

Mountain Empire Unified School District

Early Childhood Education

Parent Handbook



Serving our mountain and tribal communities

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WELCOME & PROGRAM INFO



WELCOME & PROGRAM INFO

Welcome to ECE

In the MEUSD Early Childhood Education Program, we are proud to serve children and families across our mountain communities, including our rural and tribal populations and AIAN Head Start.

We believe that young children learn best through relationships, play, and meaningful experiences. Our programs are designed to support the whole child while building strong partnerships with families.

We look forward to working together to support your child's growth and development.

Vision

Our vision for our students in Mountain Empire Unified School District focuses on what we want to be true for all graduates. Our vision is a climb to the top of the mountain, one of perseverance and dedication that inspires our students to want to stand atop the peak and look out to the world of endless possibilities.

Mission

Our mission is to support students and families by providing:

- A high-quality learning environment
- A successful community of growth
- Strong relationships between children, families, and staff



Our Community

Our Community

The Mountain Empire Unified School District is the Southeastern most school district in San Diego County, bordering the Mexican State of Baja California on the South and Imperial County on the East. The District is in mountainous terrain, which varies in elevation from 2,500 to 6,000 feet above sea level. Mountain Empire Unified School District encompasses over 660 square miles.

The District began educating students in 1923 and was composed of seven elementary schools and one union high school. Unification of the District took place in 1952.

Program Overview

The MEUSD Early Childhood Education Program includes:

- California State Preschool Programs (CSPP)
- General Child Care/Toddler Programs (CCTR)
- Head Start (Campo Kumeyaay)

Policies vary by program and are outlined in each program section.

ECE Office Contact Information

Website: ece.meusd.org

Email: ece@meusd.org

3291 Buckman Springs Road

Pine Valley, CA 91962

Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM

Phone: (619) 473-8016

Please ensure your contact information is current at all times.

Locations and Contact Information

Campo State Preschool

1654 Buckman Springs Road
Campo, CA 91906
(619) 478-5583 x 405

Potrero State Preschool

24875 Potrero Valley Road
Potrero, CA 91963
(619) 478-5930 x 927

Pine Valley State Preschool

7454 Pine Boulevard
Pine Valley, CA 91962
(619) 473-8693 x 801

Clover Flat Toddler Program

39639 Old Highway 80
Boulevard, CA 91905
(619) 473-9022 x 522

Pine Valley Toddler Program

7454 Pine Boulevard
Pine Valley, CA 91962
(619) 473-9022 x 802

Campo Kumeyaay Head Start

39639 Old Highway 80
Boulevard, CA 91905
(619) 377-8170

Program Design Overview

Mountain Empire Unified School District Early Childhood Education programs are designed to provide safe, inclusive, engaging, and developmentally appropriate environments for children ages 2 through 5. Programs operate within a public school district and follow all applicable state and federal regulations.

Days & Hours of Operation

Programs operate Monday through Friday and follow the school district calendar

Current site schedules include the following:

- Potrero State Preschool: 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- Campo State Preschool: 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM
- Pine Valley State Preschool: 6:30 AM to 4:30 PM
- Campo Kumeyaay Head Start: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Toddler Programs: site-specific schedules

- Clover Flat CCTR / Toddler and wraparound care: 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM
- Pine Valley CCTR / Toddler care: 6:30 AM to 4:30 PM

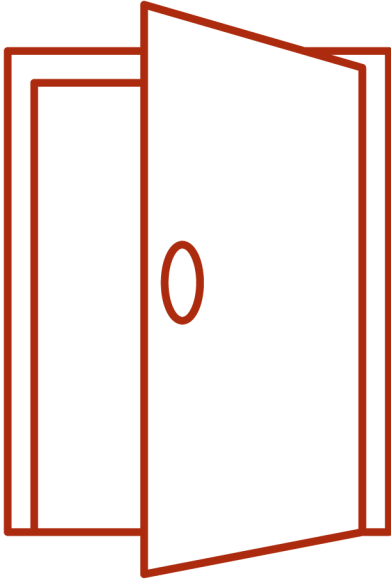
Families are expected to follow their child's assigned schedule, including part-day, full-day, contracted hours, and authorized hours of care.

GENERAL POLICIES



GENERAL POLICIES

Arrival and Departure



Late Pick-Up

Children must be picked up by the end of their assigned or authorized program day. A late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child, beginning at the scheduled pick-up time.

Repeated late pick-ups may result in additional program review or action in accordance with program policies.

- Children must be signed in and out daily by an authorized adult who is 18 years of age or older
- Sign-in/out must include a full legal signature and exact time
- Children must remain under the supervision of a parent or authorized adult until signed in and accepted by staff
- Children must be physically transferred to staff at drop-off
- At pick-up, children are released only to individuals listed on the Emergency Contact Form or those authorized in writing
- Identification may be requested at any time and is required when an individual is unfamiliar to staff or picking up for the first time
- Staff may refuse release if proper identification cannot be verified or if the individual appears unable to safely care for the child
- Once a child is signed out, they are no longer under program supervision

Supervision

Staff Responsibility

- Children are supervised at all times, including indoors, outdoors, during transitions, and while using restroom facilities.
- Staff maintain visual supervision and active engagement at all times.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

- Parents and guardians are responsible for their child:
 - Before sign-in
 - After sign-out
 - While on school grounds outside of program supervision
- Children must remain within arm's reach or under direct supervision during arrival and departure
- Parents are responsible for supervising all children in their care while on campus



Open Door Policy

Families are encouraged to participate in their child's program. Visits must support classroom routines and may be limited or rescheduled if disruptive.

- Not permitted during rest/nap time
- Children should not be signed out during rest time except in emergencies
- Families may be asked to wait until transitions are complete

Field Trips

- Parent/guardian permission is required
- A parent or authorized adult must attend with their child
- School-age children are not permitted to attend field trips
- Parents and guardians are responsible for supervising all children in their care at all times
- Adults must be able to safely supervise all children in their care

Vehicle Safety and Transportation



Children must be transported safely and in accordance with California law.

- Children must be secured in appropriate car seats or restraints
- Children may never be left unattended in a vehicle at any time
- This applies to all children present, not only those enrolled in the program

Failure to follow safe transportation practices may result in further action.

Playground Use



The playground is for use by enrolled children only.

- Children may not use the playground after being signed out of care
- After-hours use of the playground is prohibited
- Once a child is signed out, they are under the supervision of their parent or guardian.



INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND & OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

Outdoor environments are an extension of the classroom and are designed to support all children, including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and diverse learning needs.

Children participate in outdoor play in inclusive settings alongside their peers.

During outdoor play:

- Staff remain within required adult-to-child ratios for each program
- Teachers and assigned staff are responsible for the supervision of their designated children at all times
- Staff actively engage with children to support participation, communication, and social interaction

Supports are provided based on individual needs



Supports may include:

- Visual supports
- Structured routines
- Adult proximity and guidance
- Adaptations to activities or equipment

Outdoor play supports:

- Social-emotional development
- Communication and peer relationships
- Gross motor development
- Exploration and engagement

Outdoor learning is considered an essential part of the instructional day and is implemented in a way that supports inclusion, safety, and participation for all children.



Group Size and Adult-to-Child Ratios

Adult-to-child ratios are planned in advance and followed according to program requirements.

Program Type	Age Range	Adult-to-Child Ratio	Max Group Size
Toddler / CCTR	24 - 36 months	1 adult : 4 toddlers	16 children
CSPP Preschool	Preschool age	1 adult : 8 children	24 children
Head Start Preschool	Preschool age	1 adult : 8 children	20 children

Ratios are maintained throughout the day, including during indoor activities, outdoor play, meals, and transitions.

Confidentiality

The use or disclosure of any information maintained in a child's or family's data file is limited to purposes directly connected with administration of the program. Information is not used for other purposes without prior written consent or as legally required, such as by subpoena. Families may request access to information in their basic data file, and access will be provided within five business days after the program receives a written request.



Refrain from Religious Instruction

Programs refrain from religious instruction and worship.

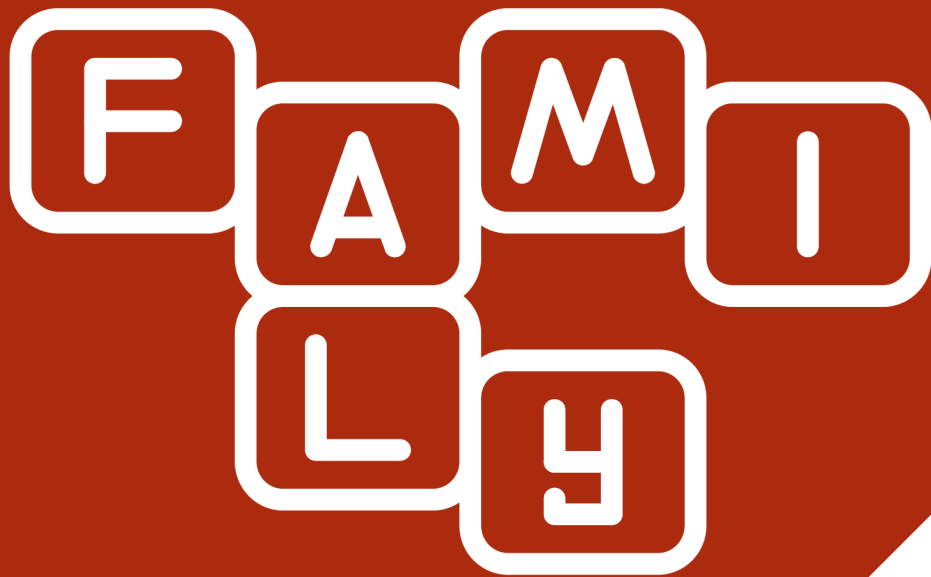
Equal Access / Non-Discrimination Statement

No person will be subjected to discrimination or any other form of illegal bias, including harassment. Equal access to services is provided without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.

Licensing & Complaint Information

Programs subject to licensing are regulated by the California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division. Families have the right to contact Community Care Licensing to ask questions, review licensing information, or file a complaint.

FAMILY & PROGRAM



FAMILY & PROGRAM FOUNDATIONS

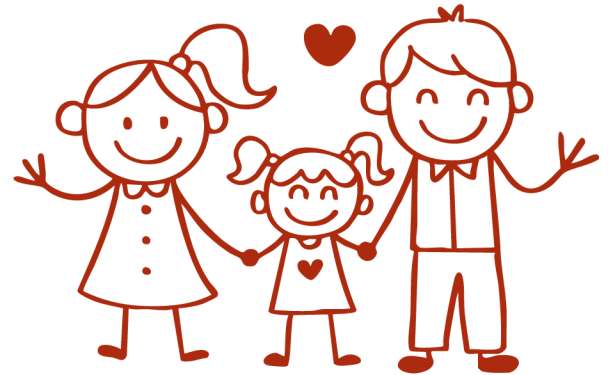


Program Philosophy, Goals & Objectives

Mountain Empire Early Childhood Education recognizes the importance of **PLAY** in the learning process for young children. We also recognize that parents are the primary caregivers and educators of their children. We work to empower children, promote individuality, and develop strong partnerships with families while creating an environment that helps young children attain physical, cognitive, social, language, and emotional achievements so they are prepared for school.

Family Philosophy

Each family brings a history of life experience and cultural heritage that is respected and valued within our centers. Partnerships between families and the center are essential to the growth and development of each individual child. Our programs seek to honor and incorporate family culture, language, and traditions to the best of our ability and within licensing, safety, and program regulations.



Parent Involvement & Education

Our goal is to provide a welcoming environment for families and invite them to participate as equal partners in the education of their children.

Opportunities to participate include, but are not limited to:

- Parent-teacher conferences twice per year
- Reading to children during drop-off or pick-up
- Parent education meetings throughout the year
- Family festivals and program events
- Parent Advisory Committee meetings
- Head Start Policy Council and Parent Committee meetings
- Classroom participation and volunteer opportunities (parents volunteering in the center must have a current tuberculosis clearance, required immunizations, and background clearance on file)

Family engagement is an essential part of program design and includes opportunities for participation, communication, and shared input in program experiences.

Conferences



Conferences provide an opportunity for families to collaborate with teachers to develop goals for their child. Parent education meetings provide an opportunity to learn about child development, hear information identified through parent surveys, build parenting strategies, and connect with program staff and other families. In preschool, Parent Advisory Committee meetings provide families with opportunities to give input on the nature and operation of the program. For Head Start, Policy Council and Parent Committee meetings are part of program governance and engagement

Health & Social Services



Our goal is for families to know where to access community health and social services to meet their unique family needs. A Family Social Service Need Request and Referral form is completed at the time of enrollment and annually thereafter. This form helps identify the needs of both the child and the family, so the child may be successful in care and school. Based on results, staff provide referrals to agencies in the community and follow up with families to help ensure their needs have been addressed. Families may also request support at any time during the year if needs arise after enrollment. If a parent or guardian has concerns at any point, they should contact the lead teacher or appropriate program staff for guidance to resources.

Education Program

Our goal is to ensure all children make progress in the domains of physical, cognitive, language, and social-emotional development. Our goal is also to provide a program approach that addresses equity, diversity, and developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate practices. The program is inclusive of children with disabilities and diverse learning needs.



Inclusion

Our program is committed to full inclusion, ensuring that all children, including those with disabilities, dual language learners, and children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, have equitable access to high-quality early learning experiences. In alignment with Head Start Program Performance Standards, California Title 5 regulations, and the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), we provide developmentally appropriate, individualized, and culturally responsive practices that support each child's growth and participation.

We implement a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach by proactively designing environments, curriculum, and interactions that reduce barriers and support multiple ways of engagement, representation, and expression. Through the Teaching Pyramid framework, we prioritize nurturing relationships, supportive environments, and intentional social-emotional teaching to promote self-regulation, communication, and positive behavior for all children.

Inclusion is embedded in all aspects of our program, including daily routines, curriculum planning, and assessment. We use ongoing observation and assessment data, including DRDP measures, to individualize instruction and ensure meaningful participation for every child. We collaborate with families, specialists, and community partners to develop and implement individualized supports, including IFSPs and IEPs, as applicable.

We believe that every child is capable, competent, and deserving of belonging. Our program fosters a community where differences are valued, strengths are recognized, and all children learn together in inclusive, respectful, and supportive environments.

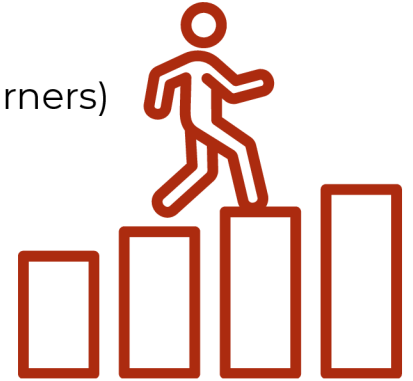


Developmental Supports

Our program supports children's development across all domains identified in the **California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (PTKLF)** and is measured through the **Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP 2025)**. Development is supported through intentional teaching, responsive relationships, and play-based learning experiences.

This includes the following domains:

- Social-Emotional Development
- Language and Literacy
- English Language Development (for dual language learners)
- Mathematics
- Science
- History–Social Science
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Physical Development
- Health



Teachers intentionally design environments and experiences that support growth across these areas in integrated and meaningful ways.

Physical Development and Health

Children build strength, coordination, and healthy habits through active play, movement, and daily routines. Both indoor and outdoor environments provide opportunities for gross and fine motor development in safe and engaging ways.

Social-Emotional Development

Relationships are the foundation of learning. Teachers foster trust, emotional security, and a strong sense of belonging. Predictable routines and supportive transitions help children develop self-regulation, confidence, and positive interactions with others.

Cognitive, Language, and Creative Development

Children learn through play, exploration, and inquiry. Teachers support thinking, problem-solving, and communication through meaningful interactions and hands-on experiences. Opportunities for art, music, movement, and conversation are embedded throughout the day, while early literacy, language, and mathematical thinking are intentionally supported.

The at-a-glance version of the PTKLF can be found at:
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp>

Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)

Our program uses the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP 2025) to assess and support each child's growth and development. The DRDP is a statewide, observation-based assessment tool used in California to measure children's progress across all developmental domains outlined in the Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (PTKLF).

The DRDP is completed through ongoing observation of children during their everyday activities, play, and interactions. Teachers gather information over time by watching, listening, and documenting what children know and are able to do in natural learning environments. This approach ensures that assessment is developmentally appropriate and does not interrupt the child's experience.

Assessment results are used to:

- Understand each child's strengths and areas for growth
- Guide intentional planning and individualized instruction
- Support social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development
- Ensure alignment with program goals and school readiness

Children are assessed at designated checkpoints throughout the year in accordance with state requirements.

All assessment information is kept confidential and used only to support children's learning and development.

Environment



Our goal is for each classroom to provide a safe, healthy, and welcoming environment that supports the broad developmental needs of children.

- CLASS is used to assess the quality of teacher-child interactions
- CLASS Environment is used to review classroom setup, engagement, and learning conditions
- ITERS is used for toddler environments

Results are used collaboratively to identify goals and action steps for continuous quality improvement. The purpose of these tools is to strengthen teaching, classroom organization, learning conditions, and child outcomes.

HEALTH & DAILY PRACTICES



HEALTH & DAILY PRACTICES



Health and Safety

The following health and safety policies are designed to ensure all children can safely participate in the program

Daily Health Check

All children receive a brief health check upon arrival each day. Staff observe for signs of illness, injury, or discomfort to ensure children are able to safely participate in the program.

To attend, children must be:

- Well enough to participate in all classroom activities
- Able to engage in outdoor play
- Free from symptoms that would require exclusion under licensing or public health guidance

Illness and Exclusion



If a child becomes ill during the program day:

- Families must remain reachable during program hours. If a parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called.
- Children must be picked up within 30 minutes

Children may not remain in the program if they are not well enough to fully participate.

Medication

Medication will only be administered when all requirements are met:

- A completed medication authorization form is on file
- Medication is in its original container
- Medication is clearly labeled with the child's name
- Written instructions are provided and followed exactly

All medication procedures follow requirements set by each program, Community Care licensing and District Policy





Immunization Requirements

In accordance with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) requirements, all children enrolled in MEUSD Early Childhood Education programs must meet the following immunization requirements prior to attendance:

- 3 Polio (IPV)
- 4 DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
- 3 Hepatitis B
- 1 Varicella (Chickenpox)

On or after the 1st birthday:

- 1 Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b)
- 1 MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)

These immunization requirements are mandatory for all preschool-aged children enrolled in the program.

Official immunization records must be provided and verified prior to enrollment.

Children who do not meet immunization requirements will not be permitted to attend in accordance with public health regulations.

Physical Examination Requirement



A physical examination report (LIC 701) is required for all enrolled children.

- The LIC 701 must be completed and signed by a physician
- The form must be submitted within 30 days of enrollment

Failure to provide the required physical examination documentation may result in:

- Exclusion from attendance
- Termination of enrollment

Personal Care Items



Personal care items are handled in accordance with program policy and licensing requirements.

- The program does not apply personal care items such as diaper cream, lotions, or lip balm unless required documentation is provided or the item is considered medically necessary
- Sunscreen may be applied with a signed parent/guardian authorization form

All personal care items must be:

- Clearly labeled with the child's name
- Provided by the family
- Additional authorization forms and instructions, may be required

Injuries and Incident Reporting



When a child is injured:

- An incident (ouch) report is completed by staff
- A copy is sent home the same day
- A photo may be shared with families through Learning Genie when appropriate
- Copies are maintained at the program site for the full school year

For injuries above the neck:

- Families are notified immediately by phone

Clothing and Footwear

Children must wear clothing and footwear that allows them to safely and comfortably participate in all program activities, including active indoor and outdoor play.

- Closed-toe, secure shoes are required at all times
- Shoes must stay securely on the child's foot during movement and play
- Open-back or loose-fitting shoes, including Crocs without a secure strap, are not permitted
- Sandals must have a back strap to ensure proper support and safety



Families should also provide:

- Weather-appropriate clothing
- A change of clothes to be kept at the program site
- Clothing and footwear should allow children to participate in activities such as climbing, running, and outdoor play without restriction.

Head Lice Policy

Children will not be excluded from care for the presence of nits (lice eggs) alone. If live lice are identified, families will be notified.

- Children may remain in care for the remainder of the day to avoid unnecessary disruption
- Families are expected to begin appropriate treatment as soon as possible

Children may return to the program:

- After appropriate treatment has been started
- Even if nits are still present

The program:

- Maintains confidentiality when communicating with families
- May provide general notification to families in the classroom when a case is identified
- Staff may monitor the child for signs of ongoing infestation
- Families may be contacted if concerns persist





Nutrition, Meals, and Food Guidelines

All Early Childhood Education programs provide meals and snacks in accordance with state and federal requirements, including the California Universal Meals Program (School Meals for All / Every Child Eats), as well as CSPP, CCTR, and Head Start Performance Standards, as applicable.

Programs provide:

- Lunch is provided daily in all programs
- Breakfast and/or snacks are provided based on program type and daily schedule
- Meal service follows approved meal patterns, portion sizes, and nutritional standards established by the State of California

Meals are designed to support children's health, development, and participation in daily activities. All food service meets required standards for nutrition, food safety, and sanitation.

Food Guidelines

To maintain compliance with licensing and program requirements:

- Soda, energy drinks, and non-nutritive beverages are not permitted
- Candy and foods of minimal nutritional value are not served as part of program meals or snacks
- Food substitutions for allergies or dietary needs must be supported by appropriate documentation when required
- Staff actively monitor for food allergies, choking hazards, and safe food handling practices

Celebrations

Classroom celebrations are permitted within the following guidelines to ensure compliance with health, safety, and nutrition standards:

- All celebrations must be pre-approved by teaching staff and/or administration
- Food items must meet program nutrition standards and may be limited based on state meal guidelines and classroom needs
- Celebrations must occur after scheduled meal service and may not replace or interfere with required meals
- Non-food items are strongly encouraged to support inclusive participation for all children
- All items must comply with health, safety, and licensing requirements, including allergy and sanitation considerations

Rest and Naptime



Rest time is part of the daily schedule and supports children's development and regulation.

- Children are provided a quiet and supervised rest period
- Not all children are required to sleep
- Children who do not sleep will be supported in quiet on cot activities

To maintain a calm environment:

- Families are strongly discouraged from signing children out during rest time unless necessary

Attendance

Attendance policies support consistent participation and program continuity.

General Attendance Expectations

Regular attendance is required for participation in all programs.

Families must:

- Notify the program by 9:00 AM if a child will be absent
- Use Learning Genie or other approved communication methods
- "Written communication" includes approved digital platforms such as Learning Genie.



Attendance Compliance

Failure to maintain attendance requirements may result in:

- Review of enrollment status
- Disenrollment
- This includes:
 - Excessive absences
 - Lack of communication
 - Abandonment of care



If a child is absent due to illness for more than 3 consecutive days, a doctor's note may be required prior to return.



Social-Emotional Learning

Social-emotional development is a core part of the program and is supported throughout the daily routine. Children are taught to understand their feelings, communicate their needs, and build positive relationships.

Programs support:

- Emotional regulation and self-control
- Communication of needs, wants, and feelings
- Relationship-building with peers and adults
- Problem-solving and social skills

Behavior Guidance and Support

Behavior is viewed as a form of communication. Staff work to understand the purpose behind behavior and respond in ways that teach and guide children toward positive outcomes.

The program uses the Teaching Pyramid Model, focusing on relationships, supportive environments, and social-emotional skill development.

Staff use developmentally appropriate strategies, including:

- Teaching and modeling expected behaviors
- Positive guidance and redirection
- Consistent routines and clear expectations
- Co-regulation and calming strategies
- Use of calming spaces
- Individualized supports when needed

Staff partner with families and may use individualized plans or additional resources to support each child's success.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

The program is committed to maintaining children's enrollment and does not use suspension or expulsion as a first response to behavior.

Suspension or expulsion may only be considered when:

- There is a serious safety concern
- All appropriate supports and interventions have been attempted
- Prior to consideration:
 - Staff will work closely with families
 - Strategies and supports will be documented
 - Referrals to additional services may be made

All practices follow applicable program requirements

Emergency Procedures and Child Safety

Emergency Contacts

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring all emergency contact information remains current and accurate.

Authorized emergency contacts must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be available to pick up a child when needed
- Present identification upon request

Custody and Legal Orders

The program must have current court orders or legal documentation on file to enforce custody, restraining, or visitation restrictions.

Verbal requests cannot be enforced without legal documentation.

Child Abuse Reporting Requirements

Program staff are mandated reporters and are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with California law.



Emergency Procedures

Emergency drills, including fire and disaster drills, are conducted in accordance with licensing and district requirements.

Families must maintain current emergency contact information at all times to ensure prompt communication during emergencies.

California State Preschool Programs (CSPP)

CSPP



CALIFORNIA STATE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (CSPP)

The California State Preschool Program (CSPP) provides early education services for eligible children ages 3–5 in accordance with California Department of Education (CDE) Title 5 regulations. The program is designed to support the whole child through developmentally appropriate, play-based learning experiences that promote social-emotional development, language and communication, early learning skills, and physical development.

Instruction and classroom environments are aligned with the California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (PTKLF) and are guided by ongoing observation and assessment using the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP). Children are provided with structured routines, intentional teaching, and opportunities for exploration, interaction, and skill-building in a safe and supportive environment.

Services may be offered as part-day or full-day depending on site, eligibility, and family need.

Important CSPP Information

Enrollment is based on income, family need, and CDE priority categories. Placement is determined based on eligibility and available space.

Services are provided based on eligibility and may be adjusted as family circumstances change.

Assigned schedules and services are determined based on eligibility and may be adjusted based on program needs, enrollment, or changes in eligibility.

Children enrolled in full-day CSPP must attend within their contracted hours of care.

Consistent attendance is required to support program participation and maintain program funding requirements.

Enrollment is subject to space availability, and eligible families may be placed on a waiting list.

Eligibility and Enrollment (CSPP)

Enrollment in the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) is determined in accordance with California Department of Education (CDE) Title 5 regulations.

Children must meet eligibility requirements based on age, income, and family need, as applicable to program type.

Age Eligibility

- Children must be:
- At least 3 years old on or before December 1 of the program year
- Not yet eligible for kindergarten

Income Eligibility

Families may qualify based on income that falls within the limits established by the California Department of Education.

Families are required to:

- Provide current and accurate income documentation
- Report all sources of income as required

Family Need (Full-Day CSPP Only)

For full-day CSPP services, families must demonstrate a documented need for care, which may include:

- Employment
- Job search
- Vocational training or education
- Seeking permanent housing
- Incapacity of a parent/guardian
- Other approved needs in accordance with CDE guidelines

Documentation is required to verify need for services.

Services are provided based on eligibility and may be adjusted as family circumstances change.

Enrollment Priority

Enrollment is prioritized in accordance with CDE requirements, which may include:

- Children who are recipients of child protective services or at risk of abuse or neglect
- Families with the lowest income
- Families who meet criteria for family need
- Other priority categories established by the CDE

Placement is based on eligibility and available space.

Documentation Requirements

Families must provide required documentation to determine eligibility, which may include:

- Proof of income
- Verification of employment, training, or education
- Residency verification
- Birth certificate or proof of age
- Additional documentation as required by the program

Failure to provide required documentation may:

- Delay enrollment
- Result in denial of services
- Lead to disenrollment if not resolved

Recertification

Eligibility is certified in accordance with CDE requirements and may be subject to recertification or updates as required by program regulations.

Families may be required to recertify eligibility:

- Annually or as required by program regulations
- When there are changes in income, need, or family circumstances

Failure to complete recertification may result in loss of services.

Attendance, Best Interest Days (BID), and Absence Classification

Attendance Expectations

Regular attendance is required for participation in the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) and is necessary to maintain enrollment and program funding.

Families must:

- Ensure children attend consistently according to their assigned schedule
- Notify the program by 9:00 AM if a child will be absent
- Communicate using approved methods, including Learning Genie

Attendance is monitored in accordance with California Department of Education (CDE) requirements.

Attendance Compliance

Failure to maintain attendance requirements may result in:

- Review of enrollment status
- Request for documentation
- Adjustment of services
- Disenrollment
- This includes:
 - Excessive absences
 - Lack of communication
 - Abandonment of care

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences include:

- Absences without notification
- Absences that do not meet excused criteria
- Excessive or repeated absences, including misuse of BID days

Best Interest Days (BID)

Families are allowed:

- **10 Best Interest Days (BID)** per program year

BID days:

- May be used for occasional absences
- Do not require documentation when used appropriately
- Are not intended for ongoing or repeated absences
- Use of BID days beyond the allowable limit may result in the absence being considered unexcused.

Excused Absences

Excused absences may include, but are not limited to:

- Illness or medical appointments
- Family emergencies
- Court appearances
- Observance of cultural or religious events
- Other reasons approved by the program

Documentation may be required for extended or repeated excused absences.

General Child Care Program/ Toddler Program (CCTR)



CCTR

GENERAL CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CCTR)

The General Child Care and Development Program (CCTR) provides care for toddlers and supports families who require childcare due to work, training, or other approved needs. Services are provided in accordance with California Department of Social Services (CDSS) requirements.

The program supports children's development through safe, structured environments and developmentally appropriate experiences that promote social-emotional growth, communication, early learning, and independence.

Classroom environments are designed to support social-emotional development, communication, self-help skills, motor development, exploration, and early learning through responsive caregiving, play-based experiences, and consistent routines. Teachers build nurturing relationships with children and families while supporting developmental growth through observation, interaction, and individualized support.

Services may include full-day or extended care depending on eligibility and family need.

Important CCTR Information

Enrollment is based on documented need and eligibility requirements. Placement is determined based on eligibility and available space.

Services are provided based on documented need and may be adjusted as family circumstances change.

Assigned schedules and hours of care are based on approved need and may be adjusted based on program needs, enrollment, or changes in eligibility.

Families must use care only during their authorized hours of care.

Consistent attendance is required to maintain enrollment and eligibility for services.

Enrollment is subject to space availability, and eligible families may be placed on a waiting list.

Eligibility and Enrollment (CCTR)

Enrollment in the General Child Care and Development Program (CCTR) is determined in accordance with California Department of Social Services (CDSS) requirements.

Children must meet eligibility requirements based on age, income eligibility, and family need, as applicable to the program.

Age Eligibility

Children must be:

- At least 24 months of age

Income Eligibility

Families may qualify based on income that falls within the limits established by the California Department Social Services

Families are required to:

- Provide current and accurate income documentation
- Report all sources of income as required

Family Need

Families must demonstrate a documented need for care, which may include:

- Employment
- Job search
- Vocational training or education
- Seeking permanent housing
- Incapacity of a parent/guardian
- Other approved needs in accordance with CDSS guidelines

Documentation is required to verify need for services.

Services are provided based on eligibility and may be adjusted as family circumstances change.

Eligibility, Documentation, and Recertification (CCTR)

Recertification

Eligibility is certified in accordance with CDE requirements and may be subject to recertification or updates as required by program regulations.

Families may be required to recertify eligibility

- Annually or as required by program regulations
- When there are changes in income, need, or family circumstances

Failure to complete recertification may result in loss of services.

Documentation Requirements

Families must provide required documentation to determine eligibility, which may include:

- Proof of income
- Verification of employment, training, or education
- Residency verification
- Birth certificate or proof of age
- Additional documentation as required by the program

Failure to provide required documentation may:

- Delay enrollment
- Result in denial of services
- Lead to disenrollment if not resolved

Enrollment Priority

Enrollment is prioritized in accordance with CDE requirements, which may include:

- Children who are recipients of child protective services or at risk of abuse or neglect
- Families with the lowest income
- Families who meet criteria for family need
- Other priority categories established by the CDE

Placement is based on eligibility and available space.

Changes in Eligibility or Need

Families are allowed:

- Families are responsible for reporting changes that may impact eligibility or authorized care, including:
 - Employment changes
 - Changes in training or education
 - Schedule changes
 - Changes in family circumstances
- Services may be adjusted based on updated documentation, eligibility requirements, enrollment, or program needs.

Attendance, Authorized Care, and Absence Classification

Attendance Expectations

Regular attendance is important in the General Child Care and Development Program (CCTR) and supports children's emotional security, relationships, participation, and continuity of care.

Families must:

- Ensure children attend consistently according to their assigned schedule
- Notify the program by 9:00 AM if a child will be absent
- Communicate using approved methods, including Learning Genie

Attendance is monitored in accordance with California Department of Social Services (CDSS) requirements.

Continuity of Care

Consistent attendance and predictable routines support children's social-emotional development, attachment, regulation, participation, and success within the classroom environment.

Children benefit from:

- Consistent daily routines
- Predictable schedules
- Strong relationships with caregivers and peers
- Regular participation in classroom experiences and activities

Authorized Hours of Care

Families are approved for a specific number of authorized hours based on documented need, such as employment, training, education, or other qualifying activities.

Families are required to:

- Use care only during authorized hours
- Follow their assigned schedule
- Notify the program of any changes in need or schedule

Documentation may be required to verify ongoing need for services.

Attendance Compliance

The program will work collaboratively with families whenever possible to support continued enrollment, participation, and eligibility.

Failure to maintain attendance or program requirements may result in:

- Review of enrollment status
- Request for additional documentation
- Adjustment of services
- Disenrollment

This includes:

- Excessive absences
- Lack of communication
- Non-use of authorized services
- Abandonment of care

American Indian Alaska Native Head Start Program



AIAN HEAD START

Campo Kumeyaay Head Start

Campo Kumeyaay Head Start is a federally funded American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start program serving primarily tribal children and families.

The program provides comprehensive early childhood services designed to support children's social-emotional, cognitive, language, physical, and cultural development through relationship-based, developmentally appropriate practices.

Classroom environments are designed to support learning through play, exploration, responsive interactions, and meaningful relationships. The program recognizes families as children's first teachers and values family voice, culture, language, and community partnerships as essential components of children's learning and development.

The program supports school readiness by providing nurturing learning environments, individualized support, family engagement opportunities, health and social service coordination, and culturally responsive practices that reflect the strengths and traditions of the communities served.

Programs operate in accordance with:

- Head Start Program Performance Standards
- Federal regulations for AIAN Head Start programs
- Applicable state and local requirements

Important Head Start Information

- Enrollment is based on eligibility, selection criteria, and available space.
- The program provides comprehensive services that may include education, health, nutrition, family support, and developmental services.
- Services are individualized to support children's learning, participation, and overall development.
- Consistent attendance is important to support children's relationships, routines, and participation in the program.
- Family engagement is an essential component of Head Start and families are encouraged to participate in program activities and leadership opportunities.
- Transportation services are limited and available only to eligible children as determined by program services and available resources.
- Enrollment is subject to space availability, and eligible families may be placed on a waiting list.

Eligibility and Enrollment (Head Start)

Enrollment in Campo Kumeyaay Head Start is determined in accordance with Head Start Program Performance Standards and federal eligibility requirements.

Children must meet age and eligibility requirements for enrollment.

Documentation Requirements

Families are required to provide:

- Proof of income
- Residency verification
- Birth certificate or proof of age
- Immunization records

Additional documentation required for eligibility determination:

- Failure to provide required documentation may:
- Delay enrollment
- Result in denial of services
- Impact continued enrollment if not resolved

Income Eligibility

Families may qualify based on income guidelines established by the federal government.

Children may also qualify if they are:

- Experiencing homelessness
- In foster care
- Receiving public assistance benefits
- Eligible under other federally approved criteria

Age Eligibility

Children must be:

- At least 3 years old
- Not yet eligible for kindergarten

Selection Criteria

Enrollment is based on a selection point system that considers:

- Family income
- Community and program priorities
- Child and family needs
- Age eligibility
- Program funding requirements

Placement is determined based on eligibility and available space.

Health, Family Partnerships & Program Services

Family Engagement

Family engagement is an essential part of the Head Start program. Families are encouraged to actively participate in their child's education and program experiences.

Opportunities for participation may include:

- Policy Council
- Parent meetings
- Classroom activities
- Family events
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Volunteer opportunities, as applicable

Families have opportunities to participate in program governance and decision-making through Policy Council and parent engagement activities.

Families may also participate in family partnership processes designed to identify strengths, goals, and supports that promote family well-being and child success.

Health and Social Services

Head Start provides comprehensive support services that may include:

- Developmental screenings
- Vision and hearing screenings
- Health and nutrition support
- Referrals to community resources
- Family support services

Program staff collaborate with families to help connect children and families with available community resources and services.

Children's development is supported through ongoing observation and assessment, including the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), to help individualize instruction and support each child's growth and participation.

Inclusion and Individualized Support

The program provides inclusive services for children with disabilities and supports children with IFSPs and IEPs through collaboration with families and service providers.

Children's social-emotional well-being is supported through nurturing relationships, responsive caregiving, and individualized support.

The program values and supports the culture, language, traditions, and strengths of the tribal communities served.

Attendance, Transportation, and Program Participation

Regular attendance is important in Head Start and supports children's relationships, routines, participation, and school readiness.

Families must:

- Ensure children attend consistently according to their assigned schedule
- Notify the program if a child will be absent
- Communicate using approved methods, including Learning Genie when applicable

Attendance is monitored in accordance with Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Attendance Compliance

The program will work collaboratively with families whenever possible to support continued enrollment and participation.

Failure to maintain attendance or program requirements may result in:

- Review of enrollment status
- Request for additional documentation
- Adjustment of services
- Disenrollment
- This includes:
 - Excessive absences
 - Lack of communication
 - Abandonment of care

Transportation

Transportation services are limited and available only to eligible tribal children and, when applicable, children with IEPs as determined by program services and available resources.

Program Participation

Families are encouraged to maintain communication with program staff and participate in program activities whenever possible to support children's success and continuity of care.

FORM

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Mountain Empire Unified School District Early Childhood Education Parent Handbook.

I understand that:

- I am responsible for following all program policies and procedures
- I may ask questions or request clarification at any time
- Program expectations include attendance, communication, and adherence to policies

I agree to follow the guidelines outlined in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____