP - Becker offers a summer camp program for children entering the Young Toddlers through 2ND grade. Siblings and former students are welcome to attend. Summer camp differs from the usual school curriculum. All classes follow the schoolwide theme, participate in weekly water play, movement activities, and visits from specialists in the arts and sciences. Elementary age classes will go on field trips.

INTERSESSION - Becker is committed to providing continuous care to those families who need it. Intersessions are offered during the periods when Becker is closed for extended breaks, as

needed, and requires separate registrations for school and camp for all ages except infants. Intersession hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

EXTENDED CARE ENRICHMENTS – During Extended Care, a variety of enrichment activities may be offered for children to participate in. Parents may choose to enroll their child in these programs. Enrollment in enrichment activities is optional and requires an additional fee.

SHABBAT – All Becker Students attend a 30-minute Shabbat service in the multi-purpose room during which they sing songs, dance, and say blessings over the candles, juice, and challah. Infants, Young Toddlers, and Twos attend Shabbat at 9:30 a.m. and Threes, Pre-K and Elementary- Aged Students attend Shabbat at 10:00 a.m. Families are encouraged and welcome to join their children in the multi-purpose room for Shabbat.

SPECIALS - Becker provides wonderful special classes throughout the week for all of our students. Our special classes focus on growing and developing the "whole child". The provider for theses classes are included in tuition.

- **Dramatic Expression-** (*All ages, once a week*) Students participate in Dramatic Expression, a dynamic arts curriculum designed to engage and inspire learners through a creative and integrated approach. Each week blends a variety of artistic disciplines—including drama, theater, dance, music, visual arts, imagination, and literacy—into a cohesive learning experience. Through hands-on activities, students develop self-expression, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills. Drama and theater exploration help build confidence and communication skills, while dance promotes physical coordination and emotional expression.
- **Library –** *(All ages, once a week)* The library offers a wide selection of books suitable for all age groups, from infants through elementary school. Each week, classrooms visit the library to participate in a lesson with our librarian, enjoy stories, and check out books for the week. The books remain in the classroom so that children can continue to explore and enjoy them throughout the week.
- **Music Therapy -** *(YT, Twos, Threes, and Kindergarten and above, once a week):* Music Therapy provides children with opportunities to explore music through singing, movement, instrument play, and creative expression. These sessions support social-emotional development, communication skills, self-regulation, and confidence while fostering a love of music in a fun and engaging environment.
- **Physical Education** - *(Pre-K and above, once or twice a week):* Physical Education encourages children to develop gross motor skills, coordination, balance, strength, and teamwork through structured games and movement activities. Lessons emphasize healthy habits, sportsmanship, cooperation, and the joy of physical activity while helping children build confidence in their physical abilities.
- **Reading Specialist** *(Pre-K and above):* Our Reading Specialist works with students to foster a love of reading while building foundational literacy skills. Through engaging, developmentally appropriate activities, students strengthen phonemic awareness, letter

and sound recognition, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and early writing skills. Lessons are designed to support each child's individual learning journey, helping to build confidence and a strong foundation for lifelong reading success.

- **Studios** *(All ages, once a week):* Studio experiences provide children with opportunities to explore a variety of materials, media, and creative processes. Rooted in the Reggio Emilia philosophy, studios encourage curiosity, experimentation, problem-solving, and self-expression. Children engage in open-ended projects that foster creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration.
- **Hebrew** *(All ages, once a week):* Hebrew classes introduce children to the Hebrew language and Jewish culture through songs, stories, games, movement, and hands-on activities. Lessons are developmentally appropriate and designed to build familiarity with Hebrew vocabulary, traditions, and holiday celebrations in an engaging and meaningful way.

TEACHER-TO-STUDENT RATIOS – Our low teacher-to-child ratios allow teachers to focus on the individual learning styles and needs to each student in our program.

- Infants – 1 teacher to 4 children
- Young Toddlers – 1 teacher to 5 children
- Two's – 1 teacher to 6 children
- Threes – 1 teacher to 7 children
- Pre-K – 1 teacher to 8 children
- Elementary – 1 teacher to 10 children

Inclusive Learning and Student Support Services

At Becker, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive environment for children with disabilities, developmental differences, and special needs. We believe every child has the right to a supportive space where they can learn, grow, and thrive alongside their peers. We recognize that all students—both with and without disabilities—benefit from inclusive environments, and we are dedicated to helping every child succeed.

Our commitment is grounded in our value of **Sacred Belonging**. Sacred Belonging is the unique sense of connection that emerges when every individual feels seen, included, and valued, and knows that they are created *b'tzelem Elohim* (in the image of God). We celebrate the uniqueness of every child and family and strive to create a community where all individuals are welcomed, respected, and supported.

We are open to working closely with families to determine the best ways to support each child's needs. In many cases, we can adapt our classroom environment, teaching methods, and procedures to provide a developmentally appropriate and inclusive experience. However, there

may be instances in which we are unable to fully adapt the classroom setting to meet specific needs. In those cases, we will work collaboratively with families to identify alternative solutions.

Accommodations -We value strong partnerships with parents, healthcare providers, local school district professionals, therapists, and other specialists to help meet each child's unique needs. We will make every reasonable effort to implement recommended accommodations within our classrooms and school facilities to support your child's development.

We understand that some children may require additional support, and we are dedicated to providing the resources necessary for them to thrive. If a recommendation exceeds our ability to reasonably accommodate, we will collaborate with the family and support team to explore alternative solutions and ensure that the child receives the appropriate care and assistance needed for success.

Adaptive Equipment - We will utilize adaptive equipment provided by families and healthcare professionals, including wheelchairs, walkers, braces, specialized seating, AAC devices, hearing aids, and other supportive tools. We will make reasonable modifications to our environment when needed to support children who use adaptive equipment and to ensure they can participate in a safe and supportive learning environment.

Referral to Specialized Schools or Programs - If we determine that we are unable to provide an environment that adequately supports your child's ability to learn, play, and remain safe, Becker will work with your family to research and begin the enrollment process for a school or program that has the specialized training, staffing, and resources necessary to meet your child's needs.

In-School Therapy and Evaluations - Research consistently demonstrates that early intervention is one of the most important factors in a child's long-term success. Even when a delay appears minor, it is important that families and educators work together to identify appropriate supports and interventions. Once an evaluation has been completed, we can provide referrals to specialists, physicians, therapists, and other educational professionals. Many of these services can be provided while your child remains enrolled at school.

Physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), speech-language therapy, and behavioral therapy are common and valuable supports for many children. Students are welcome and encouraged to receive intervention services and therapies during the school day. With parent approval, qualified service providers are welcome on campus to provide services to students.

If we observe developmental delays or concerns, whether minor or significant, we will schedule a meeting with the parents and school administration to develop a plan of action. If we recommend consultation with a specialist, physician, therapist, or evaluator, families are

expected to follow through with the recommendation within a reasonable timeframe, typically within three months.

Operational Policies & Procedures

Babysitting - Any provision of baby-sitting services by the Becker staff, after business operating hours and off Becker premises, for children registered in the center, is not sponsored by Becker. These services are not included in the liability insurance covering Becker. The arrangement for these services, provision of these services, and the payment for these services is an arrangement exclusively by the child's parent/guardian and the adult who will be providing the baby-sitting services. The actions of any Becker employee outside the center premises and hours of operations are not the responsibility of Becker.

We will make the Becker babysitting referral list available to families, the following applies:

- The list is provided solely as a courtesy resource
- Becker does not recommend, endorse, or guarantee any listed individual
- All arrangements are made independently between families and employees without involvement from Becker
- Families assume all risks associated with engaging any individual from the list
- Becker disclaims all liability for any harm, loss, injury, or dispute arising from such arrangements

Billing - Billing is managed through Brightwheel, where families can view their account balance, access payment history, and download tax documents.

For questions related to billing, please contact the Congregation Emanu El Accounting Department.

No refunds of tuition will be granted for holidays, vacations, emergency closures, or illness.

All payments made by credit card will be assessed a 3% processing fee

Clothing and Shoes- Children should come to Becker dressed in comfortable, weather-appropriate play clothing that can get dirty or stained. Our classrooms and creative spaces use a variety of materials such as paint, ink, sand, mud, shaving cream, and other sensory materials that support hands-on learning. Through these experiences, children explore concepts such as texture, color, density, mass, and volume.

Children should feel free to fully engage in messy, creative activities without concern for staying clean, so we encourage families to save special or delicate clothing for other occasions.

Children spend time outdoors each day, weather permitting. Clothing should be easy for children to manage independently and appropriate for active play.

Closed-toe shoes with secure backs are preferred. Sandals with secure straps around both the foot and ankle are acceptable. Flip-flops, backless shoes, and ballet slippers are not permitted.

Please send multiple labeled changes of clothing, including socks, underwear, an extra pair of shoes, and a sweater or jacket to be kept at school.

> **LABEL, LABEL, LABEL –** It is very important that your child's first name and last initial are clearly labeled on their shoes, socks, clothing, backpack, lunch kit, and everything else brought from home. It is required by Texas Childcare Licensing that all personal items are clearly labeled.

**Children's Product Safety - ** Licensing standards require that we certify that there are no unsafe children's products in use or accessible to children in the child-care center at any time. Our staff regularly checks the items used by children at the facility to ensure the safety of the children, including reviewing the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) lists of recalled children's items. You can access a listing of unsafe children's products through the CPSC Internet website (www.cpsc.gov) or through the DFPS Internet website (www.dfps.state.tx.us).

Confidentiality Policy - At Becker, confidential and sensitive information is shared only on a need-to-know basis with employees and advisory board members. This is done to ensure the safe, appropriate care of children and to support meaningful planning of activities.

Staff and leadership are expected to protect the privacy of all children, families, and employees. Confidential or sensitive information about other children, parents, teachers, or staff must never be shared with parents, visitors, or outside parties.

Parents and families are also expected to respect confidentiality. Parents do not have the right to share or distribute any confidential information they may observe or hear in the classroom. Any concerns should be directed only to the Director.

Developmental Reports – Teachers at Becker provide progress reports and/or developmental screening results two or more times each year. We use a combination of standards-based assessments, developmental screening tools, and teacher observations to monitor and document your child's growth and progress.

Directory – Our school encourages active parent involvement and community building through parent groups. These groups provide a space for parents and families to collaborate, share

ideas, and support school activities. To help facilitate communication, we maintain a school directory that includes contact information for all families who choose to participate. Participation in the directory is voluntary, and families may opt in or out when completing their registration on Brightwheel.

The directory is intended to promote positive connections and cooperation among families, but it is important that all contact information is used respectfully for school-related purposes only. You may access the directory on Brightwheel, or you may contact our Enrollment Coordinator to have a directory emailed to you.

Future Educators Observation Hours – At Becker, we believe it is important to help train and support the next generation of educators. Throughout the year, students, teachers, pediatric residents, and researchers may spend time at Becker as part of their educational or professional training. Observers are never left alone with children and are always supervised by a Becker staff member. Parents must sign a release form before observers are permitted to take photographs or videos of students.

Holidays - There are holidays during the year that Becker School does not observe. Although they have been secularized in our culture, we **do not** celebrate Halloween or Valentine's Day. We do not dress up in costumes on Halloween or pass out cards or candy on Valentine's Day. As always, we appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain the Jewish character of our school in regard to these holidays. We do celebrate all of the Jewish holidays, which provide the children other times to dress up (on Purim), exchange cards, and give and receive candy.

Lanyards- Each family will receive **four (4) Becker School lanyards** at the beginning of the school year. These lanyards should be used by individuals who are authorized to pick up your child.

A **current photo of the approved pickup person must be attached to the back of each lanyard**, and the photo must match the individual wearing the lanyard. This helps our staff quickly verify that the person is an authorized pickup and is an important part of our campus security procedures.

If your family needs additional lanyards beyond the four provided, they may be purchased for $3.00 each.

Late Pick-Up Policy - Dismissal times are 12:15 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Children enrolled in Extended Care must be picked up by 5:30 p.m. Please be respectful of these times, as late pick-ups can be disruptive to children and staff routines, including naps and classroom transitions.

Parents should arrive at the classroom within five minutes of dismissal. Prompt pick-up helps staff safely transition remaining children and continue program responsibilities.

We understand that emergencies may arise. If you are running late, please call and notify the school. A late fee will still apply; however, this allows staff to prepare your child and reassure them that you are on the way.

Late pick-up fees will be assessed as follows:

- **$25 for the first 15 minutes past dismissal time**
- **$50 for up to 30 minutes past dismissal time**
- **Fees will be charged to your Brightwheel billing account.**

Repeated late pick-ups may result in withdrawal from the program.

Non-Custodial Parent - Becker School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

Outdoor Play and Environmental Health and Safety - A fundamental element of our daily curriculum is to provide the children with outdoor play opportunities. Teachers will limit or provide alternate indoor activities when any of the following conditions exists:

- Severe weather alert
- Heavy rain, active thunder or lightning
- Ozone alert {Level Orange/Ozone Action Days – restricted outdoor activities for sensitive groups; Levels Red and Purple- outdoor activities restricted for all children}
- Environmental pollution alert
- Extreme Temperature: The heat index (air temperature + humidity) is the measure that will be used as an indicator for outdoor play safety.
- Heat Index 90 degrees {84 degrees F + 70% humidity}- CAUTION – outdoor time to be reduced to 20 minutes
- Heat Index 100 degrees {90 degrees F + 55% humidity} – DANGER – poses an extreme health risk. Children must utilize indoor play spaces.

Teachers are informed of severe weather, ozone and/or environmental pollution alerts, and extreme temperatures from the director or assistant director. Environmental alerts are obtained from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's alert service.

*If your child has chronic respiratory issues, please advise the teacher if activities should be modified in the event of an alert.

Rest Time - Texas Department of Family and Protective Services requires that any child who is in our care for 5 or more consecutive hours be provided a supervised nap or rest period following the midday meal. Children are not required to sleep but must lay on their mat for a set time based on age. Quiet activities will be provided until the rest time is over for the other children.

Risky Play - As a Reggio-inspired school, we believe that risky play is an essential part of a child's learning and development. We expect our children to climb, jump, run, hop, and, most likely, fall down a few times on the playground. This kind of physical play, though seemingly simple, offers profound opportunities for growth, both in terms of physical skills and emotional resilience.

By allowing children to engage in activities that push their limits—whether it's climbing a tree, jumping from a height, or balancing on an uneven surface—we foster a sense of confidence and independence. We allow children to climb as high as their bodies will naturally take them. We will not boost or help a child climb a structure or tree; however, we believe that if they are strong enough to climb on their own, they are strong enough to keep their bodies safe and find their way back down.

School Closings - Severe weather may cause an emergency closing of the school. Generally, if Houston ISD cancels school due to a weather emergency, we will do the same.

Disruption of utility services (i.e., electricity, water) that render the building unsafe will result in a school closure.

During an emergency school closing, you will be notified by our email system and Brightwheel. Please be sure to provide us the best emails as well as two phone numbers where we can leave messages.

Screenings - Hearing, vision, and speech and language screenings may be conducted at least once per school year by an outside team of trained professionals, on children that are three, four and five years old by September 1. The results are shared with the parents and teachers, and recommendations for further screening will be made if needed. Administration will contact the parents and provide appropriate resources when a referral is recommended.

Teachers can conduct a developmental screening using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire as a baseline of information based on developmental concerns raised by parents and/or teachers. This screening can take place at any time during the school year. The director and teachers will share the screening results with the parents.

If you would like more details on the screening or referral process, please contact the Director or Assistant Director.

Screen Time – We strongly believe that children learn best through active engagement. Our classrooms are intentionally designed and equipped with materials that promote exploration, creativity, collaboration, and imaginative play.

We do not use screen time in our classrooms. Occasionally, in classrooms serving children ages 3 and older, screens may be used for brief instructional purposes by classroom teachers or in specialty classes to support a specific learning objective or special activity.

Sensory Play – Our students participate in sensory exploration every day. Sensory exploration takes place in the classroom, on the playground, and in the outdoor garden.

Staff Transporting Children - Employees may not transport children to or from Becker without prior written approval from the Director and a signed parent/guardian authorization form.

If an employee agrees to provide transportation, the Director must be notified in advance, and all required documentation must be completed before any transportation is provided. Transportation Safety Training is also mandatory for staff members who transport children

Sunscreen/Insect Protection - Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen or insect repellent to their child prior to coming to school. Sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher is defined as skin protection. Teachers can apply sunscreen and/or insect repellent at other times during the day with written permission of the parent. Parents may send insect repellent containing no less than 10% DEET but no more than 30% DEET to school. An *Authorization for Applying Sunscreen/Insect Repellent form* is available on Brightwheel. Aerosols are prohibited in school. Parents may send a pump spray.

Visitors - Visitors must provide Becker with a current state ID and sign in with security. Parents of currently enrolled students are welcome to visit the school or their child at any time during our normal hours of operation.

Health Procedures

Immunization Requirements - All children attending childcare in Texas are required to meet state immunization requirements. Proof of current, age-appropriate immunizations must be provided before a child may attend Becker.

If a child is not fully immunized according to Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements, a physician-approved written plan of action must be submitted prior to attendance.

Exceptions

- Families seeking provisional enrollment must contact the Director for required documentation.
- Any exemptions must comply with Texas Department of State Health Services rules (25 TAC §97.62). Required exemption forms are available through the Texas DSHS website.

Health Documentation- A signed physician Health Statement is required within the first seven (7) days of enrollment.

- Children age four (4) and older must have documented vision and hearing screenings completed within 120 calendar days of enrollment.
- TB testing is not required for childcare attendance in Harris County.

Confidentiality of Health Records - All student health and family records are stored securely within our administrative system. Access is limited to authorized school administration to ensure confidentiality and the safety of all children.

Allergies - Some children enrolled at Becker have severe, life-threatening allergies, including allergies to foods and environmental triggers. To ensure the safety of all children, it is essential that families communicate all allergies to the school.

Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the Director and classroom teachers of any known allergies. Children with seasonal allergies may be required to provide a physician's note on file. If allergy symptoms become severe (including persistent coughing, respiratory distress, or significant congestion), the Director may require the child to be picked up.

For children with life-threatening allergies, families must provide:

- A completed Allergy Action Plan
- All required emergency/rescue medications
- Clear written instructions regarding symptoms, reactions, and treatment procedures

This documentation must be submitted prior to the child's first day of attendance and shared with all relevant staff.

If a child in a classroom has a diagnosed allergy, families will be notified and asked not to send the allergen into that classroom. A notice will also be posted on the classroom door to help ensure the allergen is kept out of the learning environment.

Allergy Action Plan forms are available through Brightwheel.

Sick Children and Illness - Becker School is designed to provide care and education for well children. Children who are ill require rest, comfort, and individualized care that can best be provided at home. To protect the health and well-being of all children and staff, children exhibiting signs of illness or contagious conditions should not attend school.

If a child displays a change in behavior, mood, or physical condition after arrival, Becker staff may conduct a health screening. This screening may include visual observation, a physical assessment, and/or the use of a thermometer to determine whether the child is well enough to remain in care.

When a child becomes ill while at school, a parent or guardian will be contacted and must arrange for the child to be picked up within 30 minutes. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, an authorized emergency contact will be contacted. Children who are ill often require a level of care that cannot be provided without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of other children. Becker is not licensed to provide sick-child or "get-well" care.

Illness Notifications – Parents are required to notify the school via email or Brightwheel if their child is diagnosed with any contagious illness or communicable disease within 24 hours of the diagnosis. We will notify parents with children in the same classroom the same or following day by sending a notification through Brightwheel with information about the communicable disease.

Reasons for Exclusion from School - A child must be excluded from care if they exhibit any of the following symptoms or conditions:

- Diarrhea or bloody stools (3 episodes) – Children are welcome to return when they are symptom free for 24 hours, when they are eating and drinking safely, and when they are able to fully participate in classroom activities.
- Vomiting (2 or episodes or with other symptoms of illnesses) - Children are welcome to return when they are symptom free for 24 hours, when they are eating and drinking safely, and when they are able to fully participate in classroom activities.
- Ear pain accompanied by irritability or confusion
- Difficulty breathing

- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease – Children are welcome to return after the start of symptoms, as long as their rash is healing and dry and they have been fever free for 24 hours.
- Impetigo – Children are welcome to return once their rash is healing and dry, they have been on oral or topical antibiotics for 24 hours, and they have been fever free for 24 hours. Any visible rash must remain covered with a waterproof bandage for the duration of healing.
- Sore throat with swollen glands
- Persistent or severe coughing
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) or other eye infections – Children are welcome to return 24 hours after starting antibiotic eye drops, when their eyes are from discharge, and when overall symptoms are improving.
- Severe cough involving redness of the face or whooping sounds
- Drainage from the eyes or ears
- Fever - For the purposes of this policy, fever is defined as: 100.4 °F or higher when measured temporal or orally

Additional reasons for exclusion include:

- Live lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations
- Unexplained rash or infected skin lesions
- Frequent scratching associated with a communicable condition
- Strep throat or other streptococcal infections until the child has received at least 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and is fever-free
- Chickenpox or shingles until all lesions have crusted over (typically six days)
- Mumps until nine days after the onset of parotid gland swelling
- Pertussis (whooping cough) until five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed
- Hepatitis A until one week after the onset of illness
- Measles until four days after the onset of rash
- Rubella until six days after the onset of rash
- Any communicable disease as determined by public health authorities or Texas Health and Human Services guidelines

Returning to School After Illness - Children may return to school when:

- They have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours, unless otherwise specified.
- They have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- They have received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours when antibiotics are prescribed for a contagious illness.
- A healthcare provider has determined that the child is no longer contagious and may safely return to group care.
- A physician's note may be required before a child returns to school when deemed necessary by the administration.

Disease Prevention and Control - Becker follows the recommendations of Texas Health and Human Services and other public health authorities to reduce the spread of communicable diseases. Disease prevention practices include:

- Proper handwashing procedures
- Safe diapering and toileting practices
- Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
- Routine cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting of surfaces and materials
- Universal precautions for handling bodily fluids
- Compliance with immunization requirements

Medication - Parents are encouraged to schedule the administration of a student's medication in such a manner that medication brought to school will be kept to a minimum. (For example, the physician may be able to prescribe the medication before/after school and at bedtime.) The first dosage of medication is to be given by parent or guardian at home.

Medicine (prescription or non-prescription) may be administered by any Becker staff with the appropriate certification. The request must be on a Medication Form which is available online or at the office. This form must be filled in completely, signed, and submitted with the medication to a Becker administrator at drop-off. All Becker administration certified to administer medicine will follow the five rights protocol and document each dosage administration.

It is the responsibility of the parent to verify that all medication brought to Becker School is not expired and does not include ingredients that have been recalled. Any medication left at the school after the school year ends will be disposed of properly.

All medications (prescription or non-prescription) must be in its original container and properly labeled. A properly labeled prescription medication is one with a pharmacy label stating the student's name, the name of the medication, and the date the prescription was filled. We encourage you to request that prescriptions be divided into two containers (one for home/one for school) by your pharmacy. Non-prescription medication must be in its original container and labeled with the student's name. This includes items such as Benadryl, insect repellant, sunscreen, diaper rash cream, etc.

Students may not carry or administer any medication to themselves. This includes inhalers, cough drops, vitamins, etc. No medications are to be kept in the classroom or child's backpack. Medications are stored in a cabinet at the reception desk**.**

Vision and Hearing Screenings – Vision and hearing screenings are performed for children in Pre-K 4 and older. The cost of these screenings is included in tuition. You may opt-out of the screenings at school if you would prefer to have these screenings completed by your child's pediatrician, audiologist, or optometrist. Results should be provided to the school at the beginning of the school year.

Parent Expectations

At Becker, we believe that strong partnerships between families and staff are essential to creating a safe, respectful, and nurturing school community. Just as expectations exist for teachers, staff, and students, the following expectations apply to parents and all family members while on campus or participating in school activities.

Becker reserves the right to withdraw enrollment if a parent's behavior is consistently disrespectful, disruptive, or harmful to the school community.

Respectful Interaction -Parents are expected to treat all staff, children, other families, and visitors with respect at all times. Intimidating, aggressive, threatening, or abusive behavior by any family member or guest will not be tolerated.

Language and Conduct - All adults are expected to use appropriate language while on campus and throughout the Emanu El grounds. Offensive language, swearing, yelling, or disruptive behavior is not permitted by parents, children, or guests.

Conflict Resolution - If a concern or disagreement arises with a staff member or another adult, parents are expected to address it in a calm and respectful manner.

Chain of Concern - At Becker, we believe that concerns, questions, and feedback are best addressed through clear, respectful, and timely communication. The Director is a primary resource for families and is available to support questions related to classroom practices, child development, and school operations.

To ensure concerns are handled effectively and fairly, the following process should be followed:

- Parents are encouraged to first discuss any concern directly with their child's teacher.
- If the concern is not resolved, the teacher will bring the issue to the Director as needed.
- If a parent brings a concern directly to the Director, the Director will typically redirect the parent to first speak with the teacher.
- If the teacher and parent are unable to reach a resolution, a conference with the Director will be scheduled.
- If the Director is unable to resolve the concern in a timely and satisfactory manner, the matter will be referred to either the Associate Rabbi or Executive Director.

Social Media Conduct - Parents are asked to refrain from publicly posting negative, critical, or defamatory comments about staff, children, or other families on social media. Concerns should always be addressed directly with the school in a respectful and appropriate manner.

Confidentiality - Families are expected to respect the privacy of others. Parents may not take, share, or post photos or videos of any child other than their own without explicit permission from that child's parent or guardian.

Child Behavior During Parent Presence - Parents are responsible for supporting school-wide behavioral expectations while on campus. Children should not be allowed to engage in unsafe, disrespectful, or disruptive behavior while at Becker, especially during arrival, dismissal, Becker Shabbat, or school events.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

For the safety of all children, an adult must accompany children at all times in the elevator, stairs, bathroom areas, parking garage, and throughout the building and playground. Children must never be left unattended in any area of the school or garage.

Arrival

- Children should be dropped off directly at their classroom by a parent or caregiver.

- All parents and caregivers must have a photo ID sticker provided by our security team. The photo ID sticker may be attached to the parent's lanyard for convenience. Lanyard photos must match the person wearing the lanyard.
- Timely arrival supports smooth transitions and full participation in learning activities
- To support your child's day, please communicate any relevant updates to teachers via Brightwheel or email before arrival (e.g., poor sleep, changes at home, illness, or other important information). Drop-off is not an appropriate time for extended conversations; teachers will gladly schedule a meeting or call if needed.

Dismissal

- All students are picked up from their classroom at their scheduled dismissal time
- Children will only be released to authorized adults listed in Brightwheel or school records
- Any change in pick-up arrangements must be communicated to the school as soon as possible
- Authorized individuals must present valid photo identification when picking up a child. All parents and caregivers must have a photo ID sticker provided by our security team. The photo ID sticker may be attached to the parent's lanyard for convenience. Lanyard photos must match the person wearing the lanyard.
- All families are required to sign children in and out daily using the Brightwheel app using their designated code. This documentation is required for compliance with childcare licensing regulations.

Parking Garage Safety- The safety of our students, families, and staff is our top priority. All parents are required to follow the following safety rules when using the school parking garage:

- **Speed Limit:** The speed limit is strictly **5 mph** at all times. Please drive slowly and cautiously when entering, exiting, and navigating the garage.
- **Pedestrian Right-of-Way:** Pedestrians always have the right-of-way. Be alert for children and families crossing.
- **Children Safety:** Children must never be left unattended in vehicles or allowed to walk through the parking garage alone. Parents must keep children close and hold hands when possible.
- **Designated Areas Only:** Use only designated parking spaces for drop-off and pick-up. Do not block traffic flow or access points.

- **No Parking Zones:** Fire lanes, handicapped spaces (unless authorized), and emergency exits must remain clear at all times.
- **No Running:** Children are not permitted to run in the parking garage due to safety risks during busy arrival and dismissal times.
- **No Distractions:** Do not use cell phones while driving or walking in the parking garage. Full attention is required at all times.
- **Assistance:** If assistance is needed, please contact the school office. If a recurring need exists, staff will help develop an appropriate support plan.

Special Circumstances during Arrival and Dismissal - If you have a sleeping or ill child in your vehicle during afternoon pick-up, please park near the school entrance and notify the front desk. Staff will assist and ensure safety while you complete pick-up procedures.

Toileting and Diapering

Families are responsible for providing diapers and wipes for children who are not yet toilet independent. Supplies are stored separately for each child, and families will be notified when additional supplies are needed. For health and safety, staff wear gloves during diaper changes, use disposable changing paper, and follow strict sanitation procedures. Disposable diapers are required.

Toilet Learning - Toilet learning is most successful when families and teachers work together. We encourage families to communicate with teachers when they believe their child is ready to begin the process.

At Becker, we believe toilet learning should be based on a child's developmental readiness rather than age. Signs of readiness may include:

- Communicating the need to use the toilet
- Following simple directions
- Staying dry for extended periods
- Showing interest in the toilet
- Pulling clothing up and down independently
- Asking to wear underwear

Children who are toilet learning must wear underwear or some type of bottom rather than diapers or pull-ups during the school day. Wet or soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed bag and sent home. Please provide at least one complete change of clothes.

For health and safety:

- Child-sized toilets are available throughout the school.
- Potty chairs are not permitted.
- Restrooms are cleaned and sanitized regularly throughout the day.
- Children and staff wash their hands after toileting and diapering.

Please note that the second-floor classrooms do not have bathrooms inside the classroom. If your child is developmentally ready, we encourage families to begin toilet learning before their child transitions to a second-floor classroom.

Field Trips - Advance notice of field trips will be sent home along with permission slips. Children may not participate without a signed permission slip submitted prior to departure.

All children are required to wear their Becker shirt on field trip days.

Siblings are not permitted to attend field trips. Family volunteers who choose to serve as drivers or chaperones are greatly appreciated; however, full participation is required to ensure student safety. Field trips may be canceled if adequate adult supervision is not available.

Chaperones must remain with the assigned group at all times, travel directly to and from the destination, and use cell phones only for emergencies while supervising children.

Transportation and Safety Requirements -Texas child passenger safety laws must be followed at all times. All children must be properly secured in a federally approved car seat or booster seat as required by law. No child may ride unrestrained. **TEXAS CHILD CAR SEAT LAWS MUST BE OBSERVED.** ***Any child younger than eight years old must be secured in a federally approved restraint seat, unless the child is at least four feet and nine inches in height.***

Drivers must provide the school with a valid driver's license and proof of insurance prior to participating.

Adults may not smoke or vape during any field trip or school-related activity.

Caregivers or staff may only transport and supervise the child(ren) of the family with whom they are employed or assigned.

Student Records - Information contained in student records will only be released to the parents/legal guardian and school personnel, except under the following conditions:

- Student information requested by the court, relating to matters of litigation, may be obtained by issuance of a subpoena to the Director.
- A signed release form from the parents is given to a designated person/agency and to us.
- Parents must be current in their payments before academic records can be sent to another school.

Communication

Ongoing communication between home and school supports each child's growth, development, and success. Becker School maintains an open-door policy and encourages families to stay in contact with teachers, staff, and administration through email, Brightwheel, or phone.

Please note that Becker observes Shabbat. No communication, including Brightwheel messages, will be sent from sunset Friday through sunset Saturday, or during Jewish holidays.

Messages sent during weekends or after school hours may be responded to on the next school day.

How We Communicate With Families

We keep families informed through:

- Parent-teacher conferences
- Brightwheel messaging, class updates, and individual communication
- School notices and announcements
- The weekly Becker Brief emailed every other Thursday
- Daily reports for Young Toddlers' and Twos' classes via Brightwheel
- Photos and videos of classroom activities shared through Brightwheel
- Updates posted on our website and social media

How Families Can Support Communication

We ask families to:

- Share important home updates (new baby, illness, travel, visitors, etc.)
- Regularly check Brightwheel and school communications

- Notify us of exposure to or contraction of communicable diseases
- Update contact information promptly
- Participate in the Becker Parent Teacher Organization
- Share relevant community resources or events
- Read all school communications
- Contact teachers or administration with any questions or concerns

DISCIPLINE and GUIDANCE PROCEDURE

Helping children to develop self-regulation and to conduct themselves in an acceptable and positive manner is a major behavioral objective of the school. Certain rules and regulations are a necessity in any group and serve as guidelines to appropriate behavior.

Each teacher develops classroom rules that the students will learn to follow. Using a positive discipline/guidance approach, children are redirected, given choices and guided in problem solving and conflict resolution by their teachers. These techniques are used in ways that are responsive to the developmental levels and characteristics of the children. Teachers handle most of the discipline within their classrooms. The teachers provide the children with clear expectations and reinforce appropriate behaviors.

When a child exhibits on-going behaviors, parents are informed and consulted regarding their child's behavior by written note, telephone, and/or conferences. The teaching staff along with the Director, parents and specialists will convene to assess the function of the behavior and to develop an appropriate, individualized plan to address the child. Positive behavior support strategies will be an integral part of the approach. Communication, cooperation and coordination of efforts between parents and teachers is essential.

Corporal punishment, psychological abuse and coercion are prohibited at Becker School.

•Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills which help them get along in their physical and social environment. The goal is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules.

• Giving children understandable guidelines and re-directing their behavior helps them to develop internal control of their actions and encourages acceptable behavior.

While our goal is to always refrain from the use of suspension, expulsion, and any other exclusionary measures, Becker School reserves the right to insist upon the immediate

withdrawal of any student whose presence is considered to be detrimental to either the student's or Becker's best interest.

If a student's behavior interferes with their ability to learn or their classmate's ability to learn, Becker will first refer to the following guidelines to aid in providing positive behavioral support:

A. Assess the function of the child's behavior. Most behavior is motivated by a need to get something (attention, desired activities/objects, or internal stimulation) or to avoid something (difficult work, embarrassment, discomfort, etc.)

    1. Clearly identify the targeted behavior that has not responded to standard teaching strategies that teachers or parents have used before; it is important to be as specific as possible and provide clear examples.

    2. Document exactly what happened before the challenging behavior, including the setting, with whom, and during what activity.

    3. Determine what happens immediately after challenging behavior, including teacher's reaction, child's reactions, and classmates' reactions.

B. Consult with parents and others (teachers, therapists, etc.) who know the child. A collective effort is most helpful in providing appropriate support for the child.

    1. Review the bigger picture as to what may be influencing the child's behavior (Things such as medical/health problems including vision, hearing, medication, or allergies; environmental triggers such as heat, noise, crowds, hunger, fatigue, sleep issues; family and social issues may also need to be considered; review teaching style)

    2. Determine the child's interests, strengths, and skills.

    3. Come up with a "best guess" as to the reasons for the challenging behavior.

C. Implement positive behavior support strategies.

    1. Determine specific behavior goals for the child.

    2. Identify desired behaviors to replace challenging behaviors.

    3. Develop teaching strategies to address replacement behaviors.

    4. Provide positive behavior support as an ongoing process.

    5. Monitor and review the positive behavior support strategies and ensure that the strategies are consistent with family and cultural values.

When behavior continues in spite of positive interventions, there may be a need to discuss possible referrals to community resources (pediatrician, therapist, etc.). If all other possible interventions have been exhausted, Becker School reserves the right to disenroll any child whose best interests are not able to be adequately supported by the school. Administration will offer assistance in finding an alternative placement.

Biting - Biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 2 ½ year old classrooms. As children begin to mature, develop expressive language skills, gain self-control, and develop problem solving skills biting behaviors typically abate. Children older than 3 years of age, may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. In all incidences of biting, the staff works to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented or redirected. Biting behaviors are consistently discouraged with an age appropriate verbal response. On-going positive guidance will be used to address and redirect the behaviors. If biting behaviors become chronic, parents, teachers and administration will meet to develop a strategy to stop this behavior and ensure the safety of all children in the classroom.

While we recognize biting as a normal behavior, it is still unsettling when your child is biting others or has been bitten. Parents will be notified by an incident report that a biting incident occurred during the day or by phone if your child is bitten. The staff is prohibited from discussing with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment is completed online each January preceding the upcoming school year. A link will be sent to all current students. Background information on each student, allergy information, publicity permission, permission to post allergies, emergency information, cell phones and emails, grandparent information and the names of persons who may pick-up your children are included on this online enrollment form.

Parents are responsible for notifying the school immediately with any changes including but not limited to change of address and phone number, e-mail address, emergency contacts, as well as new allergies or medical conditions.

In addition, before school begins in the fall each year, a Physician and Immunization Information Form needs to be completed for each child. This form must be signed by your child's doctor along with a current record of your child's immunizations.

NO CHILD WILL BE ADMITTED TO CLASS UNLESS THE CHILD INFORMATION FORMS ARE UP-TO-DATE AND ON FILE WITH THE SCHOOL PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR OR ON

THE CHILD'S FIRST DAY OF ENROLLMENT. A link to these forms will be emailed to families in June before the start of school.

Children are placed in age levels according to their age by September 1. Children begin the school year in August and stay with their class group until the end of May. Children and families handle the beginning of school in different ways. Some children transition easily at first and may have more difficulty in the second or third week of school. Other children need support from the beginning.

Scholarships – There is limited scholarship tuition assistance available for families in need. To be considered for a scholarship, families must complete a scholarship application through a third-party vendor. A scholarship committee will review the information provided and determine financial need based on the application submitted through the vendor.

Scholarship applications must be completed annually. **Receiving a scholarship in one year does not guarantee that a scholarship will be awarded in subsequent years.**

Disenrollment

Enrollment may be cancelled without financial penalty, notwithstanding the $350.00 non-refundable registration fee, if written notice of cancellation is received prior to and no later than the penalty date in May.

If a student is withdrawn at any time after the penalty date, and before the first day of school, one month of tuition will remain due and payable. If a student is withdrawn at any time between the first day of school and December 1st, one-half of the annual tuition amount will remain due and payable. If a student is withdrawn at any time after December 1st, FULL payment of the remaining tuition will remain due and payable.

The only exceptions to this policy fall under the following circumstances:

- The student's family moves outside of the Greater Houston area.
- The student is withdrawn from Becker at Becker's request.

In each of these circumstances, Becker will pro-rate the year's tuition to the end of the month in which the student withdraws. In the event of a withdrawal because the student's family moves outside the Greater Houston area, notice of such withdrawal must be given at least thirty (30) days in advance. If such notice is not given, the date of withdrawal for calculating pro rata tuition shall be thirty (30) days after actual receipt of such notice.

Food and Nutrition

Please label all lunch boxes, thermoses, containers, and food items clearly with your child's name.

If your child has a food allergy, it must be noted on the Child Information Form, and an Allergy Action Plan must be completed. Please also notify your child's teacher directly.

Lunches and snacks are eaten in the classroom or outdoors. Please send lunch in a closed, self-contained lunchbox with disposable utensils and napkins. A nutritious, well-balanced lunch and a filled water bottle should be provided daily. We are unable to refrigerate lunches; a frozen ice pack is recommended for food safety.

As a Jewish school, **pork and shellfish products** are not permitted. Kosher dietary guidelines are observed during Passover.

Carbonated drinks and glass containers are not allowed. Please also be mindful of choking hazards for children under four. The following foods should not be sent:

- Whole hot dogs (must be cut lengthwise or into small pieces)
- Whole grapes (must be cut in half or quarters)
- Popcorn
- Raw peas
- Large hard pretzels
- Large chunks of raw carrots
- Meat pieces that are difficult to chew safely

Birthdays - Birthday celebrations are welcome. Families wishing to send a treat must coordinate with their child's teacher in advance. Invitations to outside birthday parties may only be distributed if the entire class is invited.

Breastfeeding- Becker supports breastfeeding and the provision of breast milk. A private space is available upon request through the receptionist. Breast milk may be stored in the refrigerator in the kitchen or classroom if there is a refrigerator in the classroom, clearly labeled with the child's name and room number. Frozen breast milk cannot be stored.

Lunches - Catered lunches are available for an additional fee through Simply Fresh Kitchen. Orders must be placed by 5:00 a.m. daily after account setup.

Snacks - All children have a morning snack time, and families are responsible for sending a daily snack in a separate, labeled container. Healthy snack options include fruit, yogurt, cheese, crackers, applesauce, pretzels, and similar items. On Fridays, children are provided challah for snack.

Extended Care students will have an additional snack time. If lunch is not finished, children will be encouraged to finish their lunch during Extended Care before giving them their snack.

Water – Each student over 12 months of age is required to bring a reusable water bottle each day. All students have access to water throughout the day. Their water bottles can be refilled using our filtered water bottle filling stations. All water cups must be able to close with a sanitary cover.

Cleaning and Sanitizing Procedures

We take the well-being of every child seriously and work hard to provide a clean, sanitary environment. Toys are disinfected after use and all play and eating areas are sanitized throughout the day. Each evening, the facility is cleaned and sanitized by a professional cleaning crew.

Handwashing Procedures – Staff are required to wash their own hands, as well as the hands of each child, upon arrival for the day; before and after meals and snacks; after outdoor play; after using the bathroom; whenever a child's hands are soiled; when assisting with toileting or diapering; and after coming into contact with bodily fluids, including those from wiping noses or coughing.

Cleaning Products - To maintain a healthy environment: A schedule for regular cleaning and disinfecting is followed throughout the facility, EPA-approved disinfectants and sanitizers are used according to manufacturer instructions, staff members are provided with approved disinfecting wipes for commonly used surfaces and equipment and all cleaning products and materials are stored securely and kept out of children's reach.

Toys and Classroom Materials - Frequently touched toys, games, tables, and classroom materials are cleaned and disinfected regularly, toys and materials that cannot be adequately cleaned and disinfected may be removed from use, toys that have been placed in a child's mouth are removed from circulation until they have been properly cleaned and sanitized, and toys awaiting cleaning are stored separately from clean materials.

Frequently Touched Areas - The following surfaces are cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected regularly: Door handles and doorknobs**,** light switches**,** sink handles**,** countertops**,** cubbies**,** nap

cots**,** playground equipment**,** handrails and grab bars and bathrooms are cleaned and disinfected multiple times each day.

Bedding and Sleep Equipment - Each child is assigned an individual cot or sleep space, cots are cleaned and disinfected daily, children's bedding is stored separately, bedding brought from home, including blankets and pillows, should be taken home weekly for laundering and returned clean and infant crib sheets are laundered daily by the school.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect

Texas law requires all caregivers and school staff to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. If there is cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been harmed or may be at risk, a report must be made immediately to the appropriate authorities.

Reports may be made to:

- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Texas Abuse Hotline: **1-800-252-5400** (confidential reporting available 24/7) or Online reporting: www.dfps.state.tx.us
- Local law enforcement, when appropriate

Failure to report suspected abuse or neglect is a criminal offense under the Texas Family Code (§34.07) and may be classified as a Class B misdemeanor. Employees are protected by law from retaliation when reports are made in good faith.

Staff Responsibilities and Training

All Becker staff are trained to recognize, document, and report signs of abuse or neglect. Any suspected indicators must be documented and reported in accordance with state requirements. The school is legally required to cooperate fully with any official investigation. In most cases, families will be notified by Child Protective Services (CPS) if a child is interviewed or involved in an investigation.

All teachers and staff are required to complete a minimum of **24 clock hours of annual training**, which includes at least **one hour focused specifically on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect**, in accordance with Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standards (§746.1309).

Becker administrators, teachers and the rabbis are available to help families as needed.

Emergency Preparedness & Safety Procedures

Becker School is equipped with modern safety features to protect children, staff, and visitors. These include fire detection systems, emergency exit equipment, security systems, child-proof doors and cabinets, and controlled entry/exit access points to monitor and manage visitor access.

All staff receive training on emergency procedures during onboarding and participate in ongoing drills and professional development to ensure readiness.

In any emergency, the primary responsibility of staff is to ensure the immediate safety of all children by following established procedures and directions from the Director or emergency personnel. Staff remain with children at all times until they are safely reunited with a parent or authorized guardian.

Emergency Medical Plan - In the event of a medical emergency, staff will:

1. Call 911 immediately
2. Provide CPR and/or First Aid if trained and necessary
3. Contact parents or emergency contacts as soon as possible
4. Ensure a staff member remains with the child until the parent arrives, per state licensing requirements
5. Document the incident and provide an incident report for parent signature (copy kept in the child's file)

If emergency transport is required and a parent is not present, a staff member will accompany the child in the ambulance. Children will typically be transported to **Texas Children's Hospital**, unless emergency personnel determine otherwise.

Parents are responsible for all medical costs related to injury or illness.

Accidents, Injuries & Incident Reporting - Becker is equipped with fully stocked first-aid kits. First aid will be administered following guidance from medical professionals or Poison Control when applicable.

An Incident/Injury Report will be completed and signed for any of the following:

- Injuries, accidents, or illnesses requiring first aid
- Head, face, or neck injuries
- Any unusual event affecting safety

- Emergency transport
- Any incident requiring documentation for licensing compliance
- Reports are shared with parents, signed, and kept on file.

Incidents (Parent Communication & Sign-Off Procedures) - Parents are required to sign all incident reports at pick-up time. Teachers may briefly discuss the incident during pick-up. If a more in-depth conversation is needed, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting, conference, or phone call for a later time.

For minor injuries, parents will receive: An incident/injury report to sign and a phone call or Brightwheel message describing the nature of the injury, including when and how it occurred

Parents will be contacted immediately if: Emergency medical attention is required; The injury involves the head, face, or neck

Emergency Situations & Procedures

Fire - Staff will evacuate children using designated routes, with teachers positioned at the front and back of each group. Attendance will be taken both during evacuation and at the safe location.

Tornado / Severe Weather - Children will be guided to interior safe areas away from windows and large objects. Attendance will be taken immediately upon relocation.

Safety Hazard- If a hazard is identified, staff will contact emergency services if needed and evacuate the building if required. Attendance procedures will be followed at all times.

Shelter-in-Place (Public Safety or Severe Weather) - When directed by authorities, staff will: Keep all children, staff, and visitors inside, lock exterior doors immediately and communicate with families when safe to do so

Lockdown (Security Threat) -Staff will move children to secure, locked “safe zones” out of sight

- Doors will be locked and silence maintained, police will be contacted immediately, no one will leave until cleared by authorities and parents will be notified as soon as it is safe

Evacuation & Relocation Plan - If evacuation is required: Emergency services (Fire/Police) will be contacted for support**,** parents will be notified immediately for pickup or relocation instructions and children will be transported or walked to designated relocation sites

- **Primary Relocation Site:**
  First Christian Church
  1601 Sunset Blvd, Houston, TX 77005

- **Secondary Relocation Site:**
  Rice Graduate Housing
  1515 Bissonnet Street, Houston, TX 77005

If necessary, authorities may direct the center to an alternate location.

Reunification with Families - Once the emergency is resolved: Parents will receive instructions for pickup via the communication system, staff will verify identity before releasing any child, children will only be released to authorized individuals listed in records and staff will remain with children until each child is safely reunited with their family

Child Accountability & Supervision - Staff will maintain continuous supervision and use attendance tracking systems and class rosters to account for all children at all times, including during evacuation and relocation. As always children will be counted and recounted numerous times.

Emergency backpacks containing essential supplies and documentation will be carried during all evacuations.

Communication During Emergencies - Emergency services will be contacted by dialing **911 ,** the Director or designee will coordinate all communication**,** families will be notified through Brightwheel and updates will include safety status, location, and pickup instructions when applicable

Drills & Training - To ensure preparedness: Monthly fire drills are conducted**,** quarterly lockdown and shelter-in-place drills are conducted**,** and annual staff emergency preparedness training is required.

APPENDIX

Mandatory Reporting/Abuse & Neglect:

We contact and coordinate action with Child Protective Services if we suspect child abuse or neglect. Texas state law requires that any person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect must report it. Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas, and so is failure to report it. All employees at Becker are mandatory reporters to Child Protective Services. Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicions of abuse or neglect. As mandated reporters, the staff of Becker cannot be held liable for the reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded as long as the report was made in "good faith." Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to: unusual marks or cuts on the child's body, severe verbal reprimands, improper clothing (size, season, or cleanliness), transporting a child without the proper child restraints (seat belt or car seat), dropping off or picking up under the influence of drugs or alcohol, not providing meals or drinks to your child or threatening to remove them, leaving your child unattended in a car, leaving your child unattended for any length of time, or sending a child to school sick or covering up symptoms with medication. If you suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, you are required to make a report within 24 hours of the time you suspect the child has been or may be abused or neglected. Texas Childcare Licensing (713)-940-3009, the Local Childcare Licensing office (713) 940-5200, the Child Abuse (CPS) Hotline (800) 252-5400, visit texasabusehotline.org or https://hhs.texas.gov/.

What is Abuse and Neglect? Abuse is mental, emotional, physical, or sexual injury to a child or failure to prevent such injury to a child. Neglect includes (1) failure to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter and/or medical care; and/or (2) leaving a child in a situation where the child is at risk of harm.

Warning signs of Abuse and Neglect: Unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes; fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school; seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home; shrinks at the approach of adults; reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver; abuses animals or pets. Lacks needed medical or dental care, immunizations, or glasses; is consistently dirty and has severe body odor; lack sufficient clothing for the weather; parent appears to be indifferent to the child; parent seems apathetic or depressed; parent behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner; parent is abusing alcohol or other drugs. For more information on warning signs of abuse or neglect and prevention techniques, please visit the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

website, the Texas Health and Human Services website, the Child Welfare Information Gateway, or visit the Becker front office. To contact a national child abuse prevention and treatment organization, call 1-800-4-A-CHILD or visit ChildHelp.org.

A Parent/Guardian's Rights:

- Enter and examine the childcare facility during its hours of operations without advanced notice;
- Review the childcare facility's publicly accessible records;
- Receive inspection reports for the childcare facility and information about how to access its online compliance history;
- Obtain a copy of the childcare facility's policies and procedures;
- Review, at the request of the parent or guardian, the facility's: Staff training records; and in-house staff training;
- Review the childcare facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child;
- Have the childcare facility comply with a court order preventing another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the parent's or guardian's child;
- Be provided with the contact information for the childcare facility's local Childcare Regulation office;
- File a complaint against the childcare facility; and
- Be free from any retaliatory action by the childcare facility for exercising any of the parent's or guardian's rights.
- Inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving their child provided that:
    - Video recordings of the alleged incident are available;
    - The parent or guardian does not retain any part of the video depicting a child that is not their own; and
    - The parent or guardian of any other child in the video receives prior notice from the facility

Infant Class: (Starting at 6 weeks -12 months by September 1st)

**Ensure that all items are labeled with your child's first name and last initial.

WHAT TO KEEP IN THE CLASSROOM

- A jacket
- A sun hat or winter hat
- Several family phots to hand in the classroom
- Two sleep sacks (swaddles are not allowed)
- Outdoor shoes (once walking)
- Indoor grippy socks

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOUR CHILD

- A backpack
- Four to six clean bottles for milk
- One to two clean cups for water (6M+)
- Two pacifiers (if needed)
- Three extra sets of clean clothes
- Baby food/snacks (if needed)
- Healthy lunch (if not signed up for a meal plan)
- Formula and/or breast milk (enough to satisfy the child's hunger cues)
- Cloth bibs, if frequently drooling or spitting up
- Diapers (refill as needed)
- Diaper cream (refill as needed)
- Wipes (refill as needed)

BREASTFEEDING/BREASTMILK:

An area with an adult-sized rocking chairs is located in the infant classroom and is available for breastfeeding mothers. Upon request, a private room is also available. We follow these safety rules when preparing and storing breastmilk: fresh milk (never cooled) is good for six hours, refrigerated milk is good for six days, frozen milk is good for six months. Once warmed, all milk (fresh, cooled, or frozen) is good for 60 minutes.

BOTTLES/SIPPY CUPS:

We use a bottle warmer to warm all bottles and baby food brought from home. We do not use a microwave for bottles. We cannot reuse breast milk or formula past one hour following warming. We do not refill or sanitize bottles, sippy cups, or food containers. Empty bottles, sippy cups, and food containers are rinsed and put back into the child's bag for washing and sanitizing at home.

BABY FOOD/FORMULA:

Formula, baby food, and snacks can remain in the student's cubby. Parents should check the student's cubby each evening to see if more supplies are necessary. Food which needs to be pureed must be pureed at home and brought to school ready to eat. All infant formulas and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified. We are not allowed to serve any FDA-exempt infant formulas. Formula must be in the original container.

SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES:

Infants (children from birth to 12 months of age) nap at different times throughout the day. Some infants take several "cat naps" during the day, while others take long naps two or more times per day. We allow babies to sleep whenever they are sleepy. Bumper pads, blankets, pillows, sleep positioning devices, or stuffed animals are not allowed in our cribs. Please bring a sleep sack or warm pajamas for your infant to sleep in. Swaddles or clothes with restraints are not permitted. Infants must be placed on their backs to sleep until they can roll from tummy to back and from back to tummy without assistance. Infants may use a pacifier to sleep, but it must not have a stuffed animal attached. Infants may not sleep in a swing or bouncy chair. If they fall asleep in a swing or bouncy chair, we will move them to a crib. Becker will provide all sheets for the cribs to ensure they are tight-fitting and clean. According to Texas Childcare Licensing, any sleep exception must be accompanied by a note from a physician.

CAR SEAT/STORAGE:

Hallway storage is available for parents to store infant car seats during the day.

INFANT DAILY REPORTS:

Updates on your infant are available on Brightwheel and include important information about your baby's day. The report will cover key details such as feeding times and amounts, nap time and duration, diaper changes, photos, and activities. We also include observations about your infant's mood or behavior that are not typical for them. This report helps keep you informed about your child's routine and well-being while at school.

INFANT CURRICULUM:

Our Reggio Emilia approach curriculum in an infant classroom focuses on creating a rich, nurturing, and safe environment where infants are seen as curious, capable learners from birth and can work on developing their cognitive, emotional, and physical skills. The approach emphasizes the importance of fostering a strong sense of independence, communication, and exploration through hands-on, sensory-rich experiences.

In a Reggio inspired infant classroom, the environment is carefully designed to be an "educator" itself. It is filled with open-ended materials that encourage exploration, such as soft textures, natural objects, mirrors, and safe, stimulating toys. The classroom is structured to invite curiosity and self-directed learning, allowing infants to explore and interact with the world at their own pace and develop a strong sense of self-esteem.

Teachers act as **observers** and **guides**, attuned to the individual needs and interests of each child. Rather than directing activities, they support infants' natural curiosity and follow their lead. In the Reggio approach, **relationships** are at the heart of learning. Infants are encouraged to form strong connections with their caregivers and peers, promoting social and emotional development. Teachers engage in open, respectful communication, talking to infants in a way that encourages language development and emotional expression, even if the child is not yet speaking.

Collaboration is another key element. In the infant classroom, this can look like infants engaging in joint activities like group play, where they learn to share space and interact with others. Although infants may not yet communicate with words, they begin to understand social cues and form early friendships through shared experiences. Ultimately, the Reggio approach in an infant classroom emphasizes that learning is a **social, emotional, and sensory experience.** Infants are not just passive recipients of information; they are active participants in their learning, discovering the world around them through their senses and interactions with the people and materials in their environment.

Each day we spend time indoors and outdoors (weather permitting). Our students enjoy spending time on our playground, going on stroller rides, and exploring nature. Infants are all unique and have their own patterns for play, feeding, and sleeping. We use an infant's unique patterns as our guide to introduce daily activities that help prepare the infant for life.

Young Toddler Class: (1 year by September 1st)

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOUR CHILD

- A backpack
- Two clean cups with milk
- One-two clean cups for water
- Two Pacifiers (if needed)
- Three extra sets of clean clothes (refill as needed)
- An extra snack
- Healthy Lunch (if not signed up for meal plan)
- Nap Roll (washed at home each week)
- Diapers (refill as needed)
- Diaper cream (refill as needed)
- Wipes (refill as needed)

WHAT TO KEEP IN THE CLASSROOM

- A sweater or jacket
- A sun hat or winter hat
- Outdoor/playground shoes
- Indoor shoes/thick grippy socks
- Rain jacket
- Several family photos to hang in the classroom

**Ensure that all items are labeled with your child's first name and last initial.

WATER BOTTLES/SIPPY CUPS:

At around 12 months of age, children should transition from baby bottles to water and milk cups, preferably with a straw (not a spout). This helps support their developing motor skills and promotes healthier oral habits. Using a cup encourages them to drink more independently, prepares them for future milestones, and helps with early speech/language development. It's an important step in their growth and development.

EXTRA SNACK FROM HOME:

Parents are encouraged to bring a small extra snack for their toddlers, as children at this age often become more selective about what they eat. Their appetites can be unpredictable, and they may refuse meals or snacks provided at school. Having a backup snack ensures that toddlers have something familiar and appealing to keep them satisfied, helping to avoid hunger-induced anger and ensuring a smoother school day.

TOILET TRAINING:

There is no perfect age to start toilet training, but most children are ready between 24 and 36 months of age. At Becker, we want toilet training to be a collaboration between the parent, teacher, and child. The first step to successfully toilet training your child is to relax and look for

signs of readiness. Your child must show most of the signs of readiness before toilet training will be successful at school and at home.

NAPTIME PROCEDURES:

Naptime remains flexible for toddlers. Our goal is that each child naps from 12:30 PM to 2:15 PM each day. If they need longer, we will continue to let them nap. We help the students learn self-soothing techniques by introducing a sleep routine in the classroom and by helping students feel safe and comfortable in the classroom.

Toddlers are expected to rest quietly during naptime. After 45 minutes, children who do not sleep will be given quiet activities for the remainder of naptime.

INDEPENDENT FEEDING:

Around 12 months of age, children in our school transition from highchairs to sitting at low tables and chairs. This shift promotes greater independence, encourages social interaction, and improves motor skills.

YOUNG TODDLER DAILY REPORTS:

Reports and updates on your child will be available daily on Brightwheel. The report will cover key details such as feeding times and amounts, nap times and duration, diaper changes, photos, and activities. We also include observations about your child's mood or behaviors. This report helps keep you informed about your child's routine and well-being while at school.

YOUNG TODDLER CURRICULUM:

The Reggio Emilia approach curriculum in a toddler classroom is centered around the belief that toddlers are active and capable learners who construct their own understanding of the world through exploration, communication, and relationships. We value the child's natural curiosity, creativity, and problem-solving abilities, encouraging them to take an active role in their learning journey.

In our Reggio Emilia approach-inspired toddler classrooms, the **environment** plays a central role. It is carefully designed to be a "third teacher," meaning that we offer a variety of materials that promote learning and development. The environment is organized to encourage curiosity, independence, and hands-on exploration. For toddlers, this may include open-end materials such as blocks, art supplies, sensory objects, natural elements, and real-world objects that invite experimentation and imaginative play.

Teachers in our toddler classrooms are seen as co-learners and facilitators. Rather than directing activities, teachers observe and listen to the toddlers closely, understanding their interests, questions, and ideas. They offer gentle guidance and support, setting up learning experiences

that build on the child's natural interests. For example, if a toddler shows an interest in stacking objects, the teacher might introduce more complex materials or suggest activities that encourage problem-solving, such as puzzles or simple building projects. Teachers also encourage communication and collaboration, helping toddlers express their thoughts and feelings through words, gestures, and actions.

Language development is a key focus in the toddler years. Our teachers place great emphasis on rich, responsive communication. We engage toddlers in conversation, ask open-ended questions, and respond to their verbal and nonverbal cues. Language is seen not only as a way to communicate but also as a tool for thinking and problem solving. In addition to spoken language, toddlers are encouraged to express themselves through other ways, such as drawing, music, dance, or movement.

Our curriculum is emergent, meaning that it evolves based on the interests and ideas of the children. Teachers plan activities based on what the toddlers are curious about or learning in the moment, which makes learning more meaningful and engaging. For example, if several toddlers express interest in animals, the teacher might create activities related to animal sounds, books about animals, or nature walks to observe animals in their environment.

Please understand that one of our toddlers' favorite activities is to get messy and explore with their whole bodies. Sensory development is a key component for little growing bodies; it helps with emotional regulation, fine and gross motor skills, coordination, problem solving, sorting, and also builds nerve connections that allow for complex thinking skills. Our early preschoolers participate in one to two hours of sensory play per day. **Please make sure your early toddler is dressed and ready for a messy day every day.**

Two's (2 years by September 1st)

**Ensure that all items are labeled with your child's first name and last initial.

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOUR CHILD

- A backpack
- One-two clean cups for water
- Three extra sets of clean clothes (refill as needed)
- An extra snack
- Healthy Lunch (if not signed up for meal plan)
- Nap Roll (washed at home each week)
- Pull-ups if needed (refill as needed)
- Diapers (refill as needed)
- Wipes (refill as needed)
- Diaper cream if needed (refill as needed)

WHAT TO KEEP IN THE CLASSROOM

- A sweater or jacket
- A sun hat or winter hat
- Outdoor/playground shoes
- Rain jacket
- Several family photos to hang in the classroom

TOILET TRAINING:

There is no perfect age to start toilet training, but most children are ready between 24 and 36 months of age. At Becker, we want toilet training to be a collaboration between the parent, teacher, and child. The first step to successfully toilet training your child is to relax and look for signs of readiness. Your child must show most of the signs of readiness before toilet training is successful at school and at home.

EXTRA SNACK FROM HOME:

Parents are encouraged to bring a small extra snack for their toddlers, as children at this age often become more selective about what they eat. Their appetites can be unpredictable, and they may refuse meals or snacks provided at school. Having a backup snack ensures that toddlers have something familiar and appealing to keep them satisfied, helping to avoid hunger-induced anger and ensuring a smoother school day. **Bottles are not permitted unless medically necessary.**

NAPTIME PROCEDURES:

Naptime remains flexible for toddlers. Our goal is that each child naps from 12:30 PM to 2:15 PM each day. We help the students learn self-soothing techniques by introducing a sleep routine in the classroom and by helping students feel safe and comfortable in the classroom.

Children are expected to rest quietly during naptime. After 45 minutes, children who do not sleep will be given quiet activities for the remainder of their naptime.

TWO'S CURRICULUM:

The Reggio Emilia inspired approach to curriculum in a preschool classroom is centered around the belief that toddlers are active and capable learners who construct their own understanding of the world through exploration, communication, and relationships. We value the child's natural curiosity, creativity, and problem-solving abilities, encouraging them to take an active role in their learning journey.

Our classroom is carefully designed to support exploration and learning. For preschoolers, this means creating an environment filled with materials and experiences that are open-needed and sensory-rich. The space is organized in a way that encourages children to explore independently, while also providing areas for group interactions. For example, there may be spaces for quiet activities (such as reading or drawing), areas for sensory play (like sand or water), and open spaces where children can engage in group play or movement activities.

Play is central to learning, as it allows children to develop social, emotional, and cognitive skills. Teachers act as guides, observing and supporting children's natural curiosity and interests, while promoting communication and problem-solving. Teachers in the Reggio Emilia approach classroom do not direct play but instead create opportunities for play that encourage curiosity and creativity. Whether it's building with blocks, exploring sensory materials, or engaging in pretend play, toddlers learn through these experiences, developing important cognitive, moto, and social skills.

At two years old, children are starting to develop social skills and an understanding of emotions. In the classroom, teachers help children navigate these early social experiences by promoting play, taking turns, and resolving conflict. Teachers also model and encourage emotional expression, helping children identify and name their feelings. For example, if a child is upset, the teacher might acknowledge their emotions by saying, "I see you're feeling sad because you wanted to play with a toy," and guide the child toward a solution or alternative activity. Through these interactions, toddlers learn about empathy, self-regulation, and how to relate to others.

Our approach provides a safe and stimulating environment where children are empowered to explore, ask questions, and build a foundation for lifelong learning.

Two-year-olds are still developing their language skills, and in a Reggio Emilia approach-inspired two-year-old classroom, teachers actively support this process through rich, respectful communication. Teachers engage in conversations with children, asking open-ended questions, modeling new vocabulary, and encouraging them to express themselves in words, gestures, or other forms of communication.

In our Reggio Emilia approach-inspired two-year-old classrooms, the **environment** plays a central role. It is carefully designed to be a "third teacher," meaning that we offer a variety of materials that promote learning and development. The environment is organized to encourage curiosity, independence, and hands-on exploration. This may include open-end materials such as blocks, art supplies, sensory objects, natural elements, and real-world objects that invite experimentation and imaginative play.

Please understand that one of our early preschoolers' favorite activities is to get messy and explore with their whole bodies. Sensory development is a key component for little growing bodies; it helps with emotional regulation, fine and gross motor skills, coordination, problem solving, sorting, and also builds nerve connections that allow for complex thinking skills. Our early preschoolers participate in one to two hours of sensory play per day. **Please make sure your early preschooler is dressed and ready for a messy day every day.**

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOUR CHILD

- A backpack
- One-two clean cups for water
- An extra snack
- Healthy Lunch (if not signed up for meal plan)
- Nap Roll (washed at home each week)

WHAT TO KEEP IN THE CLASSROOM

- A sweater or jacket
- A sun hat or winter hat
- Rain jacket
- Several family photos to hang in the classroom
- Two extra sets of clean clothes (refill as needed)

**Ensure that all items are labeled with your child's first name and last initial.

3s & Pre-K (3 or 4 years by September 1st)

NAP/REST PERIOD:

Our 3s & Pre-K-age students are offered a rest period each day for 30 to 60 minutes (depending on the needs of the classroom). Students are not required to sleep, but are expected to read books, draw, or complete puzzles quietly.

3s & Pre-K CURRICULUM:

In a **3s/Pre-K Reggio Emilia approach classroom,** the curriculum is designed to build on the natural curiosity and emerging competencies of young children, emphasizing exploration, collaboration, and self-expression. This child-centered approach sees children as active participants in their learning process, with teachers acting as co-learners and facilitators. Rather than following a rigid curriculum, the learning experiences are driven by the children's interests, ideas, and questions, which evolve over time through observation and interaction. Our goal in our classrooms is to meet each child where they are and work as a team (teachers, parents, and environment) to expand each child's knowledge and understanding.

Our school strongly believes in **project-based and emergent learning,** where children engage in long-term investigations or projects. These projects often evolve over several weeks and may involve research, hands-on building, group discussions, and creative expression. For example, a group of kindergarteners might design and build a model of a town, drawing on their knowledge of buildings, community roles, and social structures. Throughout the project, children engage in collaborative problem-solving, refining their ideas, asking questions, and finding solutions as a

group. This hands-on, collaborative approach helps children develop social skills, communication abilities, and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

In addition to academic learning, **social and emotional development** is a major focus of the Reggio Emilia approach. Teachers encourage cooperative learning, helping children work together, share ideas, and resolve conflicts. By creating opportunities for children to collaborate on projects and group activities, the curriculum promotes social interaction, empathy, and emotional regulation. Teachers support children in articulating their thoughts and feelings, fostering self-awareness and respect for others. Conflict resolution, negotiation, and teamwork are integral parts of the learning experience.

At this point in the child's development, we carefully begin to introduce core subjects with a more concentrated curriculum. We utilize **Heggarty** and **Learning Without Tears** for phonics, pre-reading, reading, handwriting, and creative writing skills. We continue to teach all subjects through child-led and project-based learning.

Documentation plays a vital role in both tracking and reflecting on our students' learning journey. Teachers observe and document children's work, conversations, and actions through photographs, videos, and written notes. This documentation is not only a record of progress but also serves as a tool for reflection and discussion. It helps children understand their own learning process and allows them to revisit ideas, refining them over time. Teachers use documentation to identify patterns in children's thinking and to plan future experiences that build on their interests and questions. Additionally, documentation is shared with families, fostering a strong connection between home and school and giving parents insight into their child's learning journey. The teacher is seen as an active participant in the learning process, working alongside the children as they engage in discovery and problem-solving.

Our curriculum meets and exceeds all Texas standards and expectations.

Lower Elementary Classes (5- 7 years by September 1st)

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOUR CHILD

- A backpack
- A clean cup for water
- An extra snack
- Healthy Lunch (if not signed up for meal plan)

WHAT TO KEEP IN THE CLASSROOM

- A sweater or jacket
- A sun hat or winter hat
- Rain jacket
- Rain boots (to work in the garden)
- Several family photos to hang in the classroom
- one extra sets of clean clothes (refill as needed)

**Ensure that all items are labeled with your child's first name and last

LOWER ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM:

The majority of our day is spent focused on project-based learning, which provides opportunities to explore all learning domains. We typically spend about two hours of our day focused on a more structured learning curriculum, including the use of **Heggarty for phonics and Learning Without Tears for handwriting and creative writing skills, Little Thinkers for Science, and Tunstall for math.** Our small class sizes and low teacher-to-student ratio allow for much more attention given to students than in a traditional classroom. This allows us to accomplish a great deal in a shorter time frame than traditional schooling. Also, being a year-round program, we can pace ourselves and focus on creating a love for learning.

In lower elementary classrooms, our curriculum and philosophy continue to emphasize the belief that children are active, competent learners who build knowledge through exploration, collaboration, and hands-on experiences. Our approach nurtures curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking, while allowing students to take more ownership of their learning as they grow and develop. At this stage, the Reggio Emilia approach curriculum deepens the child's ability to engage with complex ideas, refine problem-solving skills, and collaborate with peers.

Our school strongly believes in **project-based and emergent learning,** where children engage in long-term investigations or projects. These projects often evolve over several weeks and may involve research, hands-on building, group discussions, and creative expression. For example, a group of kindergarteners might design and build a model of a town, drawing on their knowledge of buildings, community roles, and social structures. Throughout the project, children engage in

collaborative problem-solving, refining their ideas, asking questions, and finding solutions as a group. This hands-on, collaborative approach helps children develop social skills, communication abilities, and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

In addition to academic learning, **social and emotional development** is a major focus of the Reggio Emilia approach. Teachers encourage cooperative learning, helping children work together, share ideas, and resolve conflicts. By creating opportunities for children to collaborate on projects and group activities, the curriculum promotes social interaction, empathy, and emotional regulation. Teachers support children in articulating their thoughts and feelings, fostering self-awareness and respect for others. Conflict resolution, negotiation, and teamwork are integral parts of the learning experience.

Documentation plays a vital role in both tracking and reflecting on our students' learning journey. Teachers observe and document children's work, conversations, and actions through photographs, videos, and written notes. This documentation is not only record of progress but also serves as a tool for reflection and discussion. It helps children understand their own learning process and allows them to revisit ideas, refining them over time. Teachers use documentation to identify patterns in children's thinking and to plan future experiences that build on their interest and questions. Additionally, documentation is shared with families, fostering a strong connection between home and school and giving parents insight into their child's learning journey. The teacher is seen as an active participant in the learning process, working alongside the children as they engage in discovery and problem-solving.

Our curriculum meets and exceeds all Texas standards and expectations.