**Canvas Early Learning Center**

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**2020-21 Parent Handbook**

**Mission**

Canvas Early Learning Center (ELC) is a non-profit Early Education program with an arts emphasis. Canvas serves children ages 2-5 and their families in an early learning environment as well as children ages 5-8 in an arts-based afterschool program. Canvas is committed to providing quality care by supporting development in social emotional skills, academic achievement, movement & motor skills, and the arts.

**Hours of Operation:**

Canvas Early Learning Center is open for care from 7:45 am until 5:15 pm Monday through Friday.

Morning hours: 7:45-12:00 Afternoon hours: 12:15-5:15.

**Enrolling Your Child at Canvas**

A planned visit is recommended before your child’s first day at Canvas ELC. Children feel more comfortable staying when they have met the director, lead teacher and/or staff. Parents are encouraged to stay each until their child feels comfortable. Teachers will work with parents to develop a transition plan that meets the needs of you and your child.

**The following forms must be completed and returned to Canvas ELC *before your child’s first day*:**

* Enrollment contract.
* Personal Information
* Over-the-counter medication form.
* Canvas permission and release form.
* Emergency contact form.
* Parent Handbook signature page
* A copy of immunizations from your physician’s office. (Blue form preferred).

Children’s files will be updated yearly. During re-enrollment, parents are required to initial current forms that do not require change or fill out a new form with updated information.

Canvas ELC does not follow a traditional school year, its program year runs September to September with learning opportunities year-round. Parent’s wishing to reserve a space for their child without attending during the summer, will be offered a re-enrollment form in mid-summer. Forms returned by the deadline will be prioritized. Forms received after the deadline will be placed on a first-come-first-serve basis with applicants from the general public.

Children’s records will be made available to program staff, licensing representatives, program accreditation assessors, food program auditors or any other persons having a legally identified interest. All information shared with staff in the form of written documentation or verbal information will be kept confidential. Persons having access to children’s records will not discuss or disclose any information from those records.

**School Supply List:** *subject to change without notice, items may be requested more than once per year.*

*Please be sure to check your child’s cubbie and replenished, as necessary. If your child has more than 3 accidents per week, he or she is considered a potty-trainer.*

*1-2 changes of clothing (shirt, underwear, pants, socks) ~~Nap/rest blanket~~*

*Baby Wipes ~~Small pillow~~*

*Box of 100 large gloves ~~Pillowcase~~*

*Large container of Clorox wipes Water bottle-dishwasher safe*

*Bag or backpack Box of Kleenex tissues*

*Sunscreen*

*Nap Buddy (used only for rest and comfort, no toys please—only if can be laundered and left)*

***potty trainers***

*Diapers/pullups - Potty-trainers*

*Box of gallon Ziploc bags (for accidents)*

*Wipes--***monthly or as required**

*Box of 100 large gloves--***monthly**

Should Canvas ELC be required to purchase supplies, such as diapers, wipes or gloves, for your child’s personal use, a $5 fee will be charge per day until items are supplied. This does not apply to materials that are used center-wide. Please make every effort to ensure that your child has all of the supplies necessary to have a safe, healthy, successful and worry-free day.

# Philosophy

**Guidance and Discipline**

Positive guidance is emphasized at Canvas ELC. Guided by James Hymes’ definition: “Discipline is the slow, bit by bit process of helping a child see the sense in acting a certain way.” Our goal is to enhance self-concept while helping children become self-disciplined. When behavior problems occur, teachers will utilize natural and logical consequences, redirection, problem solving, “I“- messages, reflective listening, conflict resolution and problem-solving techniques. One of the primary responsibilities for children during the preschool years is to learn how to interact positively with others. This is a long and complicated process. Each behavior is viewed as another opportunity to work toward this goal.

**Role of the Teacher and Curriculum**

The role of the teacher is to facilitate learning through being a partner, nurturer, and guide to the child. This is done through careful observation of children’s interests, needs, and developmental levels. The teacher plans activities, projects, and the environment to meet these needs.

Canvas helps ignite curiosity and subsequent learning by focusing keenly on children’s interests, development, and the best practices set forth in state and national standards for early childhood education. Research indicates, and Canvas staff believes that:

* Children engaged in various artistic mediums both increase their skills and grow their enjoyment in the creative process.
* Children are creative beings whose skills will dissipate over time without use. Teachers strive to ignite the creativity in each activity that children are engaged in.
* Creativity is essential and so we provide open-ended activities, materials, and questions. Arts integration is planned for and encouraged through daily activities and art exploration
* Children learn best when they are given opportunities to engage in “hands-on” activities and exploration of materials.
* Activities must be developmentally and academically relevant to be meaningful.
* Children benefit from having independent choices regarding their learning.
* Communities of learners help inspire social, emotional, physical, artistic and overall academic growth.
* Activities and materials are best set at slightly above a child’s developmental level to create more engagement and pride in learning.
* Play times during the day are essential and just as academically important as any learning discipline we provide.
* Community members and professionals give our students authentic experiences.
* An atmosphere of flexibility and individuality creates trust.
* Over-reliance on coloring books, dittos, or teacher-directed activities can stifle creativity.
* An environment should be established to inspire children’s natural curiosity and eagerness to learn.
* Opportunities to learn from authentic sources and experiences enhances a child’s success
* Planned activities teach the whole child to promote social, emotional, creative, physical, cognitive, and language development.

# Parent Opportunities

Parents are a child’s first and most important teacher. Sharing experiences and perspectives enhances our communication and ability to meet each child’s needs. Throughout the year, Canvas ELC offers many opportunities for parents to share information, learn about parenting, be involved, and to volunteer their services. These may include:

* Parent communication notebook: Available for notes and comments between parents and teachers to help in daily care. Including “pick-up” substitutes
* Brief exchanges when picking up or dropping off children
* Phone calls: We have voicemail if no one is available to answer the phone
* Parent teacher conferences
* Newsletters
* Weekly menus
* Parent meeting
* Family Engagement Activities

***Please feel free to contact staff about questions or concerns that you may have or to request an individual meeting with a teacher. It is also helpful for Canvas staff to know about any significant life changes or anything that you feel would be important to the developmental process of your child.***

***Parents can be involved by:***

Gaining information about parenting and activities to do with your child through:

* + - Newsletters
    - Asking teachers for specific information
    - Community and center workshops that may be of interest or connect families with our program- information will be provided when available
    - Observations at Canvas

Volunteering to assist Canvas by:

Being a classroom volunteer Making or providing learning materials

Sharing a talent or skill Participating in fundraising events

Joining us on a field trip Visiting us at lunch

Providing input regarding:

* + - Goals
    - Interests and needs
    - Effective techniques
    - Policies and procedures
    - Curriculum ideas
    - Ideas for fundraisers, parent events and involvement activities

We have an open-door policy and welcome visits any time.

### Billing Policies

**Tuition**

Canvas ELC tuition rates are based upon each family’s enrollment contract. Full day, half day and partial week rates are listed below and on the enrollment contract. Full tuition will be due upon the child’s start date, as determined by the enrollment contract. Students will be enrolled according to the age they are on their start date. This rate will be consistent until September 1 when tuition will be reassessed.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Length of Day | Days per Week | 2-3 year olds | 3+ year-olds |
| Full day | 4-5 | $575 | $525 |
| Full day | 3 | $380 | $350 |
| Full day | 1-2 | $275 | $250 |
| Half Day | 4-5 | $315 | $290 |
| Half Day | 3 | $210 | $190 |
| Half Day | 1-2 | $150 | $135 |
| After School | 4-5 |  | $150 |
| After School | 3 |  | $90 |
| After School | 1-2 |  | $60 |
| Overlap Care | Per day | $4 | $4 |

Monthly Rates

**Enrollment Fees**

All enrollment contracts will be subject to the following fees per child.

**Non-refundable Registration Fee:** $50

Reserves empty enrollment space for a maximum of 1 month. After that time full tuition will be assessed.

**Materials fee:** $35/trimester

(upon enrollment *and* October, February, & June)

**Best Beginning Scholarship**

Canvas ELC gladly accepts the Best Beginning Scholarship. This scholarship is contracted through Butte 4-C’s in Butte and will pay the tuition for specified days or hours each week. Parents are responsible for paying all tuition and fees that are not covered by Best Beginnings Scholarships. These fees may include but are not limited to copays, registration fees, materials fees, late charges, and fees for exceeding the daily drop off/pick up times. If the State rate does not amount to the total contracted tuition, parents will be charged the difference. It is a parent’s responsibility to contact with 4C’s and contract for the amount of hours needed for care.

**After School Care**

Children receiving afterschool care at Canvas ELC will be enrolled in Canvas ELC and have a contracted monthly schedule. Parents will be billed at the rate designated for the scheduled need at the beginning of each month. (See the rate schedule above.) Contracted care includes after-school hours and *half-day school closures only on days contracted* for. Full day school-closures and half-days outside of contract are subject to availability only. Additional fees will apply. An extra care form must be completed.

School age children may ride the bus to Canvas ELC. The bus stops at the parking lot of our building. Children will be required to walk directly to Canvas’ door. If a child has not arrived on a scheduled day and notification has not been given, staff will call a parent or emergency contact to locate the child. Charges will apply as necessary. Parents *MUST* alert Canvas staff to dance schedules if their child will be going to dance upon arrival on the bus before attending Canvas.

**Canvas School Closures**

Canvas is committed to being open a minimum of 48 weeks per academic year. Tuition is based on this minimum number of days and divided into 12 equal payments. Canvas ELC does not follow the public school or college calendar. However, we are mindful of those schedules and may ask for an attendance headcount on days when those systems are closed. *Canvas will be closed for all State and Federal holidays including the day after Thanksgiving and 1-2 days surrounding Easter*. These days are not included in the 20 days of school breaks. A schedule of closure will be sent out to parents at the beginning of the school year incorporating all known breaks. Canvas reserves the right to be closed, inside the 20-day allotment, for cleaning and Professional Development. Parents will get at least a two-week notice of any closures not on the schedule to be able to locate alternate care. Canvas ELC Board of Directors reserves the right to change this schedule with notice.

In extreme or emergency conditions, Canvas ELC may call for school closures. In the event of an unexpected closure, parents will be notified by phone, text and/or email by 7:00 am or called to retrieve their child if it is determined that Canvas must close mid-day. Conditions may include (but are not limited to) extreme weather and temperature conditions, threats to health and safety, or inability to provide the minimum ratio of staff to child due to illness or other unexpected circumstances. Please see the Emergency Preparedness folder locate in the Parent Information area for details on emergency evacuations and procedures.

**Canvas School Closure Dates: Canvas will be closed on the following Dates.** subject to change. Parents will be given a minimum of 2 weeks’ notice of pending breaks, changes and holidays

September 7 Labor Day

November 25 ½ day Thanksgiving Break

November 26-27 Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 21-Jan. 1 Winter Break

January 18 Martin Luther King Jr Day

February 15 President’s Day

April 1 ½ day Spring Break

April 2-5 Spring Break

May 31 Memorial Day

July 1-5 Summer Break

August 23-27 Cleaning and Preparing for fall

4 days are reserved for other school closures. Two-weeks’ notice will be given before closing, except in emergency situations.

**Early Drop off/Late Pick Up**

Care outside of contracted hours will incur additional charges: **$5.00 charge for up to 15 minutes, $1.00 per minute thereafter**. Outside of care hours include time *before* contract begins and *after* contract ends. Contract hours include:

**Full Day: 7:45-5:15 Morning: 7:45-12:00 Afternoon: 12:15-5:15**

**Overlap: 12-12:30 or 11:00-12:15**

Charges for outside of hours care will be reflected on your next month billing statement. If a child has not been picked up after 15 minutes, we will contact a parent and/or someone from the emergency contact list. If a child is left for more than 1 hours without contact or a plan of care in place, Child Protective Services may be called. You are responsible for all additional fees regardless of who picks your child up. Being respectful of time without children is an important part of the partnership you create with the staff at Canvas. Teachers perform many extra duties to create a wonderful environment for your child. Outside of hours fees are strictly adhered to. If a pickup is late due to a classroom scheduling error, please have the teacher initial your sign out time and a charge will not be applied.

**Overlap hours:** **12-12:30 or 11:00-12:15.** Parents requiring care before or after the hours of half-day care, during the transition between AM and PM may choose to add overlap to their contract. Any overlap care not listed on the contract must be pre-approved by the director. Tuition for this care will be at a rate of **$4 per day**. Care not approved will be considered Outside-of-Hours and be subject to such fees.

**Extra Care**

From time to time, a day outside of contracted hours may need to be requested. Make this request to the director in advance. Canvas reserves the right to deny the request due to staffing ratios, daily enrollment numbers, or other critical needs. Accommodations to your request will be made if possible. A Request for Extra Care form will be completed outlining the need and additional fees that will be added to the next billing statement. The rate for care is as follows:

full day--$30 half-day--$16 after school care--$8 overlap--$4

These rates apply regardless of the number of extra *hours* attended. A full day is defined as more than 5 hours, half day is 5 hours or less and after school hours are 3:30-5:15. Overlap hours are available during the hours of 11:00-12:15 *OR* 12:00-12:30.

**Paying bills**

Parents receive a bill for advanced\* care each month and will include any additional fees that were assessed from the previous month, i.e. late payment charge, extra care, etc. Billing statements will be emailed to the email address given on the enrollment contract. If email is not acceptable, parents will provide written instructions as to the method of billing they would prefer. A $.50 charge will be added to any statement requiring to be mailed. *A locked payment box will be available near the front door to deposit payments. Checks can be made out to* ***Canvas Early Learning Center or Canvas ELC****.* Prompt payments are expected and appreciated. *The billing statement is considered you tax receipt.* If a receipt of payment is necessary, please ask the teacher in charge.

**Late / Non- payment Policy**

**Payments are due by the 1st of each month and accepted as on time until the 10th**. Canvas ELC relies on the prompt payments to be able to provide teachers, space, food, and supplies for children. A late payment charge of *$25 per child* will be assessed for any amount unpaid on the 11th. Bills not paid in full by the beginning of the next month will result in a terminated contract unless arrangements have been made with the director. Late fees will be strictly adhered to.

Any bill left unpaid after 90 days will be sent to a collection’s agency.

**Permanent changes in schedule**

Life can be a roller coaster of changes and care schedules may change. In the event a permanent change needs to take place, notify the director immediately upon awareness. Parents will be required to fill out a new enrollment contract. *See section for additional days or missing days if the change will not be permanent.* Two weeks’ notice is required before a billing change can occur. Because payment is requested before services rendered, the billing change will be reflected on the next cycle. Credits will be given after the two-week notice period for days not used. If extra days are needed before the two-week notification, they will be billed as described in this parent handbook under Extra Care.

**Absences**

Because care is budgeted for the anticipated number of children each month rather than the actual number, credits for days missed are unavailable.

In the event of an absence, parents are required to call the center as soon as possible, preferably before 8:30 am, so adjustments can be made to meals and coverage, as necessary. It is the parent’s/guardian’s responsibility to contact Canvas ELC in the event of an absences of any length. If an absence occurs for more than two weeks without notification, the contract will be terminated, and placement will be filled from our waiting list.

**Leave of absence**

Some family’s schedules vary greatly from week-to-week or month-to-month. Canvas strives to accommodate all schedules and apply fees appropriately without creating a financial hardship, while providing for Canvas’ needs and budget. If an absence for two weeks to one month will occur on a regular basis, it must be noted on the enrollment contract and **a minimum of 2-weeks’ notice must be given before the impending absence**. A fee of 50% tuition will be assessed for each week missed to reserve the space. If regular absences are not noted on the contract, notice has not been given and/or any of the requested days are utilized, full tuition will be assessed. For any time periods in excess of four consecutive weeks, full tuition will be necessary to reserve the space.

**Re-Enrollment**

Parents wishing to Withdraw their child(ren) from care for events such as summer break will be subject to re-enrollment and materials fees.

**Termination of care by Parent**

***A minimum of two-week notification is required when parents wish to leave* Canvas *ELC*.** Parents are required to fill out a Withdraw from Care form when they no longer require services from Canvas ELC. The 2-week notice period will begin upon *receipt* of this completed form. Verbal notification is not accepted. Should a form not be completed and/or returned, the two-week notice will begin at the end of the current month. Tuition and fees will be assessed for the two weeks following notification or until the child’s last day whichever is later. Parents will also be responsible for additional fees if they relate to the month of discharge, such as material fees. Refunds will not be given. To avoid additional charges, please notify Canvas ELC’s director or lead teacher, complete and return the form as soon as you know a change will be made.

**Termination of Care by Canvas ELC**

Although we make every effort to meet the needs of each child there are extremely rare situations where care at Canvas ELC may not be in the best interest of the child or other children at the center. If we have concerns about the appropriateness of placement, the teachers and /or director will meet with the parents to develop a plan of action. If, after implementing the plan, the situation is not resolved, care will be terminated.

**Preventing and Reducing Expulsion**

Canvas will expend all reasonable measures to prevent and reduce expulsion of students. Our policy is aimed at maintaining the best opportunity for each child in our care. Expulsion will result if child behavior is consistently and overwhelmingly disruptive to the classroom and or the matter cannot be resolved without overwhelming the Canvas resources.

If a pattern of disruptive behavior is observed, teachers will notify the parents and initiate planning and communication on how Canvas will manage future issues, communicate how disruptive behavior will be documented and communicate outside resources available to the family, such as therapeutic and educational supports. If the issues cannot be managed with available resources a timetable for expulsion will be established. In exceptional cases, such as wonton violence, a pattern of behavior need not be established and Canvas reserves the right to take reasonable immediate measures to maintain safety in the classroom.

**GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

**Signing In and Out See COVID Policy for fall 2020**

For the security of children and attendance records, children must be signed in and out of the center each day. Please be sure to write legibly for accuracy. If the sign in sheet has not been updated, a child’s name may be written in an empty space. A highlighted space indicates a need for a signature. The sheet will be left out for parents to sign upon return. Please check these regularly. Signing children in each day releases your child to the responsibility of Canvas employees. Though staff is aware of those present, in emergency and stressful situations children who are not signed in may be overlooked, as the attendance sheet is used to account for children. Signing children out relieves Canvas staff of the responsibility of care. Contact with teacher provides the opportunity to talk about the day and receive any messages that are important to care and education.

Please note: Photo ID will be requested from any person who is new to pick up or unfamiliar to staff regardless of the relationship to the child.

Sign in and out MUST BE LEGIBLE.

**Pick Up Substitutes**

At times, a person not on the Release and Contact form will be necessary to pick up a child. When this happens, the parent must provide ***written and signed*** notification. The pick-up substitute must make contact with the teacher in charge and provide a picture ID.

Children of parents who are separated or divorced will be released to either parent without question. If circumstances restrict access of one parent, a parenting plan must be on file at Canvas detailing the terms of custody. Without the parenting plan, Canvas will not be held responsible for the release of the child to either parent.

**Dance schedules - See COVID Policy for fall 2020**

As a courtesy, employees at Canvas will transport your child to and from dance and gymnastics classes. This is neither a contracted service, nor is Shine Studio dance services subcontracted through Canvas ELC. It is your responsibility to notify Canvas staff of dance days or changes in the schedule and give reminders until a routine is established. Parents will be required to add Shine Studio to the release form. Your child will be signed out of Canvas’ care while at Shine Studio. Canvas will resume care services when your child is signed back into care on the sign in sheet either by Canvas Staff, Shine Studio staff, or parent. Canvas will not be held responsible for the actions of Shine Studio staff or the impact it may have on your child. Your child will be required to wait at Shine Studio until a Canvas staff member arrives or Shine Studio staff walks them back.

**Intoxicated Parents**

If a parent arrives to pick up a child and is believed to be intoxicated, a staff person will take one or both of these actions.

1. Deter the parent for as long as possible and contact the other parent or person on the emergency contact list to come right away.
2. Contact the police department and child protective services to investigate the situation.

If the person in question is not a parent, the child will not be released, and staff member will call a parent or someone on the emergency contact list. Canvas ELC strives to ensure children’s safety under all circumstances.

**Hostile adults**

Any adult displaying hostile or inappropriate behavior will be asked to leave immediately. Should the adult not leave, authorities will be contacted.

**Supervision policy**

Children are never left unsupervised. At the minimum, Canvas ELC follows the child-to-adult ratio of 8:1 set by the State of Montana. Canvas ELC reserves the right to be closed unexpectedly due to inability to comply with child-to-staff ratios.

**Transportation policy**

Canvas staff may transport children on foot to playgrounds, the library and various other locations. The children will always be accompanied by at least two Canvas staff members and/or volunteers.  Supervision will be such that staff members will locate themselves strategically to be able to see all the children in the designated space.  In large spaces such as the park, one teacher will be at each end to ensure children’s safety. Attendance will be taken using the sign-in sheet before leaving and upon arrival to Canvas and the place visiting. A headcount will be taken periodically during the visit.

**Outdoor Play Policy**

Canvas ELC recognizes that outdoor play is an essential part of your child development. At least one time for outdoor play is planned for every day. Children should be prepared to go outside in all weather conditions. Air temperature and quality will be monitored each day to ensure safe playing conditions. Outdoor play will be attempted when temperatures are above 20 degrees. Please send clothing and shoes that are appropriate to all weather conditions.

**Parking**

Parking may be congested during drop off and pick up times. Consider safety when getting in and out of your car. Modeling safety rules, including pedestrian safety is an important part of parenting.

**Multicultural Education**

Canvas ELC strives for an inclusive multicultural educational program. To do this, families are encouraged to share their personal beliefs, traditions, and culture. Canvas Early Learning Center does not discriminate against anyone. We provide service regardless of all ethnic, racial, sexual, religious, or other backgrounds.

**Children with disabilities**

Canvas ELC is designed to be inclusive of all children. We welcome children with diagnosed disabilities and will make reasonable modifications in the environment, activities and staffing, with the assistance of parents and/or specialist, as necessary and within our financial means, to meet each child’s individual needs. If a child is suspected of having a disability, teachers will conduct unofficial assessments and documentation and assist in referrals for further evaluation. This will only be done with parental permission or upon parental request. We welcome the opportunity to participate in Child Study Team and Individual Education Plan meetings.

**Behavioral Needs**

Children display a variety of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors throughout each day. Canvas staff work with the children using their understanding of Positive Guidance Strategies to help children understand their emotions and develop skills to self-regulate and play peacefully. Occasionally, children’s behaviors may become excessive, violent or recurrent. When staff have exhausted all of their abilities to help your child maintain composure, parents may be called to retrieve the child. Should the behaviors continue over a length of time, a conference will be held with parents, the teacher and director. A plan will be set in motion to help maintain consistency and appropriateness. Recommendations may be made at this time regarding outside help.

**Meals See COVID Policy for Fall 2020**

Canvas ELC provides mid-morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack to children at the center. Charges for meals are included in tuition fees. The Child and Adult Food Care Program offers reimbursement for a part of each child’s meal and meals conform to the CACFP guidelines. Canvas ELC’s and each family’s participation in CACFP is important to the sustainability of quality, nutritious meals and snacks. Families choosing not to participate may be subject to meal reimbursement rates equal to those we would otherwise receive from CACFP. Weekly menus are posted near the sign in sheet. Morning snack is served at 9:00 a.m. and afternoon snack is served between 3-4 pm. Lunch is served at 12:30 p.m. to those contracted for full day and half-day afternoon care. Canvas ELC does provide milk at lunch to complete the components for a healthy meal, as necessary.

If a child’s diet must be modified for health reasons, a physician’s written explanation is required. *Please ask for the necessary form(s) for your doctor to complete.* Canvas staff are only able to modify a diet when the appropriate forms are completed and in the child’s file. If a child’s diet is modified for cultural or religious reasons, the parent is asked to put the request in writing and will be asked to provide supplemental foods.

After school children will be offered a snack upon arrival. DO NOT send snacks or extra food. Children will be asked to put it back in the backpack as everyone eats the same snacks at Canvas unless a medical need exists, and necessary paperwork is completed.

Any food that parents would like to share with students of Canvas ELC must be store-bought. Please keep treats for birthdays, etc minimal and as healthy as possible. Please DO NOT send large cupcakes. Canvas acts in recognition of CACFP guidelines, minimizing the intake of sugar as much as possible. Treats such as fruit kabobs and frozen yogurt are just as (and sometimes more) well received as candy, cake or cookies. Additionally, please inquire about food allergies and preferences and make accommodations for these children as well.

**Civil Rights Policy**

Canvas ELC provides a delicious and nutritionally balanced mid-morning snack, Lunch and mid-afternoon snack. Menus are posted for the current week on the message board near the Sign –in sheet. New menus for the up-coming week are posted each Monday. This center receives reimbursements for meals served which meet CACFP’s nutritional requirements.

In accordance with Federal Law and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture policy, Canvas Early Learning Center is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, contact the USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence 3 Ave. SW, Washington DC, 2025-9410 or call (800)795-3273 or (202)720-6382 (TTY).

**Personal Belongings See COVID Poliy in regard to belongings other than clothing**

A change of clothing or two (including socks and underwear) should be provided to keep at Canvas. Check for soiled or wet clothes regularly and replenish the supply when needed. If a child is potty-training, several changes of clothing should be provided and updated daily. Extra clothing is limited but will be used if a child does not have necessary clothing changes. Please wash and return borrowed clothing promptly. If nothing is available for a change, parents will be called to bring clothing immediately. Note that children may be required to wear only a diaper/pullup until appropriate clothing is obtained. Additionally, all children will need napping/resting materials. See the school supplies list in this parent handbook. PLEASE MARK ALL PERSONAL BELONGINGS! All bedding, including any that your child has borrowed from Canvas, will be sent home for laundering weekly. Bedding, including borrowing item should be returned on the following school day. Canvas is not responsible for any article that is not marked.

**Toys from Home**

***Please do not bring toys from home.*** Children are often reluctant to share their toys causing other children to have hurt feelings. In addition, toys may get lost or broken. Canvas ELC does not accept the responsibility of lost or broken items that are brought from home, nor should we be expected to monitor it for its whereabouts. Should children bring something from home without parental awareness, it will be expected to remain in the child’s backpack for the entire day or a teacher will keep it safe and return it upon departure. Please ask for it before leaving. Any play toys brought into the school with awareness *WILL* be sent home by the parent, *no exceptions****.***

Children may bring ONE security item to use during arrival, stressful periods, and naptime if such an item is needed. Generally, this is a blanket or stuffed toy, not a toy for play. These articles will be kept in the cubby or with napping articles when not in use.

**Holidays and Birthdays *any treats MUST be store bought***

Parents have different values and beliefs surrounding holiday and birthday celebrations. Parents are in the best position to make decisions about what beliefs they want their children to have and how they will teach these. Since churches, stores, television, etc. are all involved in celebrating holidays, children and parents have a variety of opportunities to engage in holiday events. Studies reveal that holiday curriculum consumes a large number of days each school year. Children are typically exposed to the same holidays, the same information, and often even the same activities every school year. Therefore, our curriculum will not be one that is holiday dependent. Instead, we may focus on some of the underlying themes and values that surround the time of year.

\*\*\*Treats may be shared with students of Canvas ELC on a designated day, such as the day before break or the birthdate. These treats must be store-bought and enough to be shared with ALL students in your child’s class. The treats will be shared at lunch or snack time. It is recommended that treat be small and as healthy as possible. Suggested sweet treats are a small cupcake or cookie, or Hershey’s miniatures. Healthy treats are recommended. Parents may consider fruit kabobs, frozen yogurt pops or granola bars. Please do not bring large cupcakes or cookies or cake. Also, please ask about children with food allergies and provide an alternate treat for these children.

### Safety, Medical and Emergency Information

**Policy**

Canvas ELC is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all children, staff, and any other persons participating in the program. Our commitment is to respond to the needs of the child if injured, becomes ill, or is traumatized while attending the center. We are committed to ensuring safety and appropriate administration of medication in accordance with Montana state law.

**Immunizations**

***State law requires that every child enrolled in a childcare program be immunized.*** Please update immunization records as needed. Religious exemptions are **not** accepted at Canvas ELC as per State regulations. It is also highly recommended that each child has a flu shot every year. **Please provide a new record of immunizations whenever they have been updated.** Immunization schedules are available for those unaware of the immunization timeline for children. The public health nurse performs a check of immunizations each year to aid compliance. If your child’s file is found to be incomplete, you will have seven (7) days to become current. Children and staff with incomplete immunizations will not be able to attend until they are current.

**Health check**

State regulations require each child to be visibly checked when they first arrive at Canvas ELC each day. The lead teacher will ask parents to take a visibly ill child out of the program until the illness/symptoms disappear. If the child is too ill to participate in our daily activities, including outdoor time, then the child is too ill to be at Canvas ELC. Please do not ask for exceptions since we do not normally have the staff and facilities to handle these special cases. Also, please error on the side of caution when you suspect illness.

**Sick child exclusion Indicators See COVID Policy**

As listed in the Administrative Rules of Montana Title 16, Chapter 24, Subchapter 4. Use these illness symptoms and indicators and keep your child home if he/she/has:

* **A fever** (above 100 degrees orally). Children must be ***without fever of 100 or greater for 24 hours*** before they return to the center, unless the fever is related to immunizations. Keep in mind that reducing a fever with medication does not mean FEVER-FREE.
* **Vomiting or diarrhea:** Children must be ***without vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours*** before they return to the center. Vomiting includes two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools, increased water in stool, and/or decreased form to the stool that cannot be contained by clothing.

***Please keep your child home if he/she vomited or had diarrhea during the night but “seems fine now”.*** If a child discloses that he/she vomited during the night, parents may receive a phone call for clarification.

* **An undiagnosed rash or a diagnosed contagious rash or contagious disease**. Generalized rashes, including those covering multiple parts of the body, must be evaluated by a health care provider to determine their cause before the child can return to the center. All other rashes or contagious diseases must be evaluated by a doctor and a notice from the doctor must accompany the child upon return to Canvas ELC.
* The **bacterial infections** listed below must be ***treated with antibiotics for 24 hours*** before the child returns to the center: Strep Throat; Bacterial Conjunctivitis (pink eye); Scarlet Fever; Impetigo; Skin infections with drainage
* Children with **chickenpox** will not be admitted to the center until their sores dry up, which usually takes 5 to 7 days.
* Children who are **jaundiced** must be excluded until a health care provider evaluates the cause and authorizes the child to return to the center.
* Children with symptoms of **severe illness**, such as uncontrolled coughing, mucus drainage from the nose or eyes, breathing difficulty or wheezing, stiff neck, irritability, poor food or fluid intake, or a seizure, must be evaluated by a health care provider before they may return to the center. Please have a doctor’s note available upon return.

If a child develops symptoms of an illness while at Canvas ELC, after the parent has left, we will isolate the child from the other children, contact a parent or caregiver to pick up the child, and will inform the local health department if the illness is suspected to be a communicable disease. All children who vomit or have loose stool will be sent home on the first incident.

**Contagious Disease**

Canvas ELC should be notified of any contagious disease that children have contracted even if the child has not attended since contracting it. Every attempt to prevent the disease or lessen its effects on the rest of our Canvas ELC participants will be taken. Children may not attend Canvas after a contagious disease until they have been cleared by a doctor in writing to return. Common contagious diseases include, but are not limited to: influenza, conjunctivitis (pink eye), strep throat, coronavirus, RSV, whooping cough. For a complete list, please ask the director. Any suspicions of a contagious disease will result in your child being sent home.

**Lice**

Children determined to have lice will be sent home for treatment and will not be admitted back until all nits have been removed. Canvas staff will examine the child upon return to ensure that the child can be cleared.

C**hronic Conditions**

Children with regularly occurring (chronic) condition that is not contagious and does not inhibit regular activities will be welcomed each day even when symptoms exist. The condition will be noted on the Personal Information form and written consent form and a doctor’s note releasing your child to care will be on file. Conditions may include eczema, hives, allergy or teething drainage, etc. Canvas ELC reserves the right to send children home if we do not have a doctor’s notice and/or the condition worsens throughout the day.

**Emergencies, Accidents, and Illnesses**

In the event of an illness, the parent will be notified to come and pick up the child. If staff is unable to reach a parent, they will call the person(s) listed on the Parent Consent form. If an emergency occurs that requires immediate medical attention, staff will take immediate action to secure medical care for the child, while simultaneously attempting to contact parents. All costs of medical care are the sole responsibility of the parent.

**First Aid Policy:**

When a child is hurt at Canvas, staff will apply First Aid as trained to the extent necessary. For injuries requiring medical attention, staff will first call 911. Parents will be notified immediately following. It is expected that the parent will come immediately and accompany child to the hospital, if necessary. If a parent is not available and only if conditions permit, a staff member will accompany the child.

An accident report will be written detailing the injury and events preceding.

**Accidents Reports**

Montana State Regulations require that any accident or injury requiring a visit to the hospital be documented on an accident report form. As a way of communicating more effectively with parents, Canvas ELC will also write an accident report or personally inform parents when a child has an accident or injury resulting in the skin being broken, visible injury or when an accident occurs which may require observation of future medical care.

**Medication**

Canvas staff will only administer medication as needed regularly for chronic afflictions such as asthma and diaper rash. Medications for colds, teething, chapped lips, etc. administered for a short period of time will be the parents’ responsibility. In the event that regular medication be administered, parents must complete a Medication Request Authorization Form before *any* medicine (prescribed or over-the-counter) can be given. Medication includes prescribed and over-the-counter ingestible, creams, lotions, lip balm, diaper rash ointment, essential oils, allergy medications and Epi-pens. **All medication must be in the original container with the child’s name on it.** All prescription medication must have written instructions on the label. Medication will only be given to the child it is prescribed for and for the current illness. We will NOT administer shared prescriptions or prescriptions that are “left over” from a previous illness. Medications should be handed directly from the parent to a teacher. Children should NEVER handle medication, including carrying it in their backpack or handing it to teachers.

Please let the staff know if there are special medical needs or procedures. If applicable, a demonstration, or written “what to watch for” will help staff identify and address any special health concerns.

**Emergency Evacuations**

In case of emergency, Canvas students and staff will be evacuated. Parents will be called to retrieve children due to ANY emergency evacuation cause. Children will be counted, and attendance will be compared to the Sign In sheet.

In the case of an emergency, such as flooding, that requires evacuation out of the area, children will be evacuated using employee vehicles to a site not less than 1 mile from Canvas ELC. Parents will be called to retrieve their child from this designated site. All safety measures and precautions will be taken as possible.

Emergency Evacuation sites: Whalen Tire, North Street

UMWestern Arena, 710 S. Atlantic St. west end of PE Complex

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

As required by law, Canvas ELC employees are Mandated Reporters and required to report any *suspected* cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Family Services. Please note: teachers at Canvas ELC do their best to discern whether marks on, behaviors or comments made by a child require reporting. If a child displays anything that may be misconstrued, please alert the lead teacher immediately. Reporting is in no way a reflection of the relationship you have built with Canvas staff.

**Communication, Questions, or Concerns**

Canvas staff are always interested in learning more about better ways to serve all families. This responsibility and honor is taken very seriously. Please let us know how we are doing. We cannot always make changes to accommodate everyone, but we are willing to try. It’s much better to address small problems as they arise than to let them grow into big ones. If you are happy with our center, tell us that too, and tell everyone else as well!

Concerns Procedure

If you have a concern regarding billing, classroom activities, or inappropriate interactions, please use the following process in the order that they appear. Feel free to call or to ask for a conference.

1. Speak to the person with whom you are in conflict.
2. Speak to the lead teacher.
3. Speak to the director.

Every effort will be made to achieve resolutions that are in the best interest of the children, families, and Canvas ELC.

Welcome to Canvas Early Learning Center! May your stay be positive and enriching for all!

*Children are wonderful, messy little scientists who come to us, eyes lit bright with wonder, all their senses open and their motors running. Children need a laboratory that encourages hands-on active learning, exploration, and discovery, alongside caring and sensitive adults.*

Jim Greenman (2000)

\*\*The word parent in the context of this document refers to any legal parent, guardian or temporary caregiver of the child.

**Parent Handbook Agreement**

Canvas ELC Copy

(please sign and return this page only – Keep Parent Handbook for your reference)

I/We (the undersigned) have read and understand all the information, policies and procedures outlined in the parent handbook for Canvas Early Learning Center. I/We (the undersigned) have received a copy of these policies and procedures for my/our own records and reference.  
  
By signing this agreement I/we consent to all the handbook policies and procedures and agree to them, including the media, billing, payment and late fee, transportation, illness and emergency policies and procedures

By signing this agreement, I/we acknowledge that the information supplied in regard to my/our child(ren) is true and accurate to the best of my/our knowledge.   
  
  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature Date  
  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature Date  
  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Canvas ELC Representative Date

Please keep for your records: Contracted schedule

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Enrollment | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| Full Day 7:45-5:15 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Morning only 7:45-12:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Afternoon only 12:15-5:15 |  |  |  |  |  |
| After School 3:30-5:15 |  |  |  |  |  |

I agreed to pay \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tuition each month. Additional fees will apply when extra care is needed. I will alert Canvas ELC to any changes or termination of this contract at least two (2) weeks in advance and will abide by the payment policies as outlined in this handbook.

I will refer to this parent handbook first when I have questions about policy and procedures.

FIRST DAY CHECKLIST

Forms and Paperwork

* First month’s payment as dictated on enrollment contract, including materials fees, if applicable.
* Personal Information
* Over-the-counter medication form.
* Canvas permission and release form.
* Emergency contact form.
* Parent Handbook signature page
* A copy of immunizations from your physician’s office.
* CACFP Food program eligibility form. *All families are required to fill this out. (If given)*

SCHOOL SUPPLIES -- *Name should be written on all items*

* *1-2 changes of clothing (shirt, underwear, pants, socks)*
* *~~Nap/rest blanket~~*
* *~~Small pillow~~*
* *~~Pillowcase~~*
* *Nap Buddy (used only for rest and comfort—washable and able to be kept at Canvas, no toys please)*
* *Bag or backpack*
* *Water bottle (dishwasher safe)*
* *Sunscreen*

To be provided at the beginning of each September and as needed

(\*potty trainers please supply monthly)

* *\*Box Baby Wipes*
* *\*Box of gloves*
* *Box Clorox Wipes*
* *Diapers/pullups – as necessary*
* *Box of gallon Ziploc bags*
* *Box of Kleenex tissues*