



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Child Development Services



# Family Handbook

**School Age Programs  
2021-2022**

**Approved by SMMUSD Board of Education**

# Welcome!

Dear Families,

Welcome to Child Development Services (CDS)! We are both excited and honored to have your child(ren) in our programs. As a part of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD), our department serves many children. With our various programs, including the Infant/Toddler Center, Seaside, California State Preschool Programs (CSPP), and our School Age Programs for students in grades TK - 3 (CCTR), we have the opportunity to support many families in our community. We hope you find the programs and the staff ready to support your needs.

We understand school readiness is one of the most important skills we can offer our youngest students, but we also know families are the greatest support system our children can have. We offer our families opportunities to participate in workshops, parent groups and to sit on decision-making teams in CDS. We also incorporate health and nutritional services with our school readiness programs, because we believe these services can strengthen each child's ability to successfully participate in school. We also encourage you to find ways to stay involved with us. If you don't see something that works for you, ask us - we'll figure it out together!

Please read through this Family Handbook as it is one way we can share information about who we are and what we do. The handbook will share some of the ways you can be involved in your child's education, as well as the roles and responsibilities of both parents and our staff. Finally, you will also find detailed information about the regulations that govern our programs.

Once again, thank you for being a part of our Child Development Services family. We look forward to a positive and productive year where we are able to work in partnership with you to best support our children. We hope you enjoy your experience with us!

Sincerely,

Susan Samarge-Powell, Ed.D.  
Director of Early Learning  
Child Development Services

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# **Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Administration**

## **Board of Education**

Jon Kean - President  
Laurie Lieberman – Vice President  
Keith Coleman - Member  
Craig Foster - Member  
Maria Leon-Vazquez – Member  
Jennifer Smith – Member  
Dr. Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein - Member

## **District Administration**

Dr. Ben Drati - Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Jacqueline Mora - Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services  
Dr. Mark Kelly – Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources  
Ms. Melody Canady – Assistant Superintendent, Business Services

## **Child Development Services (CDS) Administration**

Dr. Susan Samarge-Powell - Director of Early Learning  
Reham Dabash - Assistant Director, Preschool  
Monica Simon – Coordinator, ITC and School Age Programs

## **SMMUSD Mission**

“Extraordinary Achievement for all while simultaneously closing the achievement gap.”

SMMUSD’s approach - All students graduate ready for college and careers from schools that are safe, socially responsive and academically rigorous. This is accomplished through a self-reflective, shared system of accountability that consistently uses culturally relevant best practices to maximize equitable student outcomes.

SMMUSD believes in Excellence through Equity. This occurs when we:

1. Create a culture of shared accountability through a systems approach
2. Teach cross-cultural and socio-emotional skills
3. Engage in constant self-reflection around issues of equity

## **SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS MISSION STATEMENT**

Through CDS/ School Age Programs, we strive to:

- Provide a positive, fun and safe environment.
- Employ a well-trained and caring staff.
- Provide a program that balances educational, social, and recreational opportunities.
- Respond to the changing needs and interests of children.
- Be partners with parents.
- Stay involved with the school community.
- Work with support agencies throughout the community to strengthen program activities.

## **Our Program: Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives**

### **Program Description**

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) Child Development Services (CDS) is funded through the California Department of Education Child Development Division and School Age programs parents' fees. Policies for providing subsidized services are developed in accordance with the "Funding Terms and Conditions Contract" of the State Department of Education.

**If applicable, families must meet and continue to meet all eligibility requirements for the School Age programs.**

### **Open Door Policy**

Child Development Services maintains an open-door policy. Parents may visit our classrooms unannounced to observe their child during program hours. Parents must follow district procedures upon arrival.

### **Prohibition on Religious Instruction**

SMMUSD complies with the regulations which stipulate that religious instruction or worship is prohibited.

### **Equal Access**

SMMUSD does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability in determining which children and families are served. Our district understands and implements the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to make reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities. The accommodations cannot negatively impact the fiscal solvency of the program.

- ADA-Title II: SMMUSD complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Public Law 101-336 and 42 U.S.C 12101 et seq. These regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability, and require that no qualified individual with a disability be denied the benefit of Child Development services, programs, or activities.

## **Parent Involvement**

Our programs are based upon a partnership with the parents of the children enrolled. Therefore, parents are encouraged to participate in our programs. Parent participation is essential to the successful operation of each program. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and on field trips if possible. District policy requires that all volunteers:

- Complete a SMMUSD Volunteer Application at the school site
- Participate in a volunteer orientation training at the site, if applicable
- Complete an Adult Tuberculosis (TB) Risk Assessment (part of the volunteer packet) that is cleared by CDS nurse and submit a "Certification of Completion" to be filed with CDS
- Must agree to have Megan's Law Check
- Once all items have been reviewed and approved you may begin to volunteer

The following are additional examples of ways parents can be involved:

- Volunteer in the classroom.
- Assist with field trips.
- Bring items from home that might support projects or activities.
- Attend or join the Early Care and Development District Advisory Committee (DAC).
- Attend the parent /teacher conferences offered twice a year.
- Complete and return the annual State required Parent Survey.

## **Community Involvement**

The District Advisory Committee consists of Child Development Services staff, parents and members of the community. The committee meets regularly to discuss the needs of all Early Learning programs, including ITC, Preschool, and School Age Programs. Though not a governing board, the members, who represent many aspects of the community, give input concerning program policies and procedures.

## **Education Program**

SMMUSD is committed to providing a quality educational program that focuses on the whole child and support services that address the diverse needs of all our families. This is all done in an environment that is rewarding, inclusive, and collaborative for all, including children with special needs. Our program encourages respect for the feelings and the rights of others, building trust and planning routines and transitions so they can occur in a timely, predictable and unhurried manner.

## **Staff Development**

SMMUSD hires qualified staff to be part of our team. All staff members hold appropriate credentials or permits required by the state of California.

- New employees are provided an orientation to guide them in understanding how district policies relate to their respective job description.
- Teachers participate in annual mandatory staff meetings; they receive training on serving as mandated reporters, understanding district policies on substance abuse and harassment; and receive, read and sign Professional Expectations and Absence notification letters
- CDS supports continuous growth by assessing the needs of the staff members and providing professional development activities to enhance their growth.
- Staff members are evaluated per District Evaluation Procedures.
- Internal communication mechanisms are in place, including email and voicemail, to provide staff with information necessary to carry out their respective duties.

## **School Age Classroom Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS)**

Each classroom is assessed using a School Age Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS) tool at least once each school year. The objective is for each sub-scale to receive a minimum 5 out of 7 score. The information obtained from this assessment is then used to help teachers design layouts and purchase materials each school year to enhance their classroom environments.

## **Program Self – Evaluation Process**

Child Development Services complies with the California Department of Education regulations which requires the department to conduct a yearly Self -Assessment of its programs. During this process, we identify areas of compliance and non-compliance, and we work together as a team to develop a written plan after the review that will allow for correction of the items found out of compliance. For the Program Self Evaluation summary, we include recommendations based on the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP 2015), School Age Classroom Environmental Rating Scales (SACERS), the Compliance Monitoring Report (CMR), and parent feedback.

## **PROGRAM POLICIES**

### **Drop-Off**

No child shall be accepted without contact between the classroom staff and the authorized adult bringing the child to the center. Refer to your contract hours.

### **Pick-Up**

Children must be picked up from the center at the agreed upon time. **Under no circumstances** may parents/guardians leave their children at school after the closing hours. Parents picking up a child after program hours will be charged \$1.00 per minute. No exceptions.

Parents/guardians must authorize CDS staff in writing to release the child to adults **not** identified on the emergency card. In an emergency, a fax **with your signature** (as a measure of security) is acceptable, but you must then come to the CDS main office within the next two days to update the Emergency Card. Adults will be required to show photo identification if they are unfamiliar to staff. Adults must be individuals eighteen (18) years or older.

### **NOTE:**

*\*Once a child has been picked up and signed out for the day, the child may not return to the program on that day.*

*\* It is imperative to authorize and list several adults on the emergency card. Please ensure that all contact information is current.*

<b>Consequences for Late Pick-Up            (\$1.00 per minute per child will be charged when picking up child(ren)            late after the program hours)</b>		
<i>First Incident</i>	<i>Second Incident</i>	<i>Third Incident</i>
<i>Sign late pick-up form</i>  <i>Verbal warning</i>  <i>Receive written warning letter</i>	<i>Sign late pick-up form</i>  <i>Receive written warning letter</i>  <i>Conference with CDS Administrator or designee</i>	<i>Sign late pick-up form</i>  <i>Receive written warning letter</i>  <i>Meeting with CDS Administrator or designee</i>  <i>Termination of services might be issued at this point.</i>

### **Joint Custody**

In the event that custody of children is shared jointly per court documentation, children will be released to either parent and to any adult listed on the emergency card provided by either parent. Should disagreements arise between the parents related to issues of who may pick-up the child; staff will follow any and all procedures outlined in court orders. After this; if further disagreements arise, parents will be asked to return to court for clarification.

### **Child Abuse Reporting**

All CDS Staff are Mandated Reporters. This means we are required to contact DCFS if we suspect Child Abuse. Child abuse and neglect are serious issues for personnel who work with children on a daily basis. We hope to never encounter incidents of child abuse or neglect. However, we recognize that if a child in our program is potentially suffering from abuse or neglect at home, it is our responsibility to protect that child to the greatest degree possible. This may include calling DCFS. This information is not given to frighten you, but rather to familiarize you with our responsibilities as teachers, child-care professionals, and service providers.

Possible child abuse indicators that mandate a call to Department of Child and Family Services and/or the police include (According to Penal Code Section 11165):

- **Physical abuse** – Unexplained bruises, burns, welts, fractures, lacerations etc.
- **Sexual abuse** – Difficulty walking or sitting, pain when urinating/defecating, injury or pain to genital area, unusual or foul odor emanating from genital area.
- **Mental/Emotional abuse** – Failure to thrive, depression (child appears sad often, empty facial expression), severe aggression towards self and others.
- **Neglect** – Underweight, poor growth pattern, consistent hunger, unattended physical problems or medical needs, general unattended appearance (soiled clothing, inappropriate clothing, unusual body odor and lack of medical or dental care).

### **Discipline Policy**

Our goal in the School Age Programs is to help children develop positive social skills that help move them toward lifelong success. We recognize that children succeed best when the staff, parents and children work together. The School Age Programs provides for the well-being and safety of each child by helping children understand the effects of their behavior and helping children become skilled at making positive choices. We are committed to:

- Providing opportunities for children to select activities
- Modeling desired behavior/s such as fairness and cooperation
- Redirecting inappropriate behavior quickly, for example moving the child to a new activity
- Teaching children how to resolve conflicts positively
- Using verbal reminders
- Involving parents
- **Physical punishment is never allowed;** CA Child Care Center Licensing Reg.101223.2

If a child is unresponsive to the previously-mentioned techniques, remains uncooperative, and/or jeopardizes the safety of themselves or others, the following steps will be taken:

- Written notification will be provided to the parent/guardian via a parent – teacher conference and/or Incident Report.
- A team, including the teacher, parent, and Coordinator, will develop a plan to be implemented. The team will meet to review the plan periodically or as needed.
- After other interventions have been implemented, or if the child’s behavior places the safety and welfare of other children or an adult at risk, parents may be called to pick up their child. The State of California Health and Safety Code Regulation #1596.885 requires this action. If a parent refuses to comply with this requirement, the child may be suspended from the program for the following day.
- When a student demonstrates continuous unsafe behavior on center grounds, this might cause termination of services due to jeopardizing the safety of themselves or others.

### **Administering Medication**

Children taking prescription, over-the-counter, or homeopathic medication at school require the following:

1. Medical form with a written detailed description of the condition including the name and dosage of each medication signed by the doctor. Forms are available from the school nurse or staff.
2. Written permission to administer the prescription or medication signed by the parent and the physician. *Dosage and times that medication is to be administered must be included.*
3. Medications must be in the original container with the pharmacy label attached.
4. Whenever possible, medications should not expire.
5. If your doctor states that the child has a need for a medication, you must bring the medication or sign a refusal to supply the medication to the school.
6. The teacher and nurse must be notified immediately of any updates or changes to medication and/or prescription.
7. Medications are to be picked up and taken home on the last day of school.

### **Allergies/ Medical Conditions**

All diagnosed allergies and medical conditions must be documented in the child's file and each staff person responsible for supervising the child must be notified. It is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to inform the staff at the time of enrollment and the child’s teacher of any and all known (potentially harmful) allergies or medical conditions, i.e. asthma, diabetes, seizures, etc. SAP teachers are trained on the use of the EpiPen in case of an allergic emergency. If you do not wish to have your child administered an EpiPen in case of an anaphylactic reaction, you must sign a refusal statement.

### **Emergency Preparedness/Response**

Each classroom posts information regarding Disaster Preparedness and Response (earthquakes, fires, lockdowns and Shelter in Place). In an emergency the staff has access to appropriate emergency supplies. Children will routinely participate in scheduled emergency drills.

Staff will stay with the children in emergency situations until the crisis subsides and will also make efforts to comfort children during these high-stress situations. Please be reminded that children will only be released to persons on the emergency card who present photo identification. Parents/guardians who retrieve children during an emergency/crisis will need to sign a release form indicating the time the child was picked-up.

### **First Aid Procedures**

At each School Age Programs site, we make every effort to ensure your child's safety. However, minor accidents beyond our control may occur. Simple injuries will be treated at school by applying ice, soap & water, and/or bandages. In the event that a head injury or serious injury occurs, you will be notified at once. The Santa Monica Fire Department/Paramedics will be called if necessary. All program teachers are CPR, Epi-PEN and First-Aid trained.

### **Nutrition**

All meals served meet or exceed the requirements set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the California Department of Education, Child Care Food Program. Our department participates in the California State Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and is subject to California State monitoring for compliance to the regulations.

We provide:

- Balanced meals and snacks are served at approved sites to children in our program.
- Menus are posted in each classroom.

*Due to CACFP regulations, food served at the centers:*

- Cannot be taken outside of the school.
- Cannot be offered to children who are not enrolled in our program.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited basis' apply to all programs.)

### **Additional Information Regarding Nutrition**

- Sugary and/or high sodium snacks are not allowed (cakes, donuts, candy, chips, etc.)
- Only acceptable pre-packaged food items to celebrate birthdays will be allowed (fresh fruit, yogurt, muffins, and juice)
- Adults must use gloves while handling food items.
- Children engage in preventive wellness practices.

### **Special Nutrition Needs**

**Food Allergy** – If your child has a food allergy, it is essential to let staff know. The child’s doctor must complete a special form stating there is a medical reason the child cannot have a certain food and suggest substitute foods that would be appropriate. This form can be obtained from the CDS Office Staff and must be completed prior to starting school.

Religious or personal food accommodations will be made to the extent possible with our food vendors. Concerns regarding food accommodations must be discussed with the Enrollment Specialist.

### **General Policies**

- Children should wear appropriate clothing that would allow the child to successfully use the bathroom.
- Shoes should be closed-toe, have backs, and non-skid soles.
- Staff will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings. Valuables such as jewelry, money, and toys should remain at home. Please label all clothing and backpacks.
- “Treasures” from home are allowed only on “Sharing Day” (See your child’s teacher for more details).
- Spanking of children is not allowed; please do not spank any child, including your own.
- Please bring concerns or questions to the teacher first. If the teacher is unable to assist you, feel free to contact the CDS Administrative office.
- Please park in designated areas only, **handicap parking requires a state permit.** Never leave children unattended. Cars with unattended children will be reported to the Santa Monica Police Department.
- Inform teacher immediately when your child will be absent.
- Please ensure emergency cards are updated, at least three (3) names and phone numbers are required for emergency purposes.
- CAR SEAT LAW – Children under the age of 8 years or 4’9 feet (regardless of age) must be in an appropriate booster seat while in an automobile.

- Parents must give the program two week notice prior to terminating child care services. You must inform the office immediately when you are terminating services. **Notify the office staff by phone or in writing** and state the exact last day you wish services to be terminated for your child. Ensure the attendance sheet for your child is fully completed (including absences) up to the last day of service.

### **Field Trips**

The SMMUSD School Age Programs may provide opportunities for children to go on educational field trips. To ensure your child's health and safety, the following guidelines apply:

- Siblings are not permitted to attend field trips.
- Volunteers must ride on the bus with children.
- Parents/guardians may not sign in/out their child during the field trip while the class is away from the center. Children must be signed-out upon return to the school.
- Children must remain under the supervision of their teacher during field trips.
- All necessary permission slips must be signed prior to the field trip date.
- If for any reason your child is unable to attend the field trip, please contact the person in charge so other arrangements may be made.
- Remember to arrive on time to school on the day of the field trip. Your child might not be able to attend the trip if you arrive late.

### **Celebrations**

Special celebrations are planned throughout the school year and at the conclusion of the year.

Birthdays are very important days for children! Each child will receive special recognition on their birthday, with the parent's approval. Although we do not have birthday parties at school, we will help children celebrate their own special day with songs and other activities. If you want to bring a special treat to help celebrate the event, please check with your child's teacher and be sure to adhere to the following district nutrition policy:

- Homemade items are not allowed.
- Foods must be brought in their original packaging otherwise items will not be served to the children.
- Nutritionally acceptable foods include fresh fruit, yogurt, muffins, and juice.
- Please note that Board Policies do not allow distribution of invitations for off-site activities on campus.

### **Confidentiality of Records**

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District complies with the regulations that mandate confidentiality of records. All information obtained from families to determine eligibility and to complete and maintain enrollment is strictly confidential. All information is maintained by authorized district personnel and viewed only by funding source personnel. Confidential records will not be released unless stipulated by written parent/guardian permission or a court order.

### **Uniform Complaint Procedure**

A complaint is a written statement alleging discrimination, harassment, or a violation of a federal or state law or regulation. A complaint must be filed by way of the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) as written in the regulations.

The Governing Board recognizes that the district is primarily responsible for complying with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. The district shall investigate complaints alleging failure to comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations and/or alleging discrimination and shall seek to resolve those complaints in accordance with the procedures set out in Sections 4600-4687 of the Title 5 Regulations and in accordance with the policies and procedures of the governing board. (5 CCR 4620)

The district shall follow uniform complaint procedures when addressing complaints alleging unlawful discrimination against any protected group as identified under Education Code 200 and 220 and Government Code 11135, including actual or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability, or age, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any district program or activity that receives or benefits from state financial assistance. (5 CCR 4610) (AR 1312.3)

Uniform complaint procedures shall also be used when addressing complaints alleging failure to comply with state and/or federal laws in adult education programs, consolidated categorical aid programs, migrant education, career technical and technical education and career technical and technical training programs, child care and development programs, nutrition services, and special education programs. (5 CCR 4610) (AR 1312.3)

***Complaint and fair hearing process: When actions are taken by the program, that directly impacts a participating family (i.e. termination of services, etc.) the family has a right to a fair hearing regarding the action/s. Upon receipt of the Notice of Action (NOA), all parents have the right to appeal. Please see the back of the NOA for instructions regarding the Appeal Process.***

Parents are strongly encouraged to meet and resolve issues at the center. The administrative staff is eager to hear your suggestions and concerns regarding programs. However, if concerns or issues are not resolved, parents may use the following procedure:

#### E1312.3 Uniform Complaint Procedure

- Informal resolution of complaints at the site level is encouraged whenever possible.
- Complaints made under these procedures shall be presented to the compliance officer who shall maintain a log of complaints received, providing each with a code number and a date stamp.
- Within three days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer may informally discuss with the complainant the possibility of using mediation.
- Within 10 calendar days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer shall provide the complainant and/or his/her representative an opportunity to present the complaint and any evidence, or information leading to evidence, to support the allegation in the complaint.
- If the complainant refuses mediation or if the mediation process does not solve the problem, the compliance officer shall proceed with his/her investigation of the complaint.
- Within 60 days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the district's investigation and decision.
- If dissatisfied with the district's decision, the complainant may appeal in writing to the California State Department of Social Services (CDSS) within 15 days of receiving the district's decision.
- When appealing to CDSS, the complainant must specify the basis for the appeal of the district's decision and whether the facts are incorrect and/or the law has been misapplied.
- The appeal shall be accompanied by a copy of the locally filed complaint and a copy of the district's decision.

The Board of Education acknowledges and respects every individual's rights to privacy. In investigating complaints, the confidentiality of the parties involved and the integrity of the process shall be protected. As appropriate for any complaint alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the Superintendent or designee may keep the identity of a complainant confidential to the extent that the investigation of the complaint is not obstructed.

The Board prohibits any form of retaliation against any complainant in the complaint process. Such participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades, or work assignments of the complainant. The Superintendent designates the following compliance officer to receive and investigate all complaints and ensure district compliance with the law: Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources 1651 16th Street Santa Monica, CA 90404 (310) 450-8338.

The rules above mentioned are according to the “Uniform complaint procedure” of the Board of Education Regulation # AR 1312.3 Title 5, Section 430. The “Notice of Action” also covers the parent’s rights for subsidized children.

If you are not satisfied with the decision made by CDS, you also have other options through the Federal or State Court. Any person with discrimination allegations or violations has the right to file a Civil Case including but limited to a judicial mandate, restriction orders, or any other legal order. Please be aware that it is recommended that you seek legal help. (Legal costs are paid by the plaintiff). Complaints of discriminations with valid basis can also be made with:

- Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources/SMMUSD (310) 450-8338.  
1651 16th Street. Santa Monica, CA 90404.

Or to:

- United States Department of Justice (800) 541-0301 (voice TDD/TTY)

The Superintendent or designee shall meet the notification requirements of the Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 4622, including the annual dissemination of district complaint procedures and information about available appeals, civil law remedies and conditions under which a complaint may be taken directly to the California Department of Education. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that complainants understand that they may pursue other remedies, including actions before civil courts or other public agencies. The Superintendent or designee shall annually provide written notification of the district's uniform complaint procedures to students, employees, parents/guardians, the district advisory committee, school advisory committees, appropriate private school officials or representatives, and other interested parties. (5 CCR 4622)

Parents also have the right to appeal or submit a complaint to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) if they feel they have been discriminated against by the Department of Child Development Services. The complaint must be in writing to the following address:

California Department of Social Services  
Child Care and Development Division  
Attn: Appeals Coordinator  
744 P Street, MS 9-8-351  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **Sexual Harassment**

The Board of Education prohibits sexual harassment of any student by any person. Teachers shall discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and students will be taught that they need not endure sexual harassment.

Any student who engages in sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any employee who permits or engages in sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The Board expects students and staff to report incidents of sexual harassment as soon as possible to the principal or to a responsible member of the staff who will help the complainant make a formal complaint. The complaint will be given a copy of AR 1312.3 – Uniform Complaint Procedures. Complaints of harassment can be filed in accordance with these procedures. The district prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process. Each complaint of sexual harassment shall be promptly investigated in a way that respects the privacy of all parties concerned.

Policy number 514

# Subsidized Child Care

## How to Qualify for the Program

### Eligibility

SMMUSD/ Child Development Services is in compliance with the regulations of the program which mandates that all families applying for subsidy must submit eligibility documentation to receive services.

Eligibility is based on documentation and verification of at least one of the following:

**Income-** Total countable income means all income of the individuals counted in the family size, for example:

- Gross wages or salaries, commissions, Overtime, Tips, Bonuses
- Gambling or Lottery Winnings
- CalWORKS Cash Aid
- Gross income from self-employment (less business expenses with the exception of wage draws)
- Disability or unemployment compensation
- Workers compensation
- Spousal support, Child support payment received/alimony (any financial assistance for housing costs or car payments paid as part of or in addition to spousal/child support)
- Survivor and retirement benefits
- Dividends, interest on bonds, income from estates or trusts, net rental income or royalties
- Rent for room within a family's residence
- Foster care grants, payments or clothing allowance for children placed through child welfare services
- Financial assistance received for the care of a child living with an adult who is not the child's biological or adoptive parent
- Veteran's pensions
- Pensions or annuities
- Inheritance
- Allowances for housing or automobiles provided as part of compensation
- Insurance or court settlements of lost wages or punitive damages
- Net proceeds from the sale of real property, stocks or inherited property
- Other enterprise for gain

Applicants who are employed or self-employed are required to provide all documents requested by staff including but not limited to the following:

<u>Employed</u>	<u>Self-Employed</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Release authorization and payroll check stub</li> <li>● Release authorization and official letter from employer</li> <li>● Other official record of wages issued by the employer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Official letter from source of income</li> <li>● Copy of the most recently <b>signed and completed</b> tax return</li> <li>● Other business records, such as ledgers, receipts, or business logs.</li> </ul>

In cases where the applicant is not able to provide any of the documents mentioned above, staff will determine what documents to request to determine eligibility.

**SMMUSD - Child Development Services reserves the right to ask for additional documentation to verify income.**

Eligibility is also based on documentation and verification of at least one of the following:

1. **Current Cash Aid Recipient** – applicants need to provide proof of aid amount.
2. **Homelessness** – applicants must provide a written referral from an emergency shelter or other legal, medical or social service agency or a written parental declaration that the family is homeless and a statement describing the family’s living situation.
3. **Child Protective Services** – participants must provide a written referral dated within six months of application for services and includes:
  - Statement from local county welfare department, child welfare services worker, certifying that the child is receiving Child Protective Services (CPS), and **that child care and development services are a necessary component of the CPS services plan.**
  - Probable duration of the CPS service plan
  - Name, address, phone number and signature of the county child welfare staff.
4. **“At Risk” of neglect, abuse or exploitation-** participants will be asked to provide one of the following:
  - Statement by a legally qualified professional (someone licensed in the state to perform legal, medical, health, or social services for the general public)
  - Documentation that the child is at risk of abuse and neglect, and that child care and development services are needed to reduce or eliminate that risk.
  - Probable duration of the at risk situation.
  - Name, address, phone number and signature of the legally qualified professional.

### **Family Size**

The parent shall provide supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family.

Supporting documentation for the number of children shall be at least **one** of the following:

- Birth certificate for all children
- Child custody court order
- Adoption documents
- Foster Care placement records
- School or medical records
- County welfare department records
- Other reliable documentation indicating the relationship of the child to the parent

During the enrollment process, if a parent indicates that they are a single parent, they will need to self-certify the absence of the other parent by checking the appropriate box on the application. The applicant must initial and sign the confidential application.

### **Need**

Parents must meet one of the requirements below:

- Child(ren) is/are a recipient of Child Protective Services through the county welfare department.
- Child(ren) identified as At Risk of being Abused, Neglected or Exploited by a qualified professional.
- Parent(s) engaged in Vocational Training/Education, enrolled full or part-time in school documentation required. Parent/guardian must be attending school during childcare hours.
- Parent(s) employed full time/part time. Need to provide verification and check stubs.
- Parent(s) incapacitated - physician's statement required; childcare service not to exceed 50 hours per week. Must include physician's license number and hours of care needed.
- Parent is seeking permanent housing.

***Eligibility for subsidized spaces is not based on "first come, first serve" but determined by the priorities established by the State of California. Siblings of currently enrolled families have a priority when the child is age-eligible and space is available at the requested site.***

## **Required Documentation**

### **Employment / Income Verification**

Acceptable employment verification includes, but is not limited to, an employment verification form or a letter from the employer stating start date, work hours, salary, how often paid, and whether or not the current assignment is temporary. Copies of your three most recent check stubs are required upon at the time of enrollment.

### **Training Verification**

School/Training verification consists of official registration forms including class hours and days.

### **Seeking Permanent Housing**

Parents who are homeless and seeking permanent housing must submit documentation from a shelter along with a declaration under penalty that they are seeking permanent, fixed, regular and adequate housing.

### **Parental Incapacity**

Parental Incapacity must include a release signed by the parent authorizing a qualified health professional to disclose information necessary to establish eligibility. The incapacity form must identify to what extent the parent is not capable of providing care and supervision of the child along with the days and hours per week that services are recommended to accommodate the incapacitation. The qualified health professional must also state the duration of parent's incapacity.

### **Fee Payment/Delinquent Fees**

Fees are due upon registration and in advance of services received. Fees are paid at the Child Development Services office or they can also be mailed. Fees are charged on the basis of enrollment, not attendance. No deduction may be made from applicable fees for absences (vacation, illness, personal reasons, etc.).

Methods of payment: Personal or Certified Check, Money order, Visa or MasterCard.

Payments are only received at the Child Development Services office via walk in or mail:

Child Development Services  
Attn: Billing/Fees  
2828 4th Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90405

**If paying by check**, payments are due on the 25th of each month for the following month. Please make the check payable to “SMMUSD” and include your child’s first and last name on the memo line. Returned/bounced checks will be charged a \$15 service fee. In the event a personal check is returned, SMMUSD will no longer accept a personal check as payment, and fees will need to be paid by money order, certified check or credit card.

**If paying by credit card**, please note charges will be processed on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. Declined credit cards will be charged a \$30 service fee. The amount of the original payment plus the service fee must be paid within 10 days of notification.

Delinquent Fees: The State of California Education Code #18114 (a) states: “Fees shall be considered delinquent after seven (7) calendar days after the due date.” On the seventh day after fees are due, the center will notify parent(s)/ guardian(s) in writing that the childcare fees are delinquent and must be paid within 14 calendar days. Services shall be terminated if delinquent fees are not paid prior to the 14th calendar day from the date of the notice. A reasonable repayment plan may be requested. If a repayment plan is granted, the parent must comply with the agreed upon repayment plan for continued services. If terminated for nonpayment of delinquent fees, the family will be ineligible for services until all delinquent fees are paid. The family will go back on the wait-list and will be readmitted only if space is available and all fees are current.

## **How Families are Selected**

### **Priorities:**

Families are placed on a waiting list once the pre-enrollment application is received.

Parent/guardian will be contacted when space is available if their child is next on the waiting list.

Families requesting subsidy are given priority in the following order:

1. Children whose families have the lowest income ranking based on the most recent income ranking schedule (based on family size and total countable income)
2. When two or more families have the same income ranking, priority is based on the date the application is received.

### **Notification Process:**

When openings are available, the staff will refer to the waiting list and contact families according to the CDSS selection ranking guideline. Parents are contacted by mail, e-mail (if provided), or telephone to schedule an appointment to bring in the required documents for enrollment.

### **Documents to bring to your appointment:**

To verify eligibility, bring the following documents to your appointment:

- Proof of all sources of income
- Birth certificates for all children under 18 in the family.

### **Notice of Action**

Childcare services may not begin until the application for services is signed by both office staff and the parent. At the time of approval of services, staff will issue a Notice of Action (NOA) to the participant indicating the hours of services approved, and any applicable family fees.

### **Notice of Action & Updating Records**

The “Notice of Action” (NOA) is a written notification of status change for California State Subsidized Families: (i.e. Provision, approval, change, and termination of services). Once a child is enrolled, it is the parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility to keep all documents and information updated. **Emergency cards are critical. They must be complete and current at all times.**

A notice of action will be issued by staff when any of the following occurs:

- Certification is completed
- Recertification is completed
- Changes that affect need, fees and eligibility occur
- The family is to be terminated from the program for any reason
- Family fee is delinquent

**Upon receipt of a Notice of Action, all participants have the right to appeal. Please see the back of the NOA for information about the appeal process (please note that the appeal process is time sensitive).**

### **Health and Social Services**

Upon enrollment, parents will be given the Resource and Referral guide to provide access to referrals and services that the family may need.

### **Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)**

Child Development Service utilizes the DRDP as recommended by the California Department of Education (CDE), and CDSS to ensure that all children are making progress in all domains: social, emotional, language and literacy, math, science, social studies, and physical and health development.

- We use the DRDP (2015), a tool developed by the CDE to assess child development.
- Children are assessed twice per year. The initial assessment occurs within 60 days of enrollment.
- Parent/guardian's input is a necessary component of this assessment.
- The assessment is also used to plan and conduct developmental activities that are age appropriate for the children.

### **How to Continue in the Program**

#### **Re-certification:**

According to the regulations, families must recertify no sooner than twelve months from last certification to continue subsidized services. **Families who fail to recertify will be issued a Notice of Action for termination.**

#### **Notification of Changes:**

Families must notify the agency of changes in family income that exceeds the 85% State median income threshold as noted on NOA, family size or the need for services.

#### **Abide by Agency Policies, Procedures, and Program Requirements**

It is the responsibility of the parent to abide by all policies, procedures, and requirements to obtain and continue receiving services. Not doing so may result in termination of services.

### **Attendance: Sign-in and out /Absence Policy**

According to program regulations, parents/guardians must sign in/out daily on a child's timesheets. Only custodial parents and authorized adults (those listed on emergency card) are allowed to sign out or remove a child from a classroom. Staff members will require a picture identification if they are unfamiliar with the adult picking up the child. Individuals under eighteen (18) years will not be allowed to sign children's time sheets in or out unless the individual is the child's custodial parent. **Full signatures and EXACT time are required for both arrival and departure times.**

According to State Requirements and program regulations, students in the state subsidized programs are allowed ten (10) "Best Interest" days per program year for vacation, family visits, etc. Any absences in excess of ten (10) days and not included under excused absences are considered *unexcused*, and may be the cause for termination of services.

Children who are absent for five (5) consecutive days due to illness, must have a medical clearance/doctor's note prior to re-admittance. Children who have contracted a communicable illness and are excluded by the public health department, must have medical clearance prior to re-admittance, regardless of the number of days of absence.

- Regular attendance is required for all programs
- Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused, may result in termination from the state subsidized program.
- Parents are required to sign in and out on a daily basis. **Full signatures and EXACT time are required for both arrival and departure times.**
- Parents **MUST** notify the teacher when their child is absent for any reason.
- Staff members may contact families when there are excessive absences.

### **Recording/Verifying Absences**

Parents/guardians must be specific when recording reasons for absences. (i.e. Flu, Fever, vomiting). Absence excuses must be written on the last column of the sign-in sheet under the "reason for absence" box. Parent/guardian must provide full signature, and provide supporting documentation about the absence to ensure proper categorization. **Please be reminded that general explanations such as sick, not feeling well, personal, etc. are not acceptable.**

### **Excused Absences** include:

- Illness or quarantine of child
  - Illness or quarantine of parent
  - Doctor or dentist appointment
  - Court-ordered visitation (court order must be on file at Child Development Services)
- Ed Code 8208

**Best Interest Days:** (10 days per year July – June)

- Religious activities
- Family vacation
- Special time with relatives
- School activities (mandatory)
- Sport activities
- Play dates
- Court Appearance (child not mandated to be present)
- Child was too tired to attend, didn't sleep well or overslept

**Family Emergency:**

- Death in family –day of the death and funeral (parents, sibling, grandparents, aunt, uncle)
- Earthquake or other severe weather conditions
- Transportation problems (first day only)
- Civil unrest
- Sibling Illness

**Unexcused Absences** are absences not listed above and may include:

- Personal family business
- School Activities (non-mandatory)
- No transportation (after the first day)

*If a parent/guardian is not sure about recording the absence, please consult with the CDS office staff or your child's teacher.*

**Termination Policies**

Possible causes for termination include but are not limited to:

- Failure to adhere to contract hours
- Failure to provide required documentation
- Excessive excused and/or unexcused absences
- Persons whose behavior present a risk to children or staff (i.e - using profane language, threats, destroying property, etc.).
- Violations of any Education Code regarding firearms, alcohol, drugs, physical violence, theft, willful destruction of property, any conduct by parent, child, or relatives resulting in harm to person or property while on the center grounds
- Failure to provide necessary and/or requested information for continued enrollment for second year of service
- Child jeopardizing the safety of themselves or others
- Failure to pay fees for services

**If a family is terminated for any of the above reasons, they may not reapply for any of the CDS programs for not less than six (6) months.**

## **NON-SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE**

### **Enrollment/Eligibility**

Parents must submit a pre-enrollment application (PEAF). Once your application is received, you will be placed on a waiting list based on your school selection. You will be contacted once a space is available at the school site indicated on the pre-enrollment application. Enrollment is based on a first come, first serve basis.

At the point of enrollment, parents will be requested to bring proof of school enrollment, pay the non-refundable registration fee and first payment.

### **Program Fees**

Fees are prorated for the 180 days of the school year and collected in 10 equal payments. Families starting after the beginning of the school year will be charged either a full or half payment depending on the first day of enrollment

Methods of payment: Personal or Certified Check, Money order, Visa or MasterCard.

Payments are only received at the Child Development Services office via walk in or mail –

Child Development Services

Attention: Fees/Billing

2828 4th Street

Santa Monica, CA 90405

**If paying by check**, payments are due on the 25th of each month for the following month. Please make the check payable to “SMMUSD” and include your child’s first and last name on the memo line. Returned/bounced checks will be charged a \$15 service fee. In the event a personal check is returned, SMMUSD will no longer accept a personal check as payment, and fees will need to be paid by money order, certified check or credit card.

**If paying by credit card**, please note charges will be processed on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> of each month. Declined credit cards will be charged a \$30 service fee. The amount of the original payment plus the service fee must be paid within 10 days of notification.

**Delinquent Fees:** If fees are not paid within 7 days of the due date, childcare services may be terminated.

## **Attendance Procedures**

### **Signing In and Out**

According to program regulations, parents/guardians must sign-in and out daily on children's timesheets. Only custodial parents and authorized adults (those listed on the emergency card) are allowed to sign out or remove a child from a classroom. **Staff members will require a picture identification if they are unfamiliar with the adult picking up the child, even when the person's name is on the emergency card.** Individuals under eighteen (18) years will not be allowed to sign children's time sheets in or out, unless the individual is the child's custodial parent. **Full signatures and EXACT time of arrival and pick-ups are always required.**

## **Withdrawal Procedures**

### **Withdrawal Policy**

Families planning to withdraw from the program are required to notify CDS office by phone or in writing at *least* two weeks in advance to avoid fee penalties. In the event you fail to notify the CDS office of your intent to withdraw, you will be responsible for paying one half month of tuition.

### **Refunds**

Refunds will be granted to families that notify the Child Development Services department at least two weeks in advance. If the original payment was made by check or money order, a refund check will be issued in the name of the payee and mailed to the address on file. Refunds may take up to 4 to 6 weeks to receive.

### **Abide by Agency Policies, Procedures, and Requirements**

It is the responsibility of the parent to abide by all policies, procedures, and requirements to continue to receive childcare services.

## **Termination Policy**

Possible causes for termination include but are not limited to:

- Excessive excused and/or unexcused absences
- Persons whose behavior present a risk to children or staff (i.e - using profane language, threats, destroying property, etc.).
- Violations of any Education Code regarding firearms, alcohol, drugs, physical violence, theft, willful destruction of property, any conduct by parent, child, or relatives resulting in harm to person or property while on the center grounds
- Failure to provide necessary and/or requested information for continued enrollment for second year of service
- Child jeopardizing the safety of themselves or others
- Failure to pay fees for services

**If a family is terminated for any of the above reasons, they may not reapply for any of the CDS programs for not less than six (6) months.**

## **Parents Rights**

1. Parents are able to drop in unannounced to observe our programs. Per state guidelines, without advance notice, upon presentation of identification, parents/guardians have the right to enter and inspect the childcare facility in which their child(ren) is/are receiving care. Visitors must follow district visitor guidelines. Entry and inspection are limited to the normal operating hours while their child(ren) is/are receiving care. Please note: Parents visiting the site are not allowed to interact with or discipline other children in the program. All concerns should be addressed to a staff member.
2. The law authorizes the person in charge of the facility to deny access to a parent/guardian under the following circumstances:
  - a. The parent/guardian is behaving in a way which poses a risk to children in the facility;
  - b. The adult is a non-custodial parent and the facility has been requested in writing through a court order to not permit access to the non-custodial parent.
3. The law prohibits discrimination or retaliation against any child or parent/guardian for exercising their right to inspect.
4. The law requires that parents/guardians be notified of their right to enter and inspect.
5. The law requires this notice of Parents' Rights to enter and inspect be posted in the facility in a location accessible to parents/guardians.
6. Parents do not have the right to intimidate or be disrespectful to staff.
  - Parents **do not** have the right to engage in disciplinary actions with any child other than their own.
  - Parents **do not** have the right to threaten, intimidate or be disrespectful to staff.

# Appendices

## School Information and Calendar

Main Office  
 Child Development Services  
 2828 Fourth Street  
 Santa Monica, CA 90405  
 Phone: (310) 399-5865 ▪ Enrollment Fax: (310) 314-0859

School Age Programs Office Open:  
 8:00am - 5:00pm for walk-ins  
 7:00am - 8:00am by appointment only  
 5:00pm - 6:00pm by appointment only

### CDS- School Age Programs and Center Locations

Site	Address	Phone	Grades
Edison Language Academy	2402 Virginia Ave. Santa Monica, CA 90404	(310) 828-0335 x61108 or x6110	TK – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Franklin Elementary	2400 Montana Ave. Santa Monica, CA 90403	(310) 828- 2814 x62107	K – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Grant Elementary	2368 Pearl Street Santa Monica, CA 90405	(310) 450-7651 x63103, x63104, x63173	TK – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
John Muir/SMASH	2526 6th Street Santa Monica, CA 90405 2525 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Santa Monica, CA 90405	(310) 399-7721 x64131, x64133 or (310) 392-3914 x64131, x64133	K – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
McKinley Elementary	2401 Santa Monica Blvd. Santa Monica, CA 90404	(310) 828-5011 x65136, x65137	TK – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Roosevelt Elementary	801 Montana Ave. Sant Monica, CA 90403	(310) 395-0941 x68140, x68141, x68124, x68101	TK – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Will Rogers Learning Community	2401 14th Street Santa Monica, CA 90405	(310) 452-2364 x67306, x67407	TK – 3 <sup>rd</sup>

# CALENDAR

**SAP programs will be CLOSED on the following days:**

September 6, 2021	Labor Day Holiday
September 7, 2021	Local Holiday (observed)
September 16, 2021	Local Holiday (observed)
November 11, 2021	Veteran's Day Holiday
November 24-25, 2021	Thanksgiving Holiday
November 26, 2021	Admissions Day (observed)
January 17, 2022	Martin Luther King, Jr.
February 21, 2022	President's Day
May 30, 2022	Memorial Day Holiday

**\*Other Important Dates:**

- |                      |                                       |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ● Winter Break*      | December 20, 2021 – December 31, 2021 |
| ● Spring Break*      | April 4, 2022 – April 15, 2022        |
| ● Last Day of School | Thursday, June 9, 2022                |

\*Full Day Camps Available during breaks