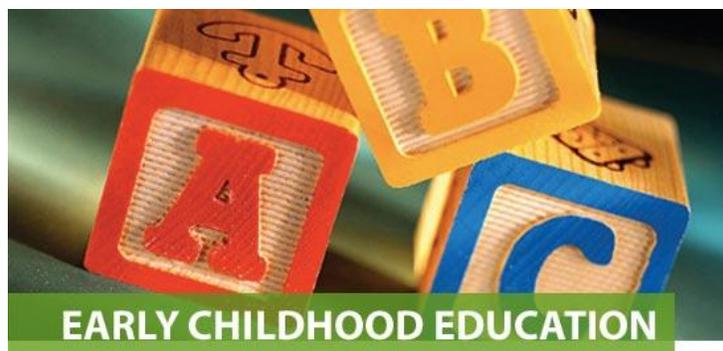


Welcome to Barnum Early Childhood Programs



Early Childhood Family Education
Beginnergarten
Leaps & Bounds
Little Steps

Parent Handbook 2019-2020

Community Education Coordinator- Roxy Olsen-Hurst
Coordinator- Alisha Bigelow
Billing- Courtney Sieckert

Early Childhood Teachers –Kaitlin Warpula and Alisha Bigelow
Community Expert- Kelly Copenhaver
Program Assistants – Sarah Vargo and Alyssa Entner

ECFE/School Readiness, Barnum Elementary School
3813 North Street
Barnum, MN 55707
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BARNUM EARLY CHILDHOOD MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Early Childhood Education in Barnum is to strengthen families through education, support and provide the best possible environment for the healthy growth and development of their children.

Barnum School Readiness

A 4-Star Parent Aware Rated Preschool Program that will provide the following for your young child:

- Kindergarten preparedness
- Social and emotional development
- Practice making good choices
- Opportunities to learn to care for self and others
- Promotion of language and cognitive skills
- Nurturing curiosity
- Activities to boost pre-math and literacy skills
- Activities to help develop gross and fine motor skills.

Classes Available

Little Steps – 3 year old class

Leaps and Bounds – 4 year old classes

Beginnergarten – 4 and 5 year old class

ECFE – Children ages 12 months to kindergarten

FFNE – Children ages 12 months to kindergarten

Baby Class – Prenatal – 12 months

Please call the Early Childhood Office if you have questions or to register (389-3001).

Kindergarten Transition Team

The Barnum Kindergarten Transition Team offers a variety of learning activities for families with children who will be entering kindergarten the following year. This team, composed of early childhood and kindergarten staff, the elementary principal, along with area childcare and Head Start professionals, plan and provide "Family Nights" throughout the school year. Focused on specific areas of learning and development. They also offer a summer kinder-camp for children entering kindergarten in the fall. Look for more information in the "Public Reporter", on the Barnum School District web-site, or ask any of the early childhood staff for details.

School Readiness Parent Involvement

As the year begins we hope to form a partnership with you to help enhance your child's education. We depend on your involvement for a successful year.

Ways to get involved:

- Talk to your child about their day at school

- Look over your child's work that is sent home

- Read daily with your child

- If possible, volunteer to help in the classroom and/or be part of the Early Childhood Advisory Board

Knowing it is in your child's best interest that we work together, please contact the Program Coordinator if you have any questions, comments or wish to visit our class. Please contact Alisha @ 218-389-3001 or e-mail her at abigleow@isd91.org

Early Childhood Education!

Children begin learning from the moment of birth! 90% of a child's brain is developed by age 5 and research shows that experiences prior to Kindergarten entrance are vitally important to future success in school. That is why our Early Childhood Education Programs are dedicated to ensure children are ready to enter kindergarten and families have the tools to ensure that their child is ready to learn!

Children grow and develop at their own rate. Here are some resources for you to use to monitor your child's growing and learning:

MN Parents Know
MN Dept. of Health-MCYSHN
Healthy Children-American Assoc. Pediatrics

Early Childhood Screening

The early years from birth to the start of kindergarten are a crucial time of rapid learning and growth. It is a quick and simple check of how your child is growing and developing. This screening is done between the ages of three and a half and four years. It identifies, at an early stage, possible learning or health concerns, so that children can get the needed help before starting school. All the information from your child's Early Childhood Screening is important to his/her future school success. After screening you will know

how your child is growing, developing, and learning. Early Childhood Screening is required for entrance in Minnesota Public Schools.

Contact Information:

Cathy Mattei, School Nurse: cmattei@isd91.org

The Minnesota Department of Education has an Early Childhood Screening Parent Video. You may view it at: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/fam/elsprog/screen/>

Early Childhood Family Education Classes

Children's Activities

The Early Childhood Teacher designs a curriculum and environment that encourages children to explore and be actively involved in learning. We believe that children of this age learn best through play and through experiencing a variety of age appropriate activities and materials. The schedule is arranged so that most of the time can be spent on free choice activities; the environment is designed to allow choices from a variety of "hands-on" activities. Staff considers emotional, social, intellectual and physical development when creating the environment for different age groups.

Parent/Child Time

Sessions usually begin with parent/child time. This is a time for:

- Parents to help their children settle in and become comfortable in the children's room
- Parents to follow the child's lead
- Parents to listen to their children and talk about what they are doing
- Parents and children to participate in "open-ended" activities (ex. The process of painting a picture is more important than the picture itself)
- For parents and children to spend time together (There will be time later to talk with adults)

Circle Time

Circle Time is a gathering of parents, children and staff for songs, stories, games, movement and fingerplays (10-15 minutes). The purpose of circle time is to encourage language and social development.

Separation

Following parent/child time, parents of older toddlers and preschoolers leave for parent discussion time in the adjoining room (45 minutes). Children may cry when left in the classroom. The teachers understand these separation anxieties, and are trained to help the children settle down. We have found that if parents do the following, children seem to adjust more quickly when leaving:

- Tell your children in a reassuring manner that you are going to talk with other parents and that you will be back soon. If you wish, show your child where you are going
- It usually doesn't help for parents to try to leave without the child noticing
- Occasionally it may take several weeks for a child to feel comfortable in the classroom without a parent. Our staff is understanding and flexible and here to help make the ECFE experience a positive one for both children and families

Parent Discussion Time

During the parent discussion time a Parent Educator will guide the group in topics relevant to their children. This time offers opportunity for parents to share ideas and concerns and to also receive up-to-date research-based information on child development and learning. A variety of topics are covered and may include such areas as health and nutrition, sleep issues, the importance of play, speech and language development, positive discipline, and balancing parent/child needs.

We offer a variety of activities to channel children's energies into positive growing experiences. The purpose of ECFE/School Readiness is to provide all children with adequate opportunities to participate in child development programs. These programs enable the children to enter school with necessary skills, behavior, family stability and support to succeed.

Children attending ECFE/School Readiness will:

- Develop listening skills and class participation
- Develop language and motor skills for success in school
- Develop self-help skills to be independent at school
- Have the opportunity to play with children the same age
- Feel confident about attending school

Parents, you benefit from ECFE/School Readiness by:

- Learning about your child's readiness skills
- Discover ways to support your child in school
- Participate in family events
- Opportunity to share with other parents in informational classes

CHILD GUIDANCE PROCEDURES

ECFE/School Readiness views discipline as an opportunity to teach children social skills needed to function successfully in daily life. Staff encourage appropriate behavior through clear guidelines, consistent consequences and positive staff interaction. When working with children, ECFE/School Readiness staff remain proactive, guiding children in making appropriate choices and redirecting them as needed.

Behavior expectations at Barnum Elementary School are based on individual responsibility and mutual respect. We have implemented the Above the Line program. This program provides student choice, ownership, and responsibility for their choices within a structured program. All students are entitled to learn in a setting which promotes respect of self, others and property. Those failing to meet behavior expectations will be subject to disciplinary measures. A complete copy of Barnum Public School District Policy Number 506, "Student Discipline," is available upon request in the principal's office.

To be more effective in working with children, ECFE/School Readiness staff team up with parents to work on issues together. Ongoing communication between home and ECFE/School Readiness promotes success for children.

Specific behavior guidance procedures adhered to ECFE/School Readiness include:

- Children will be provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior
- Behavior expectations will be developmentally appropriate for the children served
- The staff will clearly explain to the children what behavior is expected of each person in the classroom

- Children will be redirected from problem situations to more constructive activities in order to reduce conflict
- The staff will help children develop problem solving skills by using the following steps: 1. Staff will name the unacceptable behavior for the child. 2. Staff will explain why the behavior is a problem. 3. Staff will suggest or get other ideas from the child for new acceptable behaviors.
- The children will be made aware that our classroom procedures are: "You can't hurt yourself; you can't hurt others; and you can't hurt property"
- Children's unacceptable behavior will be promptly dealt with using natural or logical consequences

Common questions about Parent/Child classes:

When we arrive, what should we do?

1. Please do not arrive more than 5 minutes before the class begins. Teachers need time to prepare the rooms. You can wait outside the classroom until the room is open. Please do not go into any other classroom to play while you are waiting.
2. Hang coats and belongings on the hooks provided in the hallway. Purses can be brought into the classroom and placed on the shelf.
3. Please call if you or your child will not be attending a class. Children may not attend without a parent (unless attending with another important adult in your child's life); however, parents may attend without children.
4. Put a provided nametag on yourself and your child. Be sure items you bring from home are labeled (bottles, blankets, etc.).
5. Join the fun!!

What should I wear?

Comfortable play clothes for active learning are best. Dress for water play, painting and other, sometimes, messy fun. Rubber soled shoes are recommended.

Where are the diapering facilities?

A diapering station is located in the bathroom of the ECFE classroom. Parents will take care of their child's own diapering needs during classes. Follow diapering guidelines and place soiled diapers in a plastic bag and place in the garbage. Bring your own supplies.

How is the class organized?

All parent/child classes have time for parents and children to play together, and time for discussion. However, the break down will vary from class to class. Sometimes discussion is at the beginning of class and sometimes during the latter part. In some classes discussion time will be very short and in other it will be about half the class time. The Early Childhood Teacher and the Parent Educator plan together in preparing for classes. They determine structure and pacing of the class.

What will my child learn in ECFE?

Play is an important part of a child's learning and development. Play is the way children learn, so even though it may look like ONLY play to adults, it is a child's work and learning. Teachers use The Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Guidelines for Birth to Three and the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Guide for 3-5 (ECIPS) as a foundation for developing curriculum, play, and learning experiences for the classroom. These research based Guides detail expectations for young children in the following areas of development: • Social/Emotional • Language Development and

Communication • Cognitive (thinking) • Physical and Motor Activities provided in the classroom are chosen to enhance skill development and concept understanding in all of these areas of child development. Talk to teachers about specific skills and learning.

How is Parent Discussion Time Developed?

Parent Educators use The Parent Education Core Curriculum Framework and Indicators (PECCFI) developed by the Minnesota Department of Education. The PECCFI is a research based framework that detail learning objectives in the following areas: • Parent Development • Parent/Child Relationship • Early Childhood Development • Family Development • Culture and Community Parent educators will survey the parent group for their interests; develop a plan for parent discussion based on those interests, as well as other requirements to develop parent discussion topics. Half way through the semester parents will be asked to “evaluate” informally how they feel the class is going. Evaluation is also done at the end of each semester.

What are the basic guidelines for Parent Discussion Time?

- Respect ourselves and others
- Choose how to participate
- Support rather than judge
- Share responsibility

Who are the people working in the program?

All educators in ECFE are teachers licensed by the MN Department of Education. Classroom assistants receive training and in-service opportunities including CPR.

When do you clean the toys?

Clean up is part of each class; usually it occurs at the end of the class time and cued by a song. It helps to prepare the group for closure and teaches many skills. All children are expected to help in some way. We sanitize tables, toys, and equipment after each class. Toys that have gone in mouths should be put in the sink so that they can be washed thoroughly by staff.

How does the class end?

The group sings a “good-bye” song before leaving. Remember to take art projects, handouts, and belongings. If you need to talk with a teacher about your child, teachers are available after classes. Discuss your concerns.

Other things to know...

All hot drinks and soft drink are limited to the parent room. We ask that you do not bring beverages into non-separating classrooms.

Cell phones should only be visible if taking a picture. ECFE is a “hands free” zone.

Barnum Public Schools is tobacco free.

Groups may choose to exchange names and phone numbers among themselves; let educators know how they can assist you.

Safety rules and emergency procedures are established for each building in the district. There may be unannounced drills, including fire, lock down, or tornado drills during classes. Please remain calm and follow procedures as guided by staff. Do not go to other rooms to get your children. There are often loud sounds and flashing lights associated with these drills.

Classroom doors will remain locked during classroom sessions, if you arrive after the start of class please enter through the early childhood office.

There are many ways for parent involvement in ECFE. You are involved by attending ECFE events or classes. The Early Childhood Advisory Board welcomes new members.

Notify us when you have an addition to your family or if you move, then we can update the district census and you can be sure to get important information pertaining to your child's education.

Talk to one of our teachers if you have questions or concerns about your child's development or behaviors. Keep in mind there is a wide span in which typical development occurs.

When your child is about 3 ½ to 4 years old, you will be contacted to schedule an Early Childhood Screening appointment. This is a free check of your child's health and development.

I have ideas about the classes—What can I do?

We do evaluations near the end of most semesters so please include your suggestions. We are interested in your ideas and thoughts. Just as you grow and change as a parent, we want to grow as professionals.

We also appreciate comments that tell us we are doing a good job!

Our Early Childhood Advisory Board is another opportunity to become more involved in ECFE.

Contact our Coordinator, Alisha Bigelow at 218-389-3001 or e-mail her at abigelow@isd91.org.

School Readiness

While your child is at school. . .

Label Belongings - All personal belongings (coats, boots, hats, etc.) that are brought to school should be labeled with the child's name.

Dress and Toileting - We suggest that you send your child to school in comfortable clothing that is easy to manage in the bathroom. Clothing that your child can remove in order to attend to his/her own needs is suggested. (ex: snaps, suspenders, jumpsuits and belts may be difficult for your child).

We run and jump and dance too! - It is best if your child wear comfortable shoes that support their feet and ankles and do not easily fall off. Please avoid wearing flip flops or other similar footwear. Velcro shoes are preferred.

Also, we tend to get messy at school. We use paint, paste, and glue and goo.... so; it may be less worrisome for you and your child if their clothing is something that's easily washed. Please put an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack in case of spills or toileting accidents.



Fees

Fees for classes are on a sliding scale. Costs for specific classes are listed in the "Public Reporter" and on the Barnum School District website- www.barnum.isd91.org (click on Community Ed and scroll down to ECFE/School Readiness). You can also call or email us regarding payment options (contact Courtney Sieckert at 218-389-0108 or e-mail her at csiecker@isd91.org). Scholarships are available through "Think Small".... Go to thinksmall.org website for questions/information about scholarships. You MUST fill out the sliding fee scale form to be properly billed. There will be a 10% discount for early full payment. If one is not filled out, the business office will assume full payment is due and charge you accordingly. You will be billed and invoiced monthly. If at any time throughout the school year it becomes difficult to make payments or your income status has changed, please contact our office at 389-3001. Payments can be made in the following ways: Cash, checks or credit cards (using pay school online payment processing system).

**If a check is returned because of non-sufficient funds, cash will be required for the check amount and all bank processing fees. We may use outside services to collect unpaid tuitions.

Attendance and Transportation Procedures

Drop Off and Pick-up: Arrival time at school should be no earlier than 10 minutes before class starts. Please bring your child to the main lobby and a teacher will meet you. DO NOT drop children at the front door and allow them to walk in unattended.

For the safety of everyone, classroom doors will be locked during preschool hours. Parents and visitors must check-in at the office after the start of class.

Please pick up your child immediately after class. An adult listed on their registration form should meet your child at the classroom door.

Please note: Your child will not be released to any individual who is not listed on the enrollment form. Ask the teacher for the form to complete if someone different will be picking up your child.

If your child rides the school bus, we do follow the Barnum School district bus policies. It is a privilege to ride the bus and our children need to follow the rules.

If there is a change in your child's transportation routine, please contact the elementary office or your child's teacher **and** Little B's/daycare (if your child attends) of the changes.

Snacks/Birthdays

Healthy snacks are provided every day for our students. Our goal is to model healthy eating habits by offering healthy choices. Special treats for birthdays are welcome, however, we encourage you to provide nutritious snacks. Children's birthdays are celebrated in class on the day or week of their birthday. You are welcome to bring a store-bought snack for your child. Please be mindful of our goal to keep our kids healthy. Please, no homemade snacks (school and state policy). Parents will be notified if there are allergies in the classroom.

Communications

Please check your child's back pack every day! Your child is proud and excited about what he/she learns and does in preschool. Our lives can get so busy sometimes, but try to take 10 minutes each day to talk and ask about your child's school day, look at school papers and projects, or read his library book.

We will use the folder you purchased to send important papers, calendars, and occasional newsletters, etc. Please leave this folder in your child's back pack.

Photo Use Release

Families enrolling in Barnum Early Childhood will be given the opportunity to sign a written release allowing the opportunity to photograph or video-tape family members participating in the program. Photographs may also be used in wall or poster displays in public areas. We are excited to offer current technology in the classrooms. Your child will have smart board and I-pad use. Parents will need to authorize internet use on the Acceptable Use Agreement.

Immunization Records Required

Minnesota law requires that all children who enroll in a school or pre-school program be immunized at appropriate ages against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps and rubella, and Hepatitis A, allowing for certain specific exemptions. Parents must complete an immunization record for all children attending School Readiness and ECFE classes or fill out an exemption form. **If immunizations are not up to date within the first month of school, your child will not be able to attend class until the shots are completed or until papers are signed if you object.** This is a Minnesota Department of Health regulation. Please see ISD #91-Policy 530-Immunizations.

Illness

Please keep your child home when he/she is ill with a contagious diseases (ex. strep throat, pink eye or has a fever, cold, flu, etc.) If your child has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, he/she must be fever free for 24 hours WITHOUT medication before returning to school. We have students in our school with fragile immune systems, so please keep your sick child home. Please check the Barnum School District website (school nurse page) for specific guidelines. If your child is well enough to attend school, he/she is well enough to participate in all activities, including outside play.

What if my child gets sick at school? We will contact parents if a child becomes sick while at school and you will be asked to pick up your child.

For your information: Please be aware that your preschool staff are mandated reporters and are required to report any suspected neglect or incidence of child abuse.

In case of an emergency or injury at school which requires professional medical attention, parents will be notified immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, we will call the persons (in the order listed) on the Child Information Sheet. If necessary, we will immediately dial 9-1-1 and proceed with medical/dental help. Every effort will be made to contact the parents as soon as possible.

Please inform staff if your child has **food allergies**, special needs or physical limitations.

Data Privacy and Confidentiality

All forms required by the ECFE/School Readiness programs completed by you will remain confidential. The people who have access to these records are ECFE/School Readiness and school staff. Records included in your parent packet included:

- Enrollment form
- Immunization record
- Photo release permission
- Demographic survey

Please talk to our staff or Coordinator if you have any questions about these forms or about your rights to data privacy (MN.Stat 13.04,Subd.2).

ECFE/School Readiness Advisory Council

The Barnum Early Childhood Advisory Council is composed of parents and staff representatives. The council provides input, guidance and outreach to the community and is an essential link between program staff, the school district and families in the Barnum area. Interested parents are asked to participate on the council for one year but may continue membership for a longer period if they wish. This group meets two to four times during the school year. Please contact one of the staff if you are interested in being part of this group.

Book Orders

Staff will send home book orders from Scholastic Book Clubs once a month. This is a simple and inexpensive way for parents to purchase quality books for their children. Ordering is optional. We usually receive the books within 2 weeks. You may order online with your credit card or send your order form with a check made out to **Scholastic Books**. Please do not send cash! Information will be sent home with each order form.

