

West Orange Public Schools
Early Childhood Program

Preschool Handbook

2024-2025



Welcome
TO PRESCHOOL

West Orange

 Early Childhood Learning Center

242 Main Street, West Orange, NJ
973-567-3435

Table of Contents

Welcome!	Page 2
Program Goals and Mission	2
School Procedures	2-6
★ School Hours/ Closing	2
★ District Calendar	3
★ Drop Off and Release	3
★ Before and After Care	4
★ Visitors and Volunteers	4
★ Attendance	4
★ Lateness	4
★ Illness Policy	4
★ Personal Care Items	5
★ Toilet Training	5
★ Discipline	5-6
Curriculum Overview	6-7
★ HighScope Curriculum	6
★ Daily Schedule	6-7
Student Screening and Assessment	7
★ Early Screening Inventory- Third Edition	7
★ COR Advantage and Kaymbu	7
Health and Wellness	7-8
★ Medication Administration	7-8
★ Special Occasions	8
Family Engagement	8
Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)	9
Early Childhood Staff Directory	10
Additional District Policies and Forms	11-12
★ Emergency Drills	11
★ Field Trips	11
★ Emergency Contact Form	12

Welcome

Welcome to the West Orange Public Schools Early Childhood Program! We are so excited to welcome you to our preschool community at the West Orange Early Childhood Learning Center. We look forward to, as a school family, serving you and your child, as you enter the journey of early childhood learning. Our District is committed to partnering with our families to ensure the well-rounded success of your child. As partners, we welcome your thoughts, considerations and feedback. If at any time you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the Supervisor of Early Childhood at (973)567-3435 ext. 26.

Program Mission and Goal

Our early childhood program provides students with an opportunity to develop the skills they need to be successful in Kindergarten by participating in a variety of developmentally appropriate activities that are fully integrated throughout the school day and that facilitate development in all eight domains: cognitive, physical and health, language and literacy, creative arts, mathematics, science, social student and social and emotional .

The goal of the program is to provide families of the West Orange community an opportunity to participate in a high quality preschool program free of charge that recognizes and respects the religious and cultural diversity of all families as well as the importance of family engagement.

School Procedures

The following procedures are applicable for the district preschool classrooms at the West Orange Early Childhood Learning Center (West Orange ECLC) only.

School Hours/ Closing

The school day will begin promptly at 8:45am and will conclude at 3:23pm. The early childhood program will follow the West Orange School District Calendar (<https://www.woboe.org/Page/8667>), inclement weather closings and delayed opening schedule.

September 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4#	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

West Orange Public Schools Calendar 2024-2025

September 3 First Day for Staff
 September 4 First Day of School for Students
 June 18 Last Day of School for Students
 June 19 WOHS Graduation

Holidays - West Orange Schools Closed

September 2, 2024 Labor Day
 October 3 & 4 Rosh Hashanah
 October 14 Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day
 November 5 Election Day
 November 7 & 8 NJEA Conference
 November 28 & 29 Thanksgiving Break
 December 23-31 Winter Recess
 January 1, 2025 New Year's Day
 January 20 Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.
 February 17 President's Day
 April 14-18 Spring Break
 May 26 Memorial Day

Professional Development for Staff
 9/3, 10/14 Full Day PD
 2/3, 3/3, 5/5, 6/3 Afternoon PD

Key	
Symbol	Meaning
	School Holiday or Vacation Period: Sept 2; Oct 3 & 4, 14; Nov 5, 7, 8, 28 & 29; Dec 23 - 31; Jan 1, 20; Feb 17; April 14-18; May 26
	All Students Early Dismissal: Nov 1, 27; Dec. 20; Feb 3, 14; March 3, 31; April 11; May 5, 23; June 3, 16, 17, 18
	Full-Day Staff Only: Sept 3, Oct 14
**	Afternoon PD for Staff: 2/3, 3/3, 5/5, 6/3
	Back to School Nights Early Dismissal School Specific: Elementary 9/17 Liberty MS 9/19 Edison 9/18 Roosevelt MS 9/19 BMELC & WOELC 9/19 WOHS 9/26
	Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences: Nov 19, 20, 21, 2024 April 8, 9, 10, 2025 (Elementary ONLY Early Dismissal)
*	Edison Parent/Teacher Conferences: Dec. 3, 4, & 5 (Edison ONLY Early Dismissal)
#	First Day of School for Students: Sept 4
##	Last Day of School for Students: June 18
+	WOHS Graduation Date: June 19

Days Attended Per Month

Sep - 19	Feb - 19
Oct - 20	Mar - 21
Nov - 16	Apr - 17
Dec - 15	May - 21
Jan - 21	Jun - 13

Total # of Days: 182

Two (2) days are built into the calendar for emergency closings. Make up dates beyond the two days will be used in the following order: April 14, April 15.
 Unused days for emergency closing days - "give back" days will be scheduled in the following order: March 31, May 23.
 School Closings are posted on social media and the district website at <http://www.woboe.org>

District - Wide Daily Schedules

School
 Pre School - Grade 5
 Middle Schools
 High School

Regular Day
 08:45 - 03:23
 08:10 - 02:53
 07:30 - 02:15

Delayed Opening
 10:15 - 03:23
 09:40 - 02:53
 09:00 - 02:15

Early Dismissal
 08:45 - 01:15
 08:10 - 12:30
 07:30 - 12:00

Board Approved: 1/22/2024 - Revised: 6/6/2024

February 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
3-	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

March 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
3-	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

April 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

May 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5-	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

June 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3-	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18=	19+	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

The following holidays are officially recognized when school is not in session:
 Yom Kippur 10/12; Juneteenth 6/20

Drop Off and Release of Students

We all will play an active role in ensuring your child is in a safe and supportive learning environment. It is your obligation to bring your child to school on time and secure someone to pick him/ her up at the end of the school day. Pick up and drop off will occur at the gymnasium, entering through the front door. Students should be dropped off between 8:35am - 8:40am and picked up between 3:00pm - 3:20pm.

Guardians must certify that all contact information is up to date. Only people listed on the Emergency Contact Form will be allowed to pick up your child with the appropriate identification. This form should be updated as needed. In any special circumstance, please contact your child's teacher or Social Worker.

Visitors and Volunteers

Visitors and volunteers should speak to the classroom teacher and Community, Parent Involvement Specialist regarding opportunities for engagement. As our youngest learners embark on their educational journey, it is important to remember that they will need the space to work with their teachers and process this transition. There will be opportunities for families to participate in engaging activities throughout the school year, including volunteering. Additional information on the [Visitors Policy](#) can be found on the District's website.

Before and After Care

Before and after care options are available for families that need the service. In the morning, before care is offered between the hours of 7:30am and 8:45am. After care is available from 3:15pm to 5:00pm. For information on child care subsidies, please contact Programs for Parents, Inc. at 973-297-1114 or apply directly through their [webpage](#) at programforparents.org. Private pay for before and after care are also available and can be discussed with the West Orange Community House at 973-736-1282 ext. 20.

Attendance

Daily attendance is essential in developing a regular routine. It also sets a precedent for school attendance in the future. Students should arrive on time daily to participate in all scheduled activities for the day. Students that are tardy disrupt the day and miss out on important educational activities. Ongoing communication is essential to address these concerns and identify causes for absences. Habitual occurrences will be addressed and an Attendance Improvement Plan will be established based upon your individual needs.

Lateness

The school day will begin promptly at 8:45am. It is important that students are on time for the program, as each component of the day develops skills students need to be successful in life. Habitual lateness will impact student achievement and therefore, an Attendance Improvement Plan will be created with you to assist you in supporting the academic success of your child.

Illness Policy

If your child is experiencing any of the following, it is best he/she remains at home until the symptoms subside to be considerate of the health of our school community.

- If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, has had vomiting or diarrhea during the previous 24 hour period, please do not send him/ her to school.
- If your child has a temperature at school or vomits during school, he/ she must be picked up immediately. The child must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- If your child is given an antibiotic he/she should complete a full 24 hours of medication before returning to school.
- All viruses (flu, stomach viruses and viral sore throats) are contagious and the child should stay home until he/she is fever free and without significant symptoms.
- If your child is out for 3 or more days, a doctor's note is required for re-admittance.

Personal Care Items

Every student should maintain the following items in the school on a daily basis for use:

2 Pairs of change of clothes (weather appropriate)

- Shirt
- Pants or skirt
- Pair of underwear
- Shoes
- Socks

2 Sets of Sheets

- Crib sheet
- Blanket

It is important to label all items with your child's name, so teachers can be sure to identify to whom which items belong. When a student soils their clothes, the backup items will be used and soiled clothes sent home in a bag. Another set of clean clothes should be returned the next day.

Additional items that will support your classroom community are listed below. If you can provide any of these items for student use, it would be greatly appreciated:

- Hand sanitizer
- Tissues
- Extra sheet set
- Toothbrush/ Toothpaste

Toilet Training

All preschool students should be in the process of potty training or potty trained. All classroom staff will work with families to ensure students are vocal and identify their personal needs pertaining to self care. Bathroom visits are scheduled normally; however, students that are still

mastering toileting should be identified to the teacher early so the process can be reinforced throughout the day. Students that are still mastering this skill will need the following:

- 5 Pull Ups
- Wipes

Discipline

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is the discipline model that will be utilized in our early childhood program. This model provides a framework of evidence-based practices to promote the social-emotional competence of all children, address the social-emotional and behavioral needs of children who are at-risk, and develop supports for children with persistent social, emotional or behavioral concerns.

Teachers will work with the family to implement strategies that should be utilized in the classroom and home to support student development. If additional support is needed, the classroom teacher will speak with the Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist to coordinate tiered support strategies tailored to the individual child.

Curriculum Overview

HighScope

The HighScope Preschool Curriculum allows children to learn through play by participating in daily exploration activities coordinated by the teacher in an intentional learning environment tailored to developing their skills.

Daily Schedule Components

In accordance with HighScope, each classroom's daily schedule consists of the following components that align to NJ Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines, Preschool Classroom Teacher Guidelines and Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations that define a high quality education.

- **Plan-Do-Review Sequence** (Planning Time, Work Time, Recall Time) — This three-part sequence is unique to the HighScope Curriculum. It includes a 10- to 15-minute period during which children plan what they want to do during work time (the area to visit, materials to use, and friends to play with); a 60-minute work time for children to carry out their plans (or shift to new activities that interest them); and another 10- to 15-minute period for reviewing and recalling with an adult and other children what they've done and learned.
- **Small Group Time** — During this time, a small group of children meet with an adult to experiment with materials, try out new skills, and solve problems. Adults develop a small-group activity based on children's interests and particular skills, materials, or content areas that suit children's developmental learning needs. Though the adult plans the activity

and sets it in motion, children make choices about how to use the materials and freely communicate their ideas.

- Large Group Time — Large-group time builds a sense of community. Up to 15 children and two adults come together for movement and music activities, interactive storytelling, and other shared experiences. Children have many opportunities to make choices and play the role of leader.
- Outside Time — Children and adults spend at least 30 minutes outside every day, enjoying vigorous and often noisy play in the fresh air. During inclement weather, students will be able to do these activities in the gym area.
- Transition Times — Transitions are the minutes between other blocks of the day, as well as arrival and departure times. Teachers plan meaningful learning experiences for these times, which keeps children engaged and minimizes disruption.
- Eating and Resting Times — Meals and snacks allow children to enjoy eating healthy food in a supportive social setting. Rest is for napping or quiet, solitary activities. Since both activities happen at home as well as at school, adults in HighScope programs try to respect family customs at these times as much as possible.

Student Screening and Assessment

Early Screening Inventory- Third Edition

The Early Screening Inventory- Third Edition (ESI-3) is a brief assessment designed to identify children who might be at risk for a possible learning problem or delay. This assessment is conducted once during the school year. Parents are provided information on the assessment, including the opportunity to complete a parent survey regarding their child's development and will receive the results of the assessment. The assessment, with additional evidence from the parent and teacher will determine if additional evaluation or interventions are needed to support successful participation in the program.

COR Advantage and Kaymbu

COR Advantage is the online student assessment system that is aligned with HighScope Preschool curriculum. Teachers will tailor lessons to and conduct observations to move all students towards meeting or exceeding developmental standards. Teachers will provide student progress reports during quarterly Parent/ Teacher Conferences.

Kaymbu, in conjunction with COR Advantage will allow for ongoing family engagement and interaction throughout the school year. Families will be able to observe student learning and teachers will be able to participate in professional development opportunities that support students reaching their goals.

Health and Wellness

The Early Childhood Program of West Orange adheres to USDA Dietary Guidelines and is “nut free”. All meals, which include breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are provided by the school district. All allergies need to be reported to the school so appropriate alternative meals can be provided to ensure students receive a balanced meal for each meal time.

Medication Administration

Students that require medicine to be administered at any point in time, including asthma pumps and/ or nebulizers, must have appropriate documentation from the doctors office. All prescription medication must be clearly labeled with the students name and the name of the doctor that prescribed it. Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet inside the classroom with the appropriate documentation to ensure administration is accurately followed.

Special Occasions

On special occasions, such as birthdays or cultural celebrations, the school does not allow parents to bring food and/ or snacks, as allergy concerns will be taken into consideration and student wellness is of the utmost importance. Creative alternatives, such as games and activities, are permitted in order that the students can celebrate special occasions as a preschool community.

Family Engagement

Families play a very important part in young children’s learning. The staff at West Orange ECLC believe in building supportive partnerships with our families to achieve our shared goals for children. When families and schools work together, early childhood programs can give children a great foundation for lifelong success.

To support the partnership between the school and your family, our Community, Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) is available to families to provide advocacy services, help obtain available community services, and respond to your family’s individual needs. The primary role of the CPIS will be to assist parents in learning about child development, nutrition, providing a safe environment and how to implement HighScope Curriculum practices at home. Throughout the year, family workshops based on identified needs and topics revealed on parent surveys will also be provided.

The NJDOE Early Childhood Education website has links for new and fun ideas about helping your children learn and grow <https://www.nj.gov/education/ece/links/>.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)

The West Orange Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a student. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe and disciplined environment. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that may involve a real or perceived power imbalance. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Any concerns regarding harassment, intimidation or bullying should be immediately reported to the Supervisor of Early Childhood Education / Anti-Bullying Specialist.

Early Childhood Learning Center Staff Directory

Staff Member	Contact / Location
Kalisha Dorlean Director of Early Childhood	973-567-3435 ext. 36510 kdorlean@westorangeschools.org
Denise Lambert Administrative Assistant	973-567-3435 ext. 35601 dlambert@westorangeschools.org
Jessica Preziosi- Peer Preschool Instructional Coach	973-567-3435 jpreziosipeer@westorangeschools.org
Mara Mamroud Preschool Intervention & Referral Specialist	973-567-3435 mmamroud@westorangeschools.org
<u>Room 3B</u> Jillian Sarria, Teacher Tricia Castellano, Teacher Assistant	973-736-1282 ext. 30 jsarria@westorangeschools.org tcastellano@westorangeschools.org
<u>Room 5</u> Carolyn Narepecha, Teacher Freda Acquah, Teacher Assistant	973-736-1282 ext. 21 cnarepecha@westorangeschools.org facquah@westorangeschools.org
<u>Room 10</u> Amanda Dempsey, Teacher Elvisa Gjemeni, Teacher Assistant	973-736-1282 ext. 14 adempsey@westorangeschools.org egjemeni@westorangeschools.org
<u>Room 11</u> Viviana Cardona, Teacher Donalee Cortado, Teacher Assistant	973-736-1282 ext. 16 mtorres@westorangeschools.org dcortado@westorangeschools.org

West Orange Public Schools Contact Directory

Staff Member	Contact / Location
Hayden Moore Superintendent of Schools	973-669-5400, ext. 20512 hmoore@westorangeschools.org
Eveny de Mendez Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction	973-669-5400 ext. 20514 edemendez@westorangeschools.org

Additional District Policies and Forms

Emergency Drills

Student safety is a major priority. Monthly drills will occur to ensure students and staff are prepared for emergency situations. The emergency drills listed below provide appropriate responses to various occurrences, including those not listed. Depending on the type of emergency, one of the following will be utilized:

- Immediate Evacuation- Students are evacuated to a safe area outside of the building or in the building next door to the school facility.
- Shelter in Place- Sudden occurrence, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- Evacuation- Total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is an identified danger in the area. In this case, children will be taken to the designated relocation facility at 252 Main Street, West Orange, New Jersey.
- Modified Operation- May include cancellation/ postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of winter storms or facility maintenance that may make it unsafe for children.

Field Trips

Preschool programs can be enriched through the inclusion of carefully planned field trips. First hand experience can provide children with information and a level of understanding that adds elements of realism to their play, and enriches their overall learning.

Your child, throughout the year, will be invited to participate in various field trips. To attend, parents / guardians will need to sign a permission slip and return it to the classroom teachers. Field trips will be free of charge, however, you should plan to send a snack for your child. Opportunities to chaperone will also be available so you can experience these learning experiences with your child. Below is a sample list of the types of places your child's class may go.

- Small Local Airport/ Train Station
- Animal Shelter/Pet Shop
- Bagel Shop/Bakery
- Children's theater production
- Children's museum
- Doctor's/Veterinarian's Office
- Farm
- Florist/Garden Shop
- Fruit/Vegetable Store/Grocery Store
- Hospital
- Library
- Local Restaurant/Pizzeria/Cafeteria
- Post Office
- School
- Zoo

Emergency Contact Form

Date: _____

Student First and Last Name: _____

Birthdate: _____ Classroom: _____

Parent/ Guardian Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Contact Address: _____

Parent/ Guardian Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Contact Address: _____

Additional Emergency Contacts

First and Last Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

First and Last Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

First and Last Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

First and Last Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

First and Last Name: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____