RISE SCHOOL

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

Family Handbook

The RISE School Family Handbook provides an overview of our program, including our philosophy, goals, and the policies that guide daily operations. It is designed to help families understand the structure and standards of the RISE School.

The handbook is reviewed and updated annually. Families are encouraged to read it thoroughly and stay informed about current procedures. For questions or clarification, please reach out to school leadership.

Additional information can be found on our website: www.uah.edu/early-learning-center

Dear Families,

I am so excited to welcome your family to our school! Whether you are returning to RISE or joining us for the first time, thank you for entrusting us with your child's early learning journey. I hope you and your child are ready for a fun, enriching, and engaging year at the UAH Early Learning Center (ELC)!

At the ELC, all of our classrooms are inclusive and designed to provide high-quality early childhood education. Each classroom is led by a degreed teacher and maintains low student-to-teacher ratios, ensuring that your child receives individualized attention and support. Our curriculum is rooted in developmentally appropriate practices and built on a foundation of hands-on, play-based learning.

We take a positive approach to behavior, guiding children in understanding and managing their emotions while modeling respectful and caring behavior. Our goal is to foster a nurturing environment where all children feel safe, seen, and supported.

Please remember—*we play dirty here!* Learning at the ELC is messy, exciting, and filled with opportunities to explore the world around us.

Young children are our future, and I am truly honored that you've chosen the UAH Early Learning Center to be part of your family's story. If there is ever anything I can do to support you, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Welcome to the ELC— **Where Everyone shines!**

Warmly,

Loretta Hayslip, PhD

Executive Director
UAH Early Learning Center

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Introduction

The UAH Early Learning Center is an integral part of the College of Education, Sport, and Human Sciences. We are proud to contribute to UAH's broader mission: to explore, discover, create, and communicate knowledge. At the ELC, we support this mission by fostering leadership, innovation, critical thinking, and civic responsibility in our learning community. Most importantly, we aim to inspire a lifelong passion for learning in every child and adult who enters our doors. Please take time to carefully review this handbook to become familiar with the ELC's operations, policies, and procedures. Understanding these expectations helps ensure a safe, supportive, and enriching environment for all children, families, and staff. We are excited to partner with you and your family in this important journey of early learning and development.

In this respect, the UAH ELC offers a site for:

- Quality educational programming for young children.
- Training of student teachers in early childhood education/special education.
- Observation and interpretation of human growth and development.
- Research designed and implemented by UAH faculty and students to further the knowledge base in areas such as social interaction, language development, cognitive development, and early childhood curriculum and assessment.
- Community service in the form of high-quality early education and care, parenting programs, and in-service teacher education/training.

The UAH ELC is proud to offer three high-quality early childhood education programs, each designed to meet the diverse developmental needs of young children and their families. These programs collectively make up the 15 classrooms housed within the ELC.

This handbook is intended to help you better understand the operations of the RISE School and to provide answers to common questions you may have throughout the year.

The programs at the UAH ELC include:

- **RISE School** *(Rural Infant Stimulation Environment)*
- **CAPNA Early Head Start**
- **CAPNA Head Start**

CAPNA Early Head Start and Head Start Classrooms

Community Action Partnership of North Alabama (CAPNA) completes intake interviews and placement in programs following federal guidelines. Please contact Raven Baker, UAH CAPNA Site Director, at raven.johnsonbaker@capna.org or at 256-566-4374 for more information about both the Early Head Start and Head Start Classrooms within the UAH ELC. You may also contact the CAPNA Central Office in Decatur at 256-355-7843.

UAH ELC Mission Statement

The mission of the UAH ELC is to:

- Provide exemplary services based on recommended practices to young children with diverse abilities and their families.
- Offer instructional opportunities through collaboration with various academic units in higher education.
- Engage in research that positively influences practices in the field of early childhood education and early childhood special education at the local, state, and national levels.
- Interface with the community through outreach activities and partnerships.
- Disseminate information and provide technical assistance to other community-based agencies.
- Affect policy and systems change at the local, state, and national level.



At the UAH ELC, we believe that a quality preschool experience should be a promise, not a privilege, for ALL children.

UAH ELC Philosophy and Goals

The philosophy and goals of the UAH ELC are to:

- Provide family-centered services designed to meet the individualized needs of all children and families.
- Provide a blend of educational and therapy services within the context of a developmentally-appropriate curriculum.
- Prepare children for their next educational environment.

The theoretical frameworks of Erikson, Piaget, and Vygotsky provide a foundation for the curriculum which is designed to facilitate each child's social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development.

The program's philosophy is based on the following concepts:

- Children construct their understanding of the world through active involvement and interaction with people and materials.
- Play, exploration, and experimentation are the major vehicles for learning.
- Children benefit from making choices in a stimulating and age-appropriate planned environment.
- Children learn best in an environment which promotes acceptance, trust, initiative, and decision-making.

Child and Family Outcomes

Aligned with the University of Alabama in Huntsville's mission to explore, discover, create, and communicate knowledge, the ELC fosters leadership, innovation, critical thinking, civic responsibility, and a lifelong passion for learning. We serve as both a model early childhood education program and a training site for future teachers, offering opportunities to observe and apply knowledge of human growth and development.

To support all children and families, RISE staff employ both formal and informal strategies to understand and honor each family's structure, values, child-rearing practices, and cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. These approaches include the following initiatives:

- **Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP):** Staff identify and implement practices that reflect the diverse needs, interests, and abilities of young children and their families.
- **Reflective Practice:** Educators assess and adapt teaching strategies based on current best practices in early childhood settings.
- **Home-School Collaboration:** Staff recognize and support strong, reciprocal communication between families and educators, fostering mutual trust and respect.
- **Assessment & Documentation:** Multiple sources of data are used to assess children's development and contribute to evaluating the overall effectiveness of the program.
- **Family-Centered Planning:** Information shared by families is incorporated into the classroom environment, curriculum planning, and teaching methods to ensure responsiveness to each child's background.
- **Cultural Responsiveness:** Staff engage in cultural and community events to better understand the identities and experiences of the families and communities we serve.
- **Support for Legal Guardians:** Educators provide resources and support for those legally responsible for a child's care and well-being.
- **Intentional Relationship Building:** From the first point of contact, staff intentionally build and maintain respectful, collaborative relationships with families.
- **Family Engagement in Curriculum:** Families are viewed as experts on their children. Their knowledge, concerns, and goals are integrated into classroom assessment and curriculum development.
- **Transparent Communication:** Staff use multiple formal and informal methods to share the program's philosophy, curriculum goals, and educational strategies with families.
- **Ongoing Family Input:** Through orientations, small group discussions, individual conversations, and written surveys, families are regularly invited to contribute input on curriculum and classroom activities.

This collaborative and culturally responsive approach ensures the UAH ELC continues to meet the evolving needs of children, families, and future educators in our community.

Program Governance

The UAH ELC is a model center for the education of young children that is affiliated with the College of Education, Sport, and Human Sciences at The University of Alabama in Huntsville, a state-funded institution of higher education. The UAH ELC Programs are led by an Executive Director who reports to the Dean of the College. The UAH ELC Executive Director oversees all aspects of these programs within the ELC:

- **RISE School** (*Rural Infant Stimulation Environment)* Modeled after the first RISE School established at the University of Alabama in 1974; a fully-inclusive program serving children with special needs and their peers, designed with an integrated therapy approach.
- The additional two programs within the ELC, Head Start and Early Head Start, are governed by CAPNA. CAPNA has a Memorandum of Understanding with UAH and leases 10 classrooms.

The RISE School has a non-profit (501c3) status under the UAH Foundation. Funding is not provided for special education services through the federal or state government. However, the RISE School strives to assist with parent education and the transition of students into a public education program as they age out. A special education referral can be made at age 2 ½ to the Local Education Agency (LEA) for determination of any services to be provided through special education by the LEA. The UAH ELC Speech Therapist is available to assist any family within the center who would like assistance in obtaining information about the referral process or in seeking additional private therapy services in the Huntsville area. Referrals for children younger than two-years are made through the state Child Find number or local Early Intervention Service Provider.

UAH is committed to the UAH ELC RISE School. For RISE, UAH contributes dollar for dollar what each

family contributes to the provision of quality educators, therapy services, and the day-to-day operations of the classrooms.

Description of Programs at the UAH

RISE

The RISE School is a nationally-recognized model of best practice in the field of early childhood education and inclusive services. This model is dedicated to excellence in service, research, and teaching. RISE began in 1974 at the University of Alabama. Dr. Loreta Holder-Brown was awarded a federal grant to establish a model for children under the age of five with diagnosed disabilities to learn and flourish alongside their more traditional learning peers. The RISE Model is a unique blend of the best practices in child development, early childhood education, early childhood special education, and integrated therapy. Integrated therapy is provided by licensed speech, physical, and occupational therapists contracted by the University. There are seven RISE model schools across the United States. The purpose of the program is to optimally prepare children for their next educational environment and to support families within the community. The UAH ELC's RISE School adheres to the philosophy and recommended practices of both early childhood education and early childhood special education. *The philosophy of the UAH ELC's RISE School is based on the following premises:*

- Services are family-centered with particular emphasis placed on the family as the primary decision-maker for each child.
- The assessment process is dynamic, ongoing, and linked to instruction. It includes multiple sources and settings.
- Children's services are designed around an individualized plan consisting of goals based on the concerns of the family, priorities, and resources, as well as the child's strengths, needs, and expectations of their next environment.
- Services offered vary in intensity and structure based on the individual and group needs of the children as well as the input of their families.
- Children's development is promoted in all areas including gross and fine motor skills, independence, cognitive skills, social and emotional skills, and communication (both receptive and expressive).
- Therapy services (physical, occupational, and speech) are provided within the context of the educational environment using an integrated approach. Therapy goals are educationally relevant and are implemented collaboratively by the therapists and teaching staff.
- The foundation of the learning environment and activities is based on general early childhood guidelines, which are blended with recommended practices from early childhood special education.
- Specially designed instruction, curricular adaptations and modification, as well as language activities are embedded into the classroom's daily activities.
- The curriculum is designed to foster children's cognitive abilities, improve communication skills, and to focus on fostering skills of self-confidence, self-esteem, independence, and curiosity.

Morning Wraparound Service (MWS)

Morning Wraparound Service (MWS) hours are 7:00–8:00 a.m. for children enrolled in RISE at the UAH ELC. The MWP designation is used solely for **billing** purposes to identify care provided outside daytime hours of 8-2:30. Care during these hours is provided by student workers who meet the same DHR qualifications required of staff providing care during the 8-2:30 day. Classroom ratios continue to meet NAEYC standards and Alabama requirements.

An additional monthly fee applies to this billing option. To enroll, please notify the Executive Director or another member of the administrative staff. The enrollment form is included in the registration packet and is also available online.

For morning drop-off, park in front of the UAH ELC and enter through the lobby doors. Sign your child in at the front door; you may then escort your child to the classroom. If you arrive after 8:00 a.m., please follow the school entry policies and procedures.

Afternoon Wraparound Service (AWS)

Afternoon Wraparound Service (AWS) hours are 2:30–5:30 p.m. for children enrolled in RISE at the UAH ELC. The AWS designation is used solely for billing purposes to identify care provided outside daytime hours of 8-2:30. Care during these hours is provided by student workers who meet the same DHR qualifications required of staff providing care during the 8-2:30 day. Classroom ratios continue to meet NAEYC standards and Alabama requirements.

An additional monthly fee applies to this billing option. To enroll, please notify the Executive Director. The enrollment form is included in the registration packet and is also available online.

For pickup after 2:30 p.m., park in front of the UAH ELC and enter through the lobby doors. Sign your child out at the front door, then proceed to your child's designated classroom for pickup.

You are considered **LATE** if you arrive after 5:30 pm. Please arrive by 5:25 pm to allow five minutes for a conversation with the teacher and to gather your child's belongings before our closing time.

If for any reason school is dismissed early, AWS will be canceled.

"Drop-ins" for our MWS and AWS are subject to availability, and the family will be charged a fee per child. Contact the front office and your child's classroom teacher to request a drop-in day for your child. Drop-in service is not guaranteed as we must stay within ratio and in compliance with state licensing laws at all times.

***The Executive Director grants final approval for Morning and Afternoon Wraparound Services.**

When considering an appropriate school setting for your child, please consider your child's needs. The most appropriate placement can and *should* be based on the individual needs of each child and his/her ability to thrive. The RISE School may not be the most appropriate placement for your child. For children who are in our RISE School, the MWS and AWS may not be the most appropriate placement for your child outside of the 8-2:30 hours.

General Operations

Parking

All families at the UAH ELC should read and adhere to the UAH ELC Parking Code of Conduct. You are responsible to understand, acknowledge, and follow the guidelines set in this document. This is for the safety of **all children at the UAH ELC**. Please advise additional family members of the UAH ELC Parking Code of Conduct, as **you are responsible for anyone who may be picking up or dropping off your child.** Should they incur a violation, it will be applied to you and could cause dismissal from the program. The entrance and parking lot on the EAST side of the building is designated for RISE families. Parking in the front of the building is allowed during designated times of the day as outlined below, however the vehicle must be parked within one of the designated parking spaces.

Parking Code of Conduct

For the safety of all children at the UAH ELC, we are implementing the following procedures for parking at the facility.

Parking Code of Conduct procedures are as follows:

- The parking lot on the EAST side of the building is designated for drop off and pick up for RISE families.
- There are designated handicapped parking spaces in the EAST parking lot.
- No parking at the curb.
- MWP and AWP families may park **in a designated space** in the front of the building for drop off and pick up.
- No loud music playing from your vehicle.
- No use of profane language.
- You must park in a marked parking space.
- If a car is waiting for a parking space, please do not pull around it but wait patiently while they are pulling into a spot.
- The road in front of the UAH ELC is two-way and pulling around another vehicle on the wrong side of the road could cause an accident.
- No U-turns in front of the UAH ELC.
- Speed limit is 15 MPH in front of the UAH ELC.

Arrival/Dismissal Routines

Morning Routine

Southeast hall doors will remain open from 8:00-8:20am and are for RISE families. If you arrive after 8:20am, you must enter the building through the front lobby doors. If family members arrive early for drop off, they are asked to wait outside the doors until they are opened by a UAH ELC staff member.

Please remember to supervise children at all times in the halls, parking areas, and grounds of the UAH ELC. Children MUST be accompanied by a parent/guardian and are prohibited from entering the building alone at all times. For safety's sake, all children (including siblings and guests) must walk in the halls and be supervised at all times.

You are required to walk your child to the classroom, sign them in daily, and make sure hands are washed before your child begins the morning activity. If you drop your child off at 8:20am or later, a staff member will

walk your child down to the classroom.

In order for children to benefit from the individual program's services, families are EXPECTED to bring their children between 8:00-8:20am. The beginning of the day consists of valuable instructional time. When children are late to school, it affects the child's educational program and enrollment within the UAH ELC and disrupts teaching time for the entire class.

Afternoon Routine

For afternoon pick up, RISE families park in the east lot and enter through the southeast hall doors. Doors will open daily at 2:15pm and close at 2:30pm. Any parent/guardian that picks up after 2:30pm, will enter through the front lobby doors. For the safety of all children and staff at the UAH ELC, please exit from the same doors you entered.

Please honor the pick up time by arriving early enough to allow for conversation with the teacher and to gather your child's belongings before our closing time (2:30 pm). Teachers and Teacher Assistants have duties to complete after students leave for the day. Please be mindful and courteous of their time. If you require more time for conversations, please schedule a meeting to ensure staff have dedicated time and coverage.

Parents/family members are considered late if they arrive for pick up after 2:30pm. Children will be taken to an AWP room at 2:30pm, and an AWP daily drop-in rate will be charged to your account. If you must check your child out before the end of the day, you can park in a designated spot at the front of the building and use the lobby door entrance. There is a video doorbell for safety on the right double lobby door. Please use the video doorbell for entrance to the lobby. You will need to notify staff at the front desk of your child's name and teacher/room. The staff person will call down to the room to notify the teacher, and a staff member will bring your child to the lobby. This allows for seamless transitions for the child, fewer distractions in the classroom routine, and uninterrupted teaching time for the children. For safety purposes, you or the person picking up your child may be asked to provide a photo ID for student check out.

Departure and Exchanging Information

The time between 2:15 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. is set aside for one of the teachers to be available to greet families, quickly update families on events in a child's day, and help children transition out of the classroom. All families should be out of the classrooms by 2:30 p.m. unless a conference is scheduled prior to pick up time. We understand how important it is for families to learn about their child's day, but classrooms are being used for AWP and teachers have additional duties to close out the school day. Limited time prevents teachers from conferencing with any one family for more than a minute or two at the end of the day.

When necessary, or desired, families can ask the teacher to set an appointment for an extended conversation. If the teacher senses that the conversation needs to be extended at the end of the day, he/she may suggest scheduling another meeting time. A scheduled telephone conversation can provide the opportunity to exchange more information about a child than can be accomplished in the brief period for conversations at the door. Communication between teachers and the family of children enrolled in MWP or AWP can be addressed by sending messages through Brightwheel or calling the front office at 256-824-4760.

During arrival and departure times, teachers do not initiate or encourage extensive discussions with families about their concerns or observations of behavioral problems. It is inappropriate to have such conversations in a public place, especially in the presence of a child. Families/parents are encouraged to request a similar appointment for discussing or addressing their concerns.

Children are released only to parents/guardians or another adult approved by the parent/guardian. Teachers are notified by parents and/or office staff when another individual, other than the regular designated person, is to pick up a child. Permission to Pick Up forms must be filled out and kept on file in the office. The form should be completed by the child's first day of school. The adult authorized to pick up the child must present a valid photo ID if asked and must be at least 18 years of age. Changes can be made to the Permission to Pick Up form during the year. Please speak to the Assistant Director of Operations for more information. Only parents or legal guardians can give individuals permission to pick up their child.

UAH ELC will not be held responsible for failing to release a child to the non-custodial parent. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide UAH a court-certified copy of the custody section of the legal change of family status that has occurred (divorce, legal separation). The information will be verified when the individual arrives to pick up your child from school.

If emergency changes must be made, parents/guardians are to notify the child's teacher or Assistant Director of Operations in writing with the name of the person picking up their child. The emergency pick up person must show their government-issued ID at the front desk before being allowed to check out the child.

Children must be picked up by the designated closing time. Classroom staff have responsibilities which prohibit them from providing adequate supervision of children after program hours. A child's sense of security and trust becomes depleted when arrival times vary. Therefore, parents are asked to please be sure their child is picked up on time each day. For security reasons, during school hours, families must enter/exit the building through the front lobby doors only. For security reasons, during designated drop off and pick up times, families must enter/exit the building through the southeast doors only. For safety's sake, all children, including siblings and guests, must walk in the halls and be supervised at all times.

Tuition and Fees

RISE School Tuition

Families are required to complete a waitlist application and pay an application fee of $50. Returning families are required to submit a returning application for each student, and pay the $50 application fee for each student annually. The following policies and procedures are identified and carefully followed:

- Children are selected for enrollment in order of the earliest date of received application and by factors related to the teaching and research mission of the program.
- All information must be updated and complete. Statements such as "same as last year" are not acceptable.
- The program is open to all children regardless of race, color, creed, need, or religious affiliation.
- Children are assigned to groups based on the child's developmental needs, teaching and research requirements of the program, and the available space. Placement is made at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Children of UAH faculty, staff, and students are given priority.
- Siblings of enrolled children are given priority.
- The Executive Director determines the final selection for all UAH-governed programs and classroom enrollment.

Tuition is required from families of all children. The **annual** tuition for children is based on their age and classroom age placement. The annual tuition is divided into 12 equal installments. Please see the tuition chart for current tuition rates. Tuition is not reduced during school breaks, family vacations, summer months, schedule adjustments, or absences. Tuition does not include fees for MWP or AWP.

Tuition is **DUE** on the first of each month. A late fee of **$25 will be charged to your account after the 10th day of the month.** If at the end of the month, payment is still not made or you have not made financial payment arrangements with the Resource Manager, your child will be dismissed from the program. There is a $30 fee for all returned checks.

Tuition is an annual amount. Your tuition agreement states that you are aware of your responsibility to pay the full annual amount. It is divided into 12 monthly installments for your payment convenience. You are responsible to pay for the months of June and July to retain your current enrollment status. If you withdraw for the summer months, you are subject to be placed on the bottom of the waitlist for consideration for admission during the following fall semester. Variations from this payment structure are considered on a case by case basis with the administration team.

The obligation to pay tuition is for the year in full. In the event of voluntary withdrawal, families are obligated to pay ALL sums of the full annual tuition amount which are past due, owing, and unpaid.

Morning and Afternoon Wraparound Service Fees

MWS is charged per month per student, and AWS is charged per month per student. **Please be on time to pick up your child, arriving no later than 5:30 p.m.** Late charges may apply if you are not on time for pick up. Dismissal from the AWS may occur if there is chronic late pick up and/or late tuition payments. Discounts do not apply to MWS and AWS fees.

Online Tuition Payments for All Tuition

Online payments can be made for your application, MWS, AWS, and tuition through the UAH Early Learning Center website. Check and cash payments are also accepted. Please coordinate with our Resource Manager, Lora Corbin (lec1429@uah.edu or 256-824-7680) with any questions.

RISE children are expected to attend the program year-round. Tuition is a 12-month commitment.

Operation and Services

The UAH RISE School's year long schedule is best practice for young children. It is closely aligned with the schedule of local school systems and the university. Please refer to the current calendar for days the ELC is closed.

Attendance for RISE

The projected days of operation for each year are supplied in advance to allow families to plan alternative childcare options when needed. Attendance is very important for your child. We do understand that some absences are unavoidable (i.e. illness, doctor appointments, etc.). However, unexcused absences (absences without proper notification) should be limited to **10 or fewer per calendar year. Failure to maintain adequate attendance could result in dismissal from the RISE School.**

In order for children to benefit from the program's services, families are EXPECTED to bring their children between 8:00 and 8:20 a.m. Typically, most classrooms start their breakfast by 8:00 a.m. and morning group soon after. Children are expected to be present and ready to participate.

The teachers are engaged with the children at morning drop off and are unavailable to conference with families, except by appointment. The program's instruction may appear to be casual and interruptible from the outside, but classroom teachers and children are involved in complex interactions that require attention and focus. Teachers gladly assist children's quick transition into the classroom on those days that a late arrival is unavoidable, but families are asked to respect the integrity of the program and support it by making sure children arrive by 8:20 a.m. each day.

Please notify your teacher via Brightwheel or contact the front desk at 256-824-4760 if you plan to be late. Your child is considered "tardy" if arrival is after 8:20 a.m. Three tardies will equal an absence. **Tardies are given for any child that arrives after 8:20 a.m. or leaves before 2:15 p.m.** Tardies are considered an unexcused absence unless proper documentation is provided. Consistent lateness or early check out is not acceptable because your child misses valuable teaching time. **You could be subject to disenrollment if lateness, absences, or early check out become a pattern.**

PLEASE NOTE: If you are not able to bring your child to school by 9:00 am, please reconsider bringing them that day. Exceptions can be made for excused absences (e.g., physician appointments, therapy appointments, etc.). Often it is hard for the child to adapt to the routine mid-day. Children will not be admitted after 11:00 AM as this interrupts those that are napping or resting.

The program is designed for full-time, regular enrollment. Frequent absences or tardiness may result in a recommendation that another program would better fit a family's schedule.

Program Admission

All registration forms, Family Handbook and Orientation Acknowledgement Form, and all health forms, including an updated immunization card, must be completed and on file for your child to be considered for admission to the UAH ELC. Immunization cards must be kept current. If immunization records expire, your child will be suspended from school until immunizations are updated and a new form is received and reviewed by the RISE School Administration.

Admission for Students with Identified Special Needs

Families are required to complete an admission packet and pay required application fees. Additional admission forms and releases must be completed during the first two weeks of school for children with identified special needs. These additional forms may include:

- Permission to Evaluate
- PT/OT/Speech permission to test/provide therapy (signed by physician)

The UAH ELC RISE School offers a number of services to families of children with special needs that may include special instruction, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language therapy using an integrated/consultative service delivery model. The teachers and teacher assistants, under the supervision of the therapists, deliver many of these services through a trans-disciplinary approach throughout the school day. Recommendations are also provided to families for carry-over in the home and other natural environments.

Confidentiality of Records

Children's educational records, medical records, and family income forms are confidential and kept in a locked file cabinet. Anyone reviewing a file must sign in/out on the *Access to Student Records* form. Records may be released to outside agencies only with written authorization from the parent or legal guardian. Employees will not discuss confidential information about children and/or their families in the presence of other children and/or their families.

Directory Information

Addresses, phone numbers, enrollment, and attendance information cannot be released without written parental consent. This includes releasing contact information to other families in the classroom.

Family Information and Involvement

Family information and involvement can be found and communicated to families/parents through the family handbook, Brightwheel App, email, phone conversations, or direct contact with teaching staff and administration. Staff members use a variety of mechanisms such as family conferences, surveys, and daily written and verbal communication to promote dialogue with families.

Parent Contact Information

Notice of changes in a family' s contact information - cell/work/home phone numbers, addresses, or places of business - should be given to the administrative office. Families/parents need to make certain that they or their designated emergency person can be reached at all times. In Brightwheel, families/parents are expected to leave a phone number where they can be reached if it is different from their usual/regular routine.

Orientation

A mandatory family orientation (for new and returning families) will be held prior to the first day of the annual school year. Details will be provided closer to time. For families that enter the RISE school after the first day of the annual school year, orientation instructions will be provided for completion prior to the first date of student attendance. Students may not be enrolled until orientation is completed.

Open House/Meet the Teachers

RISE families are invited to attend an Open House/Meet the Teachers event, which is scheduled prior to the first day of the school year. During this event, families will have the opportunity to meet the ELC administrators, teachers, and support staff. Children and their families can explore the classroom environment together, helping everyone become familiar with the routines and expectations of the school day. Teachers will be available to answer questions and provide information about daily activities and curriculum, while also learning more about each child's individual needs, routines, and experiences from their families. This event is designed to help children and families feel comfortable and confident as they transition into the school year. The RISE School deeply values family engagement and views parents as essential partners in their child's early education experience.

Family Input, Suggestions, and Concerns

Parent input and feedback are always welcome. Every effort is made to accommodate family requests. An anonymous family survey will be distributed annually, inviting all families to evaluate the program and share suggestions. Parents with suggestions or concerns are encouraged to speak first with their child's teacher. If a resolution cannot be reached, families are encouraged to consult the Assistant Director of Curriculum.

Family Commitment to the RISE School

Parents and family members are required to participate as volunteers in the operations and activities of the school. Families will be informed of volunteer opportunities as they arise. Fundraisers, including School Spirit Nights at local restaurants, may occur periodically throughout the school year.

RISE families are required to contribute a minimum of **12 hours per year** through volunteer time and/or donated resources to support the school community.

There are many meaningful ways to fulfill this commitment. One opportunity is to serve as a **Room Parent**. Ideally, each classroom will have at least two room parents who help support teachers and foster family engagement. Room parents assist with: Planning Teacher Appreciation Week, as well as birthday and holiday gifts for teachers and teacher assistants; Coordinating classroom celebrations and holiday parties; Helping recruit and organize volunteers for classroom and school-wide events; Sending reminders to families about upcoming events, activities, and important dates.

Families may also contribute through **fundraising efforts** or **donating supplies** and resources that benefit the classroom or school as a whole. Fundraising and donations help provide materials for learning experiences, enhance classroom environments, and support special events for children and families.

Your involvement - whether through time, creativity, or contributions - makes a meaningful difference in creating a strong, supportive, and engaging school community.

Family Expectations

The RISE School asks all families to follow the example the teachers set in how to interact with the children in the classroom. These include following the child's lead in play, responding to their interests, focusing on the children, following the rules, and handling conflicts that arise between children. Parents are asked to let teachers help children resolve conflicts.

Parents whose behaviors in the classroom are disrupting the class or threatening the children are asked to leave. Such behaviors could include, but are not limited to: allowing children to disregard class routines and rules; interrupting instructional time; and allowing unsafe situations at the UAH ELC. The RISE School staff uses a variety of techniques to negotiate differences and difficulties that arise in their interactions with family members.

Parents are asked to contact the classroom teacher and then the Assistant Director of Curriculum if they have concerns or questions about a situation. If an agreeable solution is not achieved, then the situation will be taken to the Executive Director, Dr. Loretta Hayslip, followed by the Dean of the College of Education, Sport, and Human Sciences, Dr. Beth Quick. Staff members will arrange to use techniques in a language the family can understand and comprehend.

The RISE School provides many opportunities for families to meet with one another on a formal and informal basis, to work together on projects that support the program, and to learn from and provide support for each other during the year. Our staff works with families to plan events that are educational, informative, and social.

Occasional family education activities or other social events, related to classroom topic studies, are planned and provided for family involvement. The RISE School classrooms and playground environments are intentionally designed to welcome and stimulate adult interaction at the child's level. The environment is set up to be a child's world and the important adults in their lives are encouraged to come in and participate.

The program avoids creating two worlds - one that is at the adult level, with conversations occurring over the heads of children or directed down at them, and the second at the lower level, reserved for children interacting with each other and directing conversation up to the adults. Once inside the classroom or on the playground, adult-to-adult conversations are pleasant, but brief. The RISE School's focus is on the children. The program staff delights in friendships that form among families in the classrooms, but encourages lengthy and lively adult conversation to take place in the hallways.

Daily School Readiness

At the UAH ELC, we ask that families have their child ready for school upon arrival, just as you would in a public school setting. School readiness is wearing appropriate clothes for the weather, having shoes on when the child comes through the door, and having all necessary school materials (for example: backpack, blanket, etc.) with the child when they come into the building in the morning. **Please refrain from cell phone use in the building**. Families are required to make contact with their teacher in the morning to "hand off" their child into the teacher's care. You MUST sign in your child each morning.

Dress Code

Families are encouraged to dress children in comfortable clothing and shoes each day. The children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without restrictions or worrying about their clothing. We ask that all children wear weather-appropriate clothing. Girls should wear shorts under dresses. Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes are best for sturdy footing. During warm weather, please avoid open-toed shoes or flip flops in order to help prevent accidents and injuries.

We play dirty here! Daily activities include active and messy play. Children wear smocks or oversized t-shirts during messy art activities to help protect clothing. We request that at least two complete changes of clothes be kept at school in the child's cubby.

Health Check

Every day, the teacher or teacher assistant will conduct a health check of each child. This health check will be conducted as soon as possible after the child enters the room and whenever a change in the child's behavior or appearance is noted while that child is in our care.

This health check will address:

- Reported or observed illness or injury affecting the child or family members since the last date of attendance.
- Reported or observed changes in behavior of the child (such as lethargy or irritability) or appearance (e.g. sad) of the child from the previous day at home or the previous day's attendance at school.
- Skin rashes, impetigo, itching or scratching of the skin, itching or scratching of the scalp, or the presence of one or more live crawling lice.
- A temperature check if the child appears ill (a daily screening temperature check is not recommended).
- Other signs or symptoms of illness and injury (such as thick green/yellow drainage from nose and/or eyes, persistent cough, vomiting, diarrhea, cuts/lacerations, pain, or otherwise acting ill).
- The teacher will gain information necessary to complete the daily health check by direct observation of the child, by querying the parent/guardian, and, where applicable, by conversation with the child.

Please inform your teacher as soon as possible and prior to drop-off of any changes noted in your child's health and wellness, including sleep, diet, medications, and general mood.

What information am I required to give my child's teacher when dropping my child off at school?

When the child arrives at school, it is helpful to provide the following information to the teacher:

- If the child has not slept well the night before.
- If the child's mood and/or demeanor is unusual.
- If the child is not eating well.
- If there is any change in routine/activities for the family at home which may have an impact on the child.
- If there have been any signs of any of the symptoms as stated under illnesses.
- If the child has been exposed to any communicable disease.
- If the child is taking any new medication.

Please try to manage your children's illnesses promptly and with consideration for others in the classroom. We make every attempt to practice good preventive measures such as careful hand washing and cleaning/sanitation of toys.

Communication

Communication between the staff and families is very vital in providing and meeting children's needs. Daily communication will assist in providing an environment that accommodates children's desires, abilities, and endeavors. It will offer teachers the opportunity to connect with families while understanding and modifying the daily structure to meet the diverse situations within the classroom. Communication can be defined or observed as, but not limited to the following:

- Brightwheel mobile app
- Daily verbal communication
- Daily written communication logs/journals
- Flyers, newsletters, phone calls, or emails that addresses issues or concerns
- Classroom displays, classroom books, or shared photographs
- Parent-teacher conferences or meetings

Families are encouraged to communicate with teachers regularly and check backpacks daily. While Brightwheel has the capabilities to provide notes and pictures of their child at school, these are secondary to teaching and supervision of children. Daily activities such as potty times, nap lengths, and food consumption will be logged into Brightwheel as developmentally appropriate and based on teacher and staff time. The Assistant Director of Operations monitors Brightwheel messages throughout the school day; if you have an urgent message, please use the admin only messaging as teachers may not be able to read and respond to messages outside of nap and planning times. Teachers will notify families, in writing, of significant or special events that are happening at the RISE School. Parents are encouraged to send notes to school concerning special events at home.

Telephoning is the least effective method for families to communicate with teachers during the instructional day. Brightwheel is the most effective method of communication. If families have an emergency, the main number to reach the front desk is **256-824-4760.** This is the most efficient way to get messages to the classrooms. The best time to talk with teachers is after 2:45 p.m. when the children have left for the day.

The Executive Director will also publish periodic newsletters. The UAH ELC has a Facebook page for events and happenings to generate public awareness. The cafeteria menu is updated monthly and sent out via Brightwheel. We have an open door policy for families, barring any health restrictions, and you are encouraged to visit (after the first six weeks of school) to observe your child in their school setting. Please schedule observations/visits in advance with the Assistant Director of Curriculum. We want to avoid scheduling several families on the same day due to spatial limitations in our classrooms and observations conducted by university students.

Families/parents will be provided with a daily schedule for your child's class. Parents and teachers work together to determine a plan for providing positive behavioral support, toilet training routines, etc. Parents' beliefs and preferences are respected.

Grievance Procedures

It is the RISE School's policy and desire to provide developmentally-appropriate requirements and criteria that meet and exceed NAEYC and AL DHR requirements. The program's policy is to collaborate with families when a difference of opinion, value, and/or belief is identified with professional practices and/or strategies. The optimum goal is for the child to participate successfully at the program in all of their endeavors.

Families/parents are asked to speak with their child's teacher if they have a concern. If the concern cannot be met or is not met by the teacher, the concern should be taken to the Assistant Director of Curriculum. The Assistant Director of Curriculum will set a conference with the families to discuss their concerns and will follow up with a conference with the teacher as applicable. The program's goal is to meet the needs of the

children and their families. If the Assistant Director of Curriculum cannot or does not address the concern to the satisfaction of the family, then the concerns will be referred to the Executive Director and/or the Dean of the College of Education Sport, and Human Sciences.

Services Discontinued/Termination

The ELC reserves the right to discontinue services immediately to children under the following circumstances:

- Families/parents fail to adhere to policies and procedures of UAH and/or the UAH ELC, including but not limited to policies outlined in the Family Handbook and the Parking Code of Conduct.
- Families/parents fail to pay tuition and fees within the designated time periods.
- Families/parents fail to reasonably cooperate with the program in the provision of educational services to their child, such as, but not limited to, daily routines, implementation of curriculum, discipline and/or guidance, follow through with completion of records/additional evaluations, and maintaining a positive disposition.
- Child is dangerous to themselves or others due to delays/disabilities, behaviors, medical situations, or any psychological situation.
- It is decided - after appropriate evaluation by staff, specialists, family/parents, or Director - that another educational setting would be more appropriate to meet the special needs of the child.
- Families/parents do not adhere to the program's policies and procedures, which include, but are not limited to the following: completion of and updated records, confidentiality, observations, arrival and departure routines, medical situations, special services, conferencing schedules, participation, usage of appropriate communication devices, supporting classroom routines, or maintaining a positive disposition.
- Families/parents lack commitment to RISE school.
- Families/parents engage in behavior that involves acts of intimidation (bullying), harassment or abuse, assault, serious threats, or acts of violence that include, but are not limited to, the following: written or spoken communication creating alarm or concern, fear of immediate bodily harm, retaliation to staff, or a stress-related situation that develops/occurs due to actions of families/parents.
- Child arrives after 8:20 a.m. or is checked out early (before 2:15 p.m.) on a regular basis (defined as more than once a week over a period of at least a month without the consent of a doctor or the Director).

Outside Therapists

The UAH ELC welcomes collaboration with area Early Intervention (EI) Programs. Service providers and other EI therapists are welcome to work with the children individually in the classroom. Visits MUST be scheduled through the RISE Assistant Director of Curriculum at least a day in advance. Therapists may work with children individually in the classrooms when therapy goals coincide with scheduled classroom activities (such as feeding during lunch time).

All outside providers are required to complete an agreement and release of liability prior to offering services at the UAH ELC; and adhere to DHR requirements. Please contact the RISE Resource Manager to obtain these forms. All EI/private therapists must sign in and sign out upon arrival (every visit). Based on individual needs of a child, families may be provided information about supplemental direct therapies available with our contracted therapists and/or therapists in the community.

RISE School Curriculum

The UAH ELC offers a comprehensive curriculum that supports and enhances all areas of children's development: social-emotional, cognitive, language, and physical. Based on the belief that children learn best through play, the curriculum reflects the guidelines established by NAEYC in its "Developmentally Appropriate Practice Statement." Copies of this statement are available in the office of the Assistant Director of Curriculum.

Additionally, the program curriculum supports children's acquisition of skills and knowledge as outlined in the Alabama State Department of Early Childhood Education's Standards for Preschool Children. The curriculum is individualized for each child through a partnership between families/parents and teachers. Families/parents and teachers use both formal and informal means of gathering information about the children's interests, needs, and assessing each child's skills and knowledge. With this information, families/parents and teachers set goals for each child.

Modifications are made to the curriculum to support all children's learning opportunities, including those who live with a disability or special needs. The RISE School curriculum integrates content, concepts, and activities in all areas of the children's development. Key areas of content include social and self-help skills, social studies, language arts and literacy, science, numbers and math, creative arts, technology, motor skill development, and health and safety. Early math, reading, and writing activities are introduced as the children gain the developmental readiness necessary to acquire these academic skills.

Every part of the children's day is utilized. Routines, such as mealtimes, provide many opportunities for children to learn to organize a task - like practicing math skills while setting the table, learning to be a member of a community by taking turns passing dishes of food around the table, contributing to a conversation during lunch, developing a taste for new foods, recalling or telling a story of a morning activity, and more. The classrooms are labeled so that, as children select materials and put them away, they follow directions depicted in symbols/labels on shelves as a precursor to learning to read. These are just a few ways teachers use routines to offer learning experiences.

The classroom environment is carefully planned and evolves according to the teachers' knowledge of each child's growth and development. The classrooms are divided into interest areas (centers), based on the Creative Curriculum, in which the teachers select materials that children use individually or in collaboration with peers and adults. This helps children to acquire new skills, gain new knowledge, or practice and extend existing knowledge and skills. Teachers provide a balance of teacher-directed, child-initiated, and collaborative-learning activities throughout the day; however, most of the time, children are free to select the activities in which they want to participate. Teachers participate in children's play in order to support the work children are doing. By listening to children, teachers discover the ways in which children make sense of their world.

It is the teacher's responsibility to monitor children's choices; to extend and enhance their activities; and to support growth, development, and acquisition of skills and knowledge in all areas of the curriculum. The classroom centers are the primary instructional tools that teachers use to support children's learning. The centers include blocks and construction, dramatic play, science and sensory, math, creative arts, language arts and literacy, and fine motor skills and writing. Music and motor development are also a part of the curriculum.

Teachers identify children's prior knowledge of a subject and set up activities that extend their conceptual understanding of the topic. Then, through play and interaction with the materials and activities, the children construct ideas about their world. The materials selected for the centers are designed to support children's learning and development.

Dramatic play supports language development and social skills as children negotiate with peers to develop themes with assigned roles and a storyline. In "veterinary clinic," the children bring stories from personal experiences or experiences provided by the teachers that are then translated into a sequence of events to

dramatize with their peers. This requires developing the ability to retell events in a sequential and understandable way; selecting or constructing props to support the play theme; working with peers to organize the play and solve problems; and working with the teacher to document the play in pictures, constructions, and written word. A play theme such as this can also be used by the teacher to introduce science concepts about animal care, health, and math as animals are weighed and measured.

Teacher facilitation of the children's play and work in the centers brings about some of the most significant learning to occur in the classrooms. Learning to read and write and to understand number and math concepts are important goals for all children. The program curriculum reflects the belief that children learn these skills best within the context of meaningful activities (versus isolated drill) and that certain developmental tasks need to be mastered before these academic skills are acquired. Reading to children regularly and conversing with them about books and events help children build the vocabulary and language skills necessary for reading.

As children's fine motor skills develop and their ability to represent their ideas symbolically through drawings and constructions becomes more complex, they are ready to write. Activities are planned within a context that is meaningful to the child (for example - planning a shopping trip to purchase food for a party) and that supports the child's acquisition of the concepts of print, letters, sounds, and concepts such as weighing and measuring, and counting out money. Teachers provide many activities in which children learn the skills and concepts that they are developmentally ready to learn.

RISE School classrooms use the Creative Curriculum interest areas (centers) in conjunction with language-rich, literacy-enhanced themes to teach concepts across age levels. All classrooms use Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG), a web-based tool, to assist with progress monitoring of skill development. TSG is matched to both the NAEYC Standards and the Preschool Standards for Alabama. It is suitable for both typically-developing students and students who have special needs.

All classroom teachers use several ways to authentically assess child progress and use the online portfolio format TSG. The portfolio contains work samples, projects, photographs, therapy notes, and daily or weekly notes, etc. Data is taken for students who have delays in developmental areas. Parent conferences are scheduled each semester (fall and spring) for all students.

Daily Schedules and Routines

The daily schedule is posted outside each classroom. Each schedule is designed to allow children adequate time to explore and have a balance of active and quiet activities, indoors and out. The routine allows children to know and prepare for what is coming next and provides a sense of security. Some flexibility is anticipated in response to individual and group needs, special needs, and special times such as therapy, visitors, and weather conditions.

Children are provided the opportunity to have time for free choice and accessibility to activity learning centers throughout the daily schedule. Teachers provide children the opportunity to acquire certain skills through indirect and direct teaching strategies. They purposefully plan and prepare the environment so children are allowed to have child-initiated and interest-topics to be discussed, explored, and researched.

Each child is supported and provided for through planned lessons, special interest centers, and collaborative inquiry to play individually, in pairs, small groups, and whole groups. Teaching strategies will also include opportunities for children to be exposed to curriculum content, routines, learning opportunities, tasks, and skills in a holistic approach, and segmented sections, as applicable, that are meaningful and suitable for children. Teachers will also provide children the opportunity to engage and be immersed in emerging skills and activities that support and enhance repetitive learning opportunities.

The teaching staff assist children's learning by interacting and playing within centers or activities. Teaching staff use this opportunity to gather documentation of children's learning, reflect upon and assess children's interactions, and modify plans or teaching strategies to increase children's learning opportunities.

Each child's schedule is individualized so that the day includes, as needed, lunch, snack, and rest (children may or may not sleep). The center will have common group activities, music, gross motor play outdoors (weather permitting), and therapeutic services (if typical school day). Each child will generally follow a schedule that includes individual activities.

Teaching staff's interactions will be demonstrated or portrayed by:

- Interacting with children without using any form of physical or psychological abuse.
- Recognizing and protecting children from health and safety hazards.
- Interacting, encouraging, and providing children with a variety of learning opportunities and social experiences.
- Adapting and responding to conditions that require changes and demanding responses that support the quality of the program.
- Communicating with families, children (if applicable), and other staff members.

In addition to other planned activities, teachers encourage and help children become independent and competent in toileting, hand-washing, personal hygiene, dressing, and eating. Children are encouraged, guided, and provided the opportunity to clean up equipment and materials within the classroom and on the playground area.

Guidance and Discipline

The philosophy of the RISE School is that discipline is based on the developmental level of the child. All expectations for children's behavior are developmentally-appropriate. Staff members will observe children to determine patterns in a child's behavior to provide planned, reflective, and consistent individualized responses.

Positive Behavioral Support/Discipline Procedures

The teachers and staff members of the UAH ELC provide behavioral support and use discipline measures that demonstrate kindness and compassion, but also firmness and consistency. Every attempt is made to help children gain the confidence and knowledge that is needed to develop their self-control. Children are not allowed to hurt themselves or others or destroy property. Promoting positive behaviors in children is a primary goal in the classroom setting.

Guidelines for promoting these behaviors are as follows:

- Classroom rules are simple and geared toward the child's developmental level.
- Teachers and staff serve as models of appropriate behavior.
- Yelling at children and frequent use of the word "no" are not accepted as appropriate staff interactions with children.
- Children will be praised for following the rules and for modeling positive behaviors.
- Children will be reminded of the rules, and the classroom staff will consistently enforce limits.

Unacceptable behaviors will be dealt with using the following guidelines:

- Consistent responses and consequences to unacceptable behavior
- Planned ignoring
- Redirecting

The program staff uses a number of positive guidance techniques, both direct and indirect, to ensure safety and order in the classrooms. These techniques are implemented for children to learn and understand limits while developing positive self-esteem and a greater sense of self control. For example, to assist children in understanding and developing a greater sense of self-control, children will be redirected with other options or materials, given a choice between options, or be allowed to gain self-control by thinking about their behavior while sitting in a designated area for a break or cool-down time.

Teachers will utilize a number of resources to determine a child's inability to display positive self-esteem and/or self-control. Teachers and staff will document a child's persistent, serious and/or challenging behavior through daily anecdotal notes, accident/incident reports, running records, and/or daily communication logs as a method to collect and analyze data about a child's recurring behavior. The documentation will assist in determining factors that contribute to the child's challenging behavior with events, activities, and/or interactions with others. This information will be collected and kept in the child's file. Teachers will notify the Assistant Director of Curriculum of children who need additional assistance in developing positive self-esteem and self-control. The Assistant Director of Curriculum will then contact the family, and a meeting will be set to discuss alternative strategies, which support the child.

A team will be developed that consists of the parents, teachers, the Assistant Director of Curriculum, and other resource specialists (as needed) to focus upon developmentally-appropriate practices/strategies in order to develop and implement a plan for the child on an individualized basis that supports the child's inclusion and success within the program. In addition, a behavioral therapy specialist can be contacted to assist with the team decision in regard to screenings and/or assessments to determine the level of support for individual children.

Biting Policy

Our programs recognize that biting is unfortunately not unexpected when children are in group care. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program and we recognize how upsetting biting is for families. While we feel that biting is never the right thing for toddlers or preschoolers to do, we know that they bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems in children.

Our program does not focus on punishment for biting but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting. When biting occurs, these are our three main responses:

- Care and help for the child who was bitten.
- Help for the child who bit so that he or she learns other behavior.
- Examination of our program to stop the biting.

Our teachers express strong disapproval of biting. They work to keep children safe and to help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior. When there are episodes of ongoing biting, we develop a plan of specific strategies, techniques, and timelines to address it. We do not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

We give immediate attention and, if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We offer to put ice on the bite if the child is willing. If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water.

When children bite, their families are informed personally and privately the same day and given a copy of the incident form. When we experience ongoing biting in a classroom, we examine classroom practices and identify a plan within the room. We keep the name of the child who did the biting confidential. This is to avoid labeling and to give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting. In addition,

we have current resources on biting available for staff and families. We encourage families to bring their concerns and frustrations directly to the teachers and/or Assistant Director of Curriculum.

Biting is always documented on our standard incident report form, which is completed and signed by a teacher and an administrator. It must also be signed by the guardian. One copy is given to the family and the other copy is kept in the student's file.

****The UAH ELC reserves the right to remove any student from the center if his/her behavior threatens the safety or well-being of others or themselves.**

Supervision of Children

The UAH Early Learning Center (ELC) maintains the highest level of quality services for young children by ensuring appropriate adult-to-child ratios at all times. The program adheres to both the Alabama state-mandated child care guidelines and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards for adult/child ratios.

The UAH ELC practices active supervision, which is the focused, intentional, and continual observation of children by educators and program staff to ensure that all children are safely and fully engaged in their learning environments. Classroom staff in the RISE School are supported by therapists, child care assistants, floaters, volunteers, and university students, allowing each child to receive individualized attention and assistance as needed.

Inclusion

What does it mean to think inclusively?

- Inclusion means asking about access.
- Inclusion means asking about cultures and beliefs.
- Inclusion means valuing multiple forms of communication for everyone.
- Inclusion is about structuring our classrooms so that typical hierarchies of "smartness" are broken down and replaced with an understanding that there are many ways to be smart.

"We are all products of our experiences"(Sapon-SHelvin, Widening the Circle: *The Power of Inclusive Classrooms)*. Why not give each child the experience of diversity and learning how to work with others of varied abilities? Why not give each child the opportunity to see beyond the surface and to build lasting friendships with children of different backgrounds, abilities, interests and needs? At the end of the day, we are all human. Each and every individual deserves a chance to reach his/her full potential and to learn how to not only advocate for themselves but for others.

Immediate Benefits for ALL Students

Children with and without disabilities each transition from the pre-k classes with a strong foundation in pre-reading, pre-writing, mathematics, and self-awareness. Our goal is for every child to be a full participant in the general education setting if possible. Visit the UAH RISE School and you will discover that our children do not see a distinction between themselves - they are simply friends who play together, learn together, and cheer each other on! Every child adds value to each classroom family and, overall, our school family.

NAEYC: 10 Signs of a Great Preschool

1. Children spend most of their day playing and working with materials or other children. They do not wander aimlessly, and they are not expected to sit quietly for long periods of time.

2. Children have access to various activities throughout the day. Look for assorted building blocks and other construction materials; props for pretend play; picture books; paints and other art materials; and table toys such as matching games, peg boards, and puzzles. Children should not all be doing the same thing at the same time.
3. Teachers work with individual children, small groups, and the whole group at different times during the day. They do not spend all of their time with the whole group.
4. The classroom is decorated with children's original artwork, their own writing with invented spelling and stories dictated by the children to teachers.
5. Children learn numbers and the alphabet in the context of their everyday experiences. The natural world of plants and animals and meaningful activities like cooking, taking attendance or serving snacks provide the basis for learning activities.
6. Children work on projects and have long periods of time (at least one hour) to play and explore. Worksheets are used little if at all.
7. Children have an opportunity to play outside every day. Outdoor play is never sacrificed for more instructional time.
8. Teachers read books to children individually or in small groups throughout the day, not just at group story time.
9. Curriculum is adapted for those who are ahead as well as those who need additional help. Teachers recognize that children's different backgrounds and experiences mean that they do not learn the same things at the same time in the same way.
10. Children and their families look forward to school. Parents feel secure about sending their child to the program. Children are happy to attend; they do not cry regularly or complain of feeling sick.

Assessment

RISE Philosophy

Assessment should be embedded in the practices of an early childhood program and should be conducted in partnership with parents and families. An authentic assessment is one that gathers data from natural observations and interactions with the child in familiar settings and with familiar adults. Assessment done at the program strives to be authentic. Assessment should be valid and reliable.

The program selects assessment instruments and methods that best achieve the purposes of its assessment practices, using criteria for analyzing assessment data that are standardized or agreed upon by the field. Assessment data is understood to be only one source of knowledge about the child. Multiple sources are gathered and analyzed along with assessment data to determine a child's level/ability or need. Formal and informal sources of information are used before a referral is made for further evaluation.

Parents are recognized as the expert of their child's growth and development and given respect for their right to make decisions about their child's education and care. Families/parents are given information about the data gathered in assessment practices. The staff works closely with families/parents in achieving the best assessment method(s) that meet each individual child's needs. Assessment is on-going and is used to monitor children's progress and to inform best practice. There are clear linkages between assessment, curriculum, and program development

Assessment and Evaluation Plan

Assessment and evaluation are integral parts of a strong early childhood program. The program uses multiple sources of data collection to assess children's development and learning and to evaluate the program. All assessments, evaluations, and communication with families about their child's growth and development are sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and home language. *The purpose of assessment and evaluation is to:*

- Conduct health and developmental screenings of children and make appropriate referrals for further assessment as indicated.

- Identify children's interests and needs.
- Describe children's level of development and scope of knowledge.
- Discover children's approaches to learning.
- Plan curriculum and choose instructional strategies.
- Plan an environment that best supports learning.
- Improve the program and instructional practices.
- Communicate with families and the community.
- Use language and familiar settings for the children to obtain meaningful and accurate results.
- Provide for child's progress reports at least on a quarterly basis, parent conferences at least two times a year, and at any time by parent request.

The RISE School special services team consists of Executive Director, Assistant Director of Curriculum, speech-language pathologist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, and teachers. The special services team works closely with families at the RISE School to determine if additional evaluations are necessary. For children with an applicable medical diagnosis or with screening data indicating possibility of developmental need, the special services team meets with families to determine the best method of evaluation for their child.

The teachers are specialized in early childhood education methods and theories. If a staff member suspects that a child has a developmental delay or other special needs, the staff member will contact the Assistant Director of Curriculum. Then, observation, documentation, and discussion about the child's growth and development will take place with the Special Services team. The teachers are not specialized to diagnose developmental delays or other special needs. Therefore, the Assistant Director of Curriculum will communicate to families in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner; provide documentation and explanation for the concern; and suggest next steps and information about the program and outside resources available to parents/families.

For children birth to three-years, referrals for assessment via Child Find or Early Intervention (EI) Service Provider are encouraged. EI is a family-centered, therapeutic resource that services eligible children at no cost. To be eligible for EI services, a child must be evaluated and present with a 25% delay in one of five developmental areas: physical, cognitive, communication, adaptive, social-emotional. The RISE School works closely with local EI providers to carry over established goals and treatment plans into RISE classrooms and integrated therapy sessions for eligible students.

For children three- to five-years, referrals for assessment via the student's local school system are encouraged. The school system can provide a complete developmental assessment with parent referral at no cost. To be eligible for school-based services or an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a child must have an applicable medical diagnosis, score 2 standard deviations below the mean in 1 assessment domain, or score 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in 2+ assessment domains. UAH is not a Local Education Agency (LEA); however, the RISE School special services team can incorporate recommendations from IEPs to carry over established goals and treatment plans into RISE classrooms and integrated therapy sessions.

If a family does not desire to pursue evaluation via EI or school-based entities, the special services team works collaboratively to determine the best assessment method(s) for the student. The RISE School uses the same service qualification benchmarks as Early Intervention for ages birth to three-years and as the local school system for ages three- to five-years. The RISE School can provide consultative services for students that demonstrate a developmental need, but that do not qualify for a therapy plan based on established benchmarks.

For eligible students, a RISE special services therapy plan is established in order to provide appropriate therapeutic interventions and support for the student within the classroom for continued developmental growth and success. The plan is updated with the entire special services team, including family, on an annual basis;

however, families can request additional meetings at any point during the school year by contacting the school speech-language pathologist.

Administration of Assessments and Evaluations
Staff members will obtain written consent from families/parents before sharing information about a child with other relevant providers, agencies, or other programs. The RISE School staff and other personnel administering instruments will obtain and maintain appropriate training for collecting/gathering data on individual children. The Assistant Director of Curriculum will be responsible for approving and checking set credentials and/or requirements for in-house and outside agencies that are administering instruments within the program. Results/reports will only be shared with parents and predetermined individuals for research projects.

Assessment Timeline
Additional intervention and/or resources are documented and followed up with the Assistant Director of Curriculum and appropriate specialist. Data is gathered on a weekly basis by teachers and/or relevant therapy providers. For students served under a RISE therapy plan, families will receive a progress report every quarter from the special services team. Parents receive written reports at least two times a year during parent/teacher conferences.

- Portfolios are on-going assessment tools and are regularly used in planning. They are shared twice a year in parent conferences and available to parents and children to review at other times.
- Assessment is conducted by the Assistant Director of Curriculum, certified staff/therapists/faculty, parents, and ECE students.
- Data is collected by observation, surveys of parents and staff, and review of documents.

Family Education and Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)

The RISE School will ask for written permission from the parent in order to release any information from a child's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR & 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest.
- Other schools to which a student is transferring.
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
- Accrediting organizations.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully-issued subpoena.
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to state laws.

Families/parents have the right to access their children's educational records. Requests to review the records should be made through the administrative office. Suspected violations of confidentiality should be reported promptly to the Executive Director.

Non-custodial parents and grandparents
The right to information about a child by non-custodial parent(s) and grandparent(s) is determined by court order and/or by the custodial parent(s). A copy of any custody papers issued by the court is to be kept on file in the office.

Children's Health

Information about children's health helps teaching staff plan activities to support their growth and development. At enrollment, families/parents are asked to submit a doctor's statement and provide information about special health needs that a child might have. A child's health information is kept confidential. Only the information necessary for a child's care is shared with staff and student workers/floaters who need to know.

When families/parents provide the RISE School with information about allergies, diet restrictions, or special health care needs, that information is shared with those individuals who provide care for the child. By regulation, some of it may be posted in the classroom so all adults who care for the child can be informed.

Children who have chronic health conditions or special developmental needs may need additional assistance. Families are asked to provide the program with written medical instructions from their health care provider for handling such conditions as asthma, orthopedic or sensory problems, seizures, and serious known allergies. Physician's or health care provider's directions/instructions will be followed, if the child is accepted to the center. Conditions that require regular medication or technology support will need to have written documentation via completion of the appropriate forms, if accepted to the center. The RISE School works with families to ensure that a child receives the necessary protection and care. There is NOT a nurse on staff. However, at least two staff members in the building are trained in CPR and Basic First Aid at all times.

Illnesses and Medication

The family will be expected to notify the staff of any illness indicating an absence. Exclusion from school will be based on the needs of the sick child and the other children in the classroom. In case of a communicable disease, and at the discretion of the Director, other families will be notified of the existence of the circumstances.

In the event that a child is hospitalized for any reason (including emergency room visits), families must obtain a release from the physician stating the child is healthy enough to return to school. A copy must be provided to the Director before the child may return to school. Please try to manage your children's illnesses promptly and with consideration of the other children in their classroom. We make every attempt to practice good preventive measures, such as careful hand washing and cleaning of toys and equipment.

Administering Medications

Medications and special medical procedures can only be administered to a child enrolled in the RISE School with **written, signed, and dated instructions** from both a **licensed physician** and the child's **parent(s) or guardian(s)**. Medication Permission Forms are available in the office and under the "Documents" tab in Brightwheel. The RISE School adheres to Alabama School System policies and reserves the right to contact the child's physician or pharmacist to clarify instructions when necessary.

Medication Requirements

- **All medications**, including **prescription and over-the-counter (OTC)** (e.g., diaper cream, sunscreen, pain relievers), must:
    - Be in the **original container** unopened with **manufacturer's label or prescription label** attached.
    - Be clearly labeled with the **child's full name**, **date filled**, **physician's name**, **expiration date**, and **specific storage and dosage instructions**.
    - Be accompanied by a **completed Medication Permission Form**, signed by both the parent and physician, even for OTC items.

- For **children under two years old**, a physician's written dosage is required for all OTC medications.
- If your physician provides a **sample medication**, a **written dosage and administration plan** must be submitted at the same time.
- **Do not leave medications in a child's school bag**. Medications must be **hand-delivered to staff** to ensure safe storage.

Sun Block

The RISE School encourages the use of sunblock with UVA and UVB protection of SPF of 30+ to protect children from the harmful rays of the sun. Families/parents are asked to apply sun block in the morning when dressing their child. Teaching staff apply sun block in the afternoon at the end of the day. A child-friendly SPF 30 sunblock supplied by families can only be applied with the proper Medication Permission form on file.

Insect Repellent

Insect repellent must be applied at home before coming to school. We will not apply it at the ELC.

Storage and Documentation

- All medications are stored in a **locked cabinet** in the front office or another designated cool storage area.
- The administration of all medications is **documented** daily.
- Medications must be **supplied by the family** and clearly marked with the date they were brought to the program.

Staff Medication Training and Oversight

- Medications are overseen by the Executive Director and designated staff who are trained annually in medication administration.
- Staff administering medication must:
    - Receive specific training and a written performance evaluation conducted annually by a licensed health professional or consultant.
      Demonstrate competency in correct procedures and follow written guidelines.
    - Hold current pediatric CPR and First Aid certification.
    - Sign documentation each time a medication is administered.

We are committed to providing a safe and responsive environment. Please reach out to the office if you have any questions about our medication policy or procedures.

Illness

What types of illnesses would prohibit a child from attending the center? We **cannot admit** a child into care if any the following exist or keep a child in care if any of the following develop:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in school activities, including outdoor play.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
- Existence of lingering illness, lethargy, or behavior changes which would inhibit a child's participation in classroom activities or outside play.
- Any other infectious or potentially infectious illness identified by the center Director.
- The child has any one of the following listed below, unless medical evaluation by a health care professional indicates that you can include the child in the center's activities:

Children should not be in school if the following illnesses are present, or have been present for twenty-four (24) hours:

Illness	Signs and Symptoms	Exclusion and Readmission Criteria
Fever	Temperature of 100.4 or higher with or without behavior changes and/or other signs of illness. OR Temperature of 99.5 or higher WITH additional behavior changes and/or other signs of illness.	Students will be sent home and may not return until they have been fever free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medication, such as Motrin/Tylenol).
Rash (unexplained)	Irritated or swollen skin on the body that may appear in the form of bumps, raised lesions, and/or sores that may be causing itching/discomfort to the individual.	Students will be sent home if a rash is present that cannot be explained by a previously noted skin condition on file, such as eczema. A physician's note is required to return to school. Please note: If there are open wounds on the skin that are blistering, oozing, and/or draining; they must be able to be covered completely with a watertight bandage.
Diarrhea	Frequent loose, watery stools compared with a normal pattern.	Students will be sent home after **2 or more** loose, watery stools within a 24-hour period. Students may return when they have been diarrhea free for 24 hours. *If frequent loose stools are a normal pattern due to a medication/medical condition, then a physician's note will be required for the child to remain at school.*

Vomiting	Forcefully expelling the stomach's contents out of the mouth (often involves retching). Not due to a medical condition, such as reflux.	Students will be sent home after **1 or more** episodes of vomiting. Students may return when they have been episode free of vomiting for 24 hours without medication. *OR until a physician determines that the cause of the vomiting is not contagious, and the child is not in danger of dehydration. A physician's note is required.*
Common Cold	Sore throat, nasal/chest congestion, runny nose, coughing, sneezing, headaches, body aches, etc.	Students will be sent home if unable to participate in daily classroom activities and/or have excessive coughing and thick green/yellow drainage. Students can return with a physician's note saying that the symptoms are non-contagious OR when symptoms disappear.
Herpes Simplex **(cold sores or fever blisters)**	Fever, irritability, sores in mouth, gums, and/or lips.	Students can return once sores have disappeared and have been treated with medication. In addition, students MUST be fever free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication, such as Motrin/Tylenol).
Strep Throat	Fever, red sore throat, swollen glands, and/or a strawberry tongue (occurs following a peeling of a white coating from the tongue)	Students can return to school with a physician's note and 24 hours after starting the antibiotic. In addition, students MUST be fever free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication, such as Motrin/Tylenol).
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Red/pink itchy, swollen eyes; eye discharge, possible light sensitivity, possible fever, and/or eye pain	Students will be sent home if any of the following symptoms are present and can return to school once symptoms have improved (reduced redness, minimal to no discharge from the eye) with a physician's note.

COVID-19 Virus	Fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath/ difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste and/or smell, sore throat, congestion and/or runny nose, nausea/vomiting, and/or diarrhea.	**CHILD TESTS POSITIVE:** If your child tests positive for COVID-19, he/she may return to school when symptoms have improved AND the child is fever-free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication, such as Motrin/Tylenol). The child MUST be well enough to be able to participate in daily classroom activities. **POSITIVE CLOSE CONTACT (classmate or teacher):** In the case of a positive child or teacher in a classroom, all families in the classroom will be notified. Parents please closely monitor your child for signs and symptoms of COVID. If your child develops any symptoms or is otherwise unwell, please follow the illness policy guidelines above. **PLEASE NOTE**: *Many who test positive are presenting symptoms that are assumed to be allergies or a common cold. If your child or anyone in your family has head congestion, runny nose, sore throat, etc.; please get tested. Keep in mind, a fever is not always present.*
Influenza (Seasonal Flu)	Fever, chills, body aches, cough, runny and/or stuffy nose, sore throat, headache, and/or myalgia.	Students may return to school after symptoms have improved AND they are well enough to participate in daily classroom activities. In addition, students MUST be fever free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication, such as Motrin/Tylenol).
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	Cold-like signs or symptoms, fever, wheezing/difficulty breathing, irritability, decreased activity, and/or poor appetite.	Students may return when symptoms have improved AND they are well enough to participate in daily classroom activities. In addition, students MUST be fever free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication, such as Motrin/Tylenol).

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease	Fever, sore throat, poor appetite, vague feeling of illness, skin rash: flat or raised red spots usually on the palms of hands and soles of feet, but may also appear on knees, elbows, bottom, genital areas, and/or inside the mouth. This illness is EXTREMELY contagious.	Students may return to school when they have been fever free for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication, such as Motrin/Tylenol), have no uncontrolled drooling with mouth sores, AND feel well enough to participate in daily classroom activities.
Head Lice	Itching of the head/neck and visible nits/lice on the scalp and/or in the hair.	Students may return to school once full treatment has been completed AND no nits/lice are present.
Impetigo	Rash anywhere on the skin, but most commonly on the face, lips, arms, and/or legs that spreads to other areas; itchy blisters filled with yellow or honey-colored fluid that oozes and then dries/crusts over.	Students may return to school after receiving medication treatment for 24 hours AND if the sores have stopped oozing/are getting smaller OR can be covered completely with a watertight bandage. A physician's note is required.
Scabies	Intense itching (especially at night), with pimple or tiny blister-like scaly rash which may affect many areas of the body, but most commonly seen in between fingers, around wrists, elbows, armpits and/or knees.	Students may return to school once prescribed treatment has been completed. A physician's note is required.

While we want all students present at school, there will be times that students will not be able to attend due to illnesses. We urge you to keep your child home if unwell to help prevent the spread of communicable disease and protect our children and staff.

As with all absences, let your child's teacher know the reason for the absence. If your child is diagnosed of a contagious illness, notify administration immediately so that they can post a statement informing families of possible exposure. A physician's return-to-school note will be required if a child is diagnosed with a disease that is preventable by vaccine (Chicken Pox, Mumps, Measles, Rubella, and Whooping Cough) and/or it is listed as a requirement to any of the above illnesses listed. When a child experiences a condition not listed within the chart above, the CDC recommendations will be followed.

Parents will be notified if children become ill at school and must make arrangements to pick up their child within the hour. The UAH ELC enforces the same standards in preventing employees from working while sick.

Injury

If a child becomes injured, or if there is a medical emergency, the RISE School staff is expected to respond quickly and calmly, assessing the situation to provide appropriate care. Staff should seek help from other adults so that someone can specifically tend to an injured child. If the staff member determines that the injury is serious and that professional help may be needed, the staff member will notify administration immediately. The team will decide the appropriate action to take including calling the family to take the child to the doctor or calling 911. We immediately call 911 if a child has stopped breathing or has difficulty breathing. Staff wear gloves for any injury involving blood or bodily fluids. A staff member is not permitted to transport an injured child to their home or to a medical facility.

If 911 is called, the caller will give the following information:

- Self-identification
- Identity of the injured person and the nature of injury
- Time of injury
- Location of injured person
- Pre-existing medical conditions and/or allergies
- Current medication taken

If 911 is called following the above consultation, the parent will also be called immediately thereafter. A staff member/Executive Director will be selected to accompany the student in the ambulance if the student is taken from the school to a hospital for treatment. The family will be notified of the medical facility destination. The staff member will stay with the student at least until the parent has arrived. The Assistant Director of Operations will follow-up with the family regarding the status of the student's condition until the student returns to school.

A container of liquid absorbent pellets is kept in the center and used on spills of bodily fluids such as blood or vomit. An injury report is completed for each accident.

Accident/Incident Reports

An Accident/Incident Report must be filled out when an injury occurs to a child. If there is any kind of mark (redness, teeth marks, bruise, scratch, etc.), blood is visible, or the child continues to complain, a report must be filled out, no matter how minor the injury. No other child's name should be mentioned on the report. An Incident Report may be filled out when the family/parent needs to be notified of the behavior of a child such as biting, seriously hurting others, unusual behavior, etc. If a child was hurt or bitten by another child, we do not use that child's name. Instead, we write "another child." A copy with signatures from the teacher, guardian, and Administrator is given to the family, and a copy is placed in the child's file.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

It is required by state law that any teacher or staff member that suspects child abuse or neglect notify the local Department of Human Resources. Child abuse in any form is not tolerated. No one, including parents or teachers, is allowed to abuse a child physically or mentally while at the RISE School. Staff members are to never use physical punishment, such as shaking or hitting, or engage in psychological abuse or coercion. Program staff is never to use threats, derogatory remarks, or withhold food as a form of discipline. All forms of abuse must be reported immediately to the Executive Director. The program is required by Alabama and federal law to report any suspected evidence of physical, mental, or sexual abuse; or child neglect to the Alabama Department of Human Resources (AL DHR). AL DHR will determine if a situation warrants investigation. Teachers and staff are required to report any suspicion of child abuse to the local DHR and the Director. Verification is not required.

Alabama and federal law require that suspicions be reported in good faith. Protecting a child from an abusive adult, even if it is another staff member who gets stressed and reacts harshly to the children, is the responsibility of all staff. Physical punishment of children in a child care or early education setting is considered child abuse by Child Care Licensing and must be reported. It is a misdemeanor for any person to fail to report. A person making a report in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability. The name of the reporter is kept confidential.

A report should be made when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused, neglected, or is in danger of being abused. A report of suspected abuse is a request for an investigation. Investigation of child abuse reports is the responsibility of Child Welfare workers and, when a crime may have been committed, law enforcement officials.

During annual staff orientation, all staff receive Child Abuse and Neglect training and are provided resources and information that raise awareness, including warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect. Teachers working with children ages 3-24 months receive training regarding Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, which is the unexplained death of a sleeping baby and Shaken Baby Syndrome, which is the result of violent shaking of young children.

Emergency Plans/Procedures

A Designated director will be on-site at all times. Listed below are the procedures for the UAH ELC in the event of an emergency situation.

Emergency Lighting
Classrooms and evacuation bags have flashlights. Batteries are routinely replaced or recharged. The building is equipped with emergency lighting in the event of a power outage.

Obtaining Emergency Assistance
Administration and classroom teachers ensure that all children are evacuated from the building or are in a safe place. After the children are safe and accounted for, someone is appointed to contact the UAH Police Department if not already done so (by activation of the alarm system). The classroom teachers are responsible for bringing their attendance sheets and classroom backpack containing children's emergency information. When evacuating to the designated location, all staff with cell phones will carry them to use for contacting families, if necessary. The administrative staff are responsible for checking each of the classrooms and bathrooms for any child or adult that was left or unable to hear/see the alarms.

Teacher Supplies for Emergencies
The classroom backpack contains items necessary for emergencies, including copies of children's emergency and contact information. Teachers carry cell phones and walkies with them whenever they leave the classroom. The Assistant Director of Operations is responsible for maintaining the emergency center binder. Classroom teachers are responsible to maintain classroom backpacks and up-to-date emergency folders. All UAH ELC staff are responsible to make sure they bring the classroom emergency bag when leaving the classroom for any reason.

Shoes In an Emergency
Children are expected to wear shoes at all times, however when a child removes their shoes for any reason, teachers should encourage them to always place **their shoes in a central basket in the classroom.** That way, if an evacuation is necessary, teachers can grab the basket and put shoes back on children after they are out of the building.

Code ORANGE

Disaster Evacuation Plan
The administrative team, classroom teachers, and other staff members are familiar with and prepared for all evacuation scenarios. Code Orange preparedness drills are practiced monthly. Teachers discuss these emergency procedures with children so they are prepared and less likely to get upset.

Fire Emergency
The fire alarms are linked to the Huntsville Fire Department and UAH Police and Safety Department. If the alarm sounds, Huntsville Fire Department and UAH Police Department are automatically dispatched to the building. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. Fire drills are conducted monthly. In the event of a fire-related emergency, teachers gather and count the children, take a classroom iPad, walkie talkie, and the classroom backpack, and evacuate the building to a designated safe place. Once in a designated safe location, teachers take attendance and account for all children. Teachers are responsible to verify that all children are accounted for and present (during fire drills, children practice walking out of the building, taking attendance, and remaining in the safe location during the drills). Generally, in the event of a fire, the classrooms go to the west fenced playground. The administration team checks rooms in the process of leaving the building to ensure no one is left behind.

Code BLUE

Weather Preparedness Plan
The administrative team, classroom teachers, and other staff members are familiar with and prepared for all weather scenarios. Code Blue preparedness drills are practiced quarterly. Teachers discuss these emergency procedures with children so they are prepared and less likely to get upset.

Tornado
If the UAH campus civil defense tornado sirens sound, the children are immediately evacuated to a designated safe area in the building. These hallways/rooms are in the center of the building and have no windows. The teachers are responsible for bringing daily attendance, emergency cards, and emergency backpacks to the evacuation area. The administration team is responsible for checking all rooms to make sure no child or staff are left behind.

Teachers check attendance once the children are in the evacuation area. The evacuation area is supplied at all times with a civil defense talking radio and batteries, first aid supplies, bottled water, snacks, flashlights and batteries, quilts, a collection of things to entertain the children, diapers, Kleenex, and wet wipes. Tornado drills are practiced quarterly. Children are kept in the evacuation area during a tornado warning for Madison County. Parents are discouraged from leaving the ELC with their children during dangerous weather conditions.

Inclement Weather
In case of snow or severe weather, we will follow the schedule of UAH. If UAH closes due to inclement weather, the UAH ELC will also close. If the threat of inclement weather arises, families should listen to local radio stations for school closings and times and make arrangements to pick up their child promptly. In the event of an early closing, AWP will be canceled for that day. Any other unscheduled closing will be reported to families as soon as possible through Brightwheel. Please sign up for Brightwheel for messages from administration.

Code YELLOW

Shelter-In-Place Procedures

The administrative team, classroom teachers, and other staff members are familiar with and prepared for all safety scenarios. Code Yellow preparedness drills are practiced quarterly. Teachers discuss these emergency procedures with children so they are prepared and less likely to get upset.

Shelter-in-place occurs when a threatening situation is posed and escape from the building is not advisable until instruction has been received from appropriate authorities. In the event of a shelter-in-place situation, before contacting anyone else, teachers or other adults are to immediately contact the police by calling 911. If children are on the playground and teachers become aware of a dangerous situation (strange behavior of an individual outside the fence, entry onto the playground of a strange individual who will not leave or appears dangerous, the sound of gunfire in the area) or staff are notified of a dangerous situation and told to go into shelter-in-place, the children are moved inside immediately. Teachers should ensure their doors are closed and locked; and immediately call 911. If children are inside their classroom and the teachers become aware of a dangerous situation either by their own observation or by notification from appropriate authorities, they should immediately their hallway and outside doors are locked, move the children away from windows/doors, have them sit down on the floor in a hidden area, turn off the light, and call 911. ALL classroom doors should remain locked during the school day.

Dangerous or Suspicious Persons

Any person who enters the building or loiters on the property outside of the building should be identified. A person with no legitimate business in the building should be asked to leave. The UAH Police are called if such a person refuses to leave. In the event of a hostile or volatile adult entering the building or classroom, teachers should attempt to move the children to another room and contact the administration immediately for assistance. The police will be called if the danger is assessed to be severe. Avoid behaviors that would increase the likelihood of a violent response from the individual. Keep the children calm until help arrives.

Lost or Missing Child Procedure

In the event that a child is determined to be missing, the following procedures will be followed:

- Staff will determine when and where the child was last seen. Staff will remain calm and keep the other children calm.
- Staff will (if possible) consider the state of mind of the child. Were they scared, frustrated, attempting to elope? Did they fall behind?
- Staff will conduct a search of the immediate area with other available staff. Staff will ask nearby children and staff if they have seen the child or know where the child is. Before leaving the rest of the group to find a child, staff will see that the group is supervised by other staff members. Available employees will monitor the front entrance and playground gate while other employees begin looking for the child inside the building. Administration will pull video camera footage to check for the child.
- Staff will check bathrooms, gym, other classrooms, community room, and playgrounds.
- Staff will contact the Executive Director and/or other administrative personnel about the situation.
- Staff will identify the missing child, when and where the child was last seen, and provide a description of the child, including clothing worn. The Executive Director will organize an extended search. If the child is not found in 10 minutes, the Executive Director will contact the UAH police department and the child's family.
- Staff will remain calm and positive, acknowledge the other children's fears, and try to keep the routine as normal as possible.
- Staff will complete an incident report and any other additional reports requested.

Code RED

Lockdown Procedures

The administrative team, classroom teachers, and other staff members are familiar with and prepared for all safety scenarios. Code Red preparedness drills are practiced quarterly. Teachers discuss these emergency procedures with children so they are prepared and less likely to get upset.

In the event that there is a direct threat to the safety of the UAH Campus or UAH Early Learning Center, the UAH Police Department will notify the Executive Director of the RISE School and issue all students and staff to initiate code red protocols. Officers will dispatch to the ELC in order to neutralize the threat. ELC staff will move children to a secure, out-of-sight location. ELC staff will be monitoring the safety of the children during code red protocols and will be unable to communicate to families until cleared and approved by the Police Department. Families will be notified via Brightwheel of initiation of code red status, as well as resolve. Families are discouraged from coming to the UAH campus during a code red in order to ensure safety of all parties. It is recommended that families download UAlert for additional notifications in regard to campus safety.

Health, Safety, and Nutrition Information

Hand Washing

Hand washing is the most important means of limiting the spread of diseases. All individuals participating in the program wash their hands before and after preparing and serving food, before and after helping a child with the bathroom or changing a diaper, after cleaning a child's face, before and after tending to a child's injuries, after handling pets, and after outside play. Children are encouraged to wash their hands at the same time using soap and rubbing their hands together under running water for several seconds.

Staff and children follow proper hand washing procedures in order to eliminate as many germs in the environment as possible. Children who are developmentally ready to learn personal hygiene are taught hand washing procedures and are periodically monitored for assistance to successfully complete the task. Staff will assist children with hand washing as needed. Hand washing is required for all staff, volunteers, and children when entering the room. This reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.

Everyone is required to wash their hands at these times:

- When arriving for the day and upon entering any classroom.
- Before and after:
    - Meals and snacks, preparing, handling, or preparing food.
    - Feeding a child.
    - Administering medicine.
    - Playing in water activities that are used by more than one child.
    - Moving from one group to another that involves contact with infants and toddlers/twos.
    - Diapering.
    - Using the toilet or helping a child use the toilet.
- After:
    - Handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood, vomit) from noses, mouths, eyes, or open sores.
    - Handling any raw food that requires cooking (eggs, meat, poultry).
    - After playing in water that is shared by two or more people.
    - Handling pets and other animals.
    - Handling garbage or cleaning up items or areas.
    - Removing gloves when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood.

Hand washing how-to:

- Wash hands thoroughly using warm running water to wet hands and wrists.
- Use a thumb-nail size of liquid soap, rubbing and working soap vigorously into a lather and washing hands between fingers, back and inside of hands up to wrists, and under fingernails for at least 20 seconds or two verses of "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat," making sure that all jewelry area is cleaned under and around the item.
- Rinsing all areas well.
- Dry hands thoroughly using a clean paper towel.
- Avoid touching faucets by using a paper towel to turn off faucets.
- If in the bathroom, open the bathroom door with a paper towel and throw the paper towel in the trash receptacle.
- ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUBS ARE NOT USED IN LIEU OF HANDWASHING PRACTICES AND/OR PROCEDURES. Since alcohol-based hand sanitizers are considered an OTC medication per DHR regulations, a medication form must be signed by the legal guardian and on file in the office.

Diapering and Toileting

Diapering and toileting are conducted only by staff members that are trained in diapering/toileting procedures. Staff will change your child's diaper regularly throughout the day and periodically check your child in an attempt to assure they remain dry and clean. For any child requiring diapering, the family is responsible to provide diapers/pull ups with tabs and wipes. Your child's teacher or other staff member will make every attempt to notify you when the supply of diapers/wipes is getting low. Diapers should be clearly marked with your child's name.

Should your child need any special care or attention when diaper changing, please provide written instructions to the Director upon enrollment. The staff is able to apply lotions or creams to children only to prevent a rash or dry skin with a signed medication form. All diapers will be changed only on a designated diaper-changing table. Children on a changing table are never left unattended, and staff will wear protective gloves and will place the soiled diaper in a plastic bag for disposal. Changing tables are cleaned after each use.

Disposable diapers are required for children who are not toilet trained. Cloth diapers are prohibited. Families/parents that change their child's diapers at the RISE School are asked to follow the required sanitation procedures posted in the diaper changing area.

Independence in toileting is a huge developmental milestone for your child. As with many skills your child is learning, consistency and commitment from the adults will play a large part in how quickly your child will acquire this skill. Before beginning to toilet train a child, teachers ask families/parents to meet and plan together for a successful new step in a child's development. Teaching staff want to work with families/parents and help make this a successful new step in their child's development.

Toilet training must begin at home. Families are asked to keep the teacher/staff updated on the routine used at home and provide metrics regarding success. **We ask that families send pull-ups with Velcro sides.**

Children like to imitate other things and toileting is another area they will explore. Toilet training comes when a child is ready to take responsibility for eliminating in the toilet and handling their own clothing. This is generally around two-and-a-half to three years of age but differs among children.

The following are requirements when implementing toileting practices:

- Commercial disposable diapers or pull-ups are used unless the child has a documented medical reason signed by a health provider.
- Diapers and clothing items that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag without rinsing or avoidable handling and sent home that day for laundering.
- Children are checked at minimum, every 2 hours when awake and when they awaken from rest/nap times.
- At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child when the child is being changed on an elevated surface.
- Changing procedures must be posted and followed.

Meals and Snacks

The University contracts with a food service company which provides employees who prepare nutritional meals and snacks. All snacks and meals follow the USDA/CACFP required Food and Nutrition and Food Service and Sanitation guidelines. Outside food is NOT allowed. The food service is checked on a regular basis by the State Department of Health. Both agencies use the USDA Guideline for the program's evaluation. In addition, a local dietician works with the program by analyzing the nutritional value of items on the menu by calculating fats, sugar, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals, as well as proteins, fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy food groups. Then a meeting is held to review the analysis and suggested changes to meet the national dietary requirements.

Children attending the RISE School are provided with breakfast, lunchtime meal, and an afternoon snack. The menu is posted monthly on the bulletin board in the main hall and sent via Brightwheel to all families/parents. The menu is planned to include a variety of foods and to meet a child's daily nutritional requirements. Children are encouraged to try each food and develop a liking for a variety of foods.

When children require a specific diet, either for medical, religious, or cultural reasons, families should discuss the dietary needs/restrictions with the Director and the classroom teachers. A plan to ensure that a child's nutritional needs are being met can be discussed. A doctor or cleric signature is required for food substitutions. Food substitution forms can be obtained from the Director at enrollment or during the year. If the RISE School is unable to provide an adequate substitution for prescribed diets, then families/parents are asked to provide additional foods their child can eat.

Meals are served in a family-style atmosphere. Several children and at least one adult share meals and snacks together at a table and engage in conversation. As they are ready, children serve themselves and pour their own drinks. Developmentally-appropriate table manners are taught and encouraged.

Parents are encouraged to be on time in the mornings. Children are served breakfast soon after arrival. A hot, nutritious lunch is also provided daily at a scheduled time. Children will eat in their rooms. Parents of children in the infant room should speak to the teacher concerning the introduction of solid foods. An afternoon snack will also be provided. Parents of children with medical needs are encouraged to meet with the Director to discuss the child's needs.

Food, Drinks, and Candy from Home

The RISE School **does not allow** food or drinks to be brought from home. Children should complete snacks or meals before entering the building. The program provides nutritious snacks in the afternoon and a nutritional breakfast and lunch. The USDA menu provides the children with the energy they need to get through the school day.

Any food items brought to be shared for a special activity during the program's daily hours or that are requested by the program must be store-bought or prepared in a licensed commercial kitchen listing all ingredients to address dietary needs of all students in the classroom. Items must come from a nut-free facility and cannot contain nuts in the ingredient list. Teachers will do their best to communicate with families of students with a dietary need ahead of time for the special activity so that a substitution can be made if needed.

Breastfeeding

The UAH ELC provides a space in the breastfeeding room for any nursing mothers to breastfeed their child when on campus. Families have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for their child while in care at the UAH ELC. Beyond the child's first birthday, a dietary form must be completed by a physician and on file with the ELC.

Health and Safety Procedures

The following health and safety procedures are followed at the UAH ELC:

- Fire drills are conducted monthly and severe weather drills are conducted four times a year. Lockdown procedures are practiced four times a year. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. All drills are documented and records of drills-including the date, time, and length for the procedure to take place, are located in the licensing binder in the Director's office.
- All classrooms maintain a first aid kit and emergency backpack.
- Children and staff wash their hands as often as necessary (as outlined by DHR Minimum Standards).
- Frequently mouthed and handled objects/toys are washed and sanitized between uses by the children.
- Diaper changing and toileting are performed in a separate area of the classroom. Gloves are always worn by staff when diapering or assisting children with toileting. Soiled diapers and clothing are kept in separate, closed containers. Changing tables are sterilized after each use. Latex-free gloves are used if your child is allergic to latex.
- All classroom materials such as towels, washcloths, bibs, and sheets are washed after single uses by the children or staff.
- All electrical outlets are covered.
- Instructional staff and the Director are certified in pediatric CPR and First Aid. There is a pediatric AED in the main office.
- All staff are required to receive a physical exam every four years. A tuberculin test must be completed within two weeks of employment. Staff must provide written evidence of a negative tuberculin test, or positive with no health risk.
- Staff are not permitted to transport students to or from school unless they are on the child's Authorized Pick Up List. At the time of transport, the employee is not acting on behalf of the UAH ELC or the University.

Infant Care

In addition to the aforementioned practices, some states require caregivers to follow additional rules and regulations when caring for children under 12 months of age.

This includes but is not limited to:

Following the policy guidelines outlined in DHR Minimum Standards regarding Infant Safe Sleep.

- All infants must be placed in supine (on their back) when positioned for sleep.
- Labeling cribs of children that can independently roll over in the crib.
- Limiting the use of blankets to children 12 months or older.
- Ensuring all non-walking children who are 12 months or younger sleep in a crib provided by the Center.
- Obtaining the proper forms when a child requires alternative sleeping arrangements and positions.

● Posting and updating feeding schedules for any bottle-fed child every 30 calendar days.
● Posting and updating nap schedules for any child napping beyond the designated nap and rest hours in the daily schedule every 30 calendar days.

Please note: If your child is 3-11 months, please provide in writing by the first day of school:
- An individualized nap schedule if your child is taking naps more than once a day.
- An individualized feeding schedule if your child primarily feeds from a bottle.

Naptime
All children enrolled in the RISE School are expected to rest for a minimum of 45 minutes on their assigned cot. Children may bring a small pillow, blanket, and soft sleep toy such as a doll or stuffed animal to sleep/rest with them on their cot/mat. Children who do not sleep are able to complete quiet tasks designated by the classroom teachers. Children are taught to play quietly and to not disturb their sleeping classmates. Teaching staff will assist the children with nap time transitions with music, patting backs, and reading stories. The teaching staff will not require, force, or punish children for not sleeping during naptime. On Fridays (or other designated days due to holidays or breaks), families/parents are requested to retrieve all sleeping items brought from home to wash/sanitize and bring back the following week.

Outdoor Play
Children are expected to participate in outdoor play with their class each day, as the weather permits. Outdoor play takes place each morning and afternoon, unless the weather is determined to be detrimental to the children's health and safety (i.e., electrical storms, temperature above 100 degrees F, or wind chill below 0 degrees F).

Children should come to school dressed appropriately for changing weather conditions. Special attention to clothing and footwear protects children from injuries on the playground. Rubber-soled shoes and shoes that fit securely on a child's foot help prevent falls on slippery surfaces when children run and climb. Necklaces, scarves, and strings on hoods of jackets should be avoided as these items can choke if a child falls and the item is entangled in playground equipment.

Teaching staff constantly survey the playground and other equipment to discover and correct potential hazards, but family' s attention to these matters adds to each child's safety. Flip-flops are a potential hazard and are prohibited as footwear. Children need to have layered clothing items during the colder temperatures so drastic weather changes can be tolerated by the children during outdoor play.

Water Play
The classrooms plan water-play experiences at specially-designed tables that are closely supervised, and precautions are taken to prevent infectious disease. Children are prohibited from drinking and/or immersing their bodies in the water and/or other substances. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play.

Water table materials are changed on a daily basis or as needed to prevent the spread of communal disease/germs. Fresh water is used and is changed before a new group of children participates in the water play, and the water is drained with each group of children when they complete their play. When cleaning the water-play table, fresh water flows freely through the water table and out through a drain in the table. Children are encouraged and reminded to wash their hands before and after playing at the water-play activities.

Special attention with supervision is implemented with toddlers/twos during water-play activities. Only designated water-play equipment will be utilized for water activities. Toddlers/twos will not have access to large buckets that contain liquids of any type. Water-day activities may include the following:

- Sprinkler
- Mud Day (muddy water)
- Small pools with no more than two inches of water

All families will be notified prior to any water day activities at the ELC.

Supplies/Personal Items

"We play dirty here!" Neat, sturdy, washable play clothes are recommended. Please allow your child to wear comfortable sturdy shoes such as tennis shoes. If your child wears AFOs, please make sure they are on each day.

Children's Clothing

Families/parents must maintain a minimum of TWO complete changes of clean clothing (including underwear, socks, pants, and shirt) and an extra pair of shoes (suggested) in their child's cubby at all times. Please check appropriate seasonal clothing for a complete set of clothes. It is important for children to have a complete change of clean clothes in the event of an accident (toileting, food-related, or curriculum-related). Children may be upset about soiled clothing, and, in such cases, it is more comfortable for children to change into their own clothing.

All clothing must be marked with the child's name or initials. Clothing should be exchanged to accommodate children's growth and seasonal weather changes. During the course of each day, children are involved in active exploration and play. Many kinds of materials and equipment are available. Children are expected to wear clothing appropriate for active play.

Although teaching staff do their best to protect a child's clothing, the program does not guarantee the condition of a child's clothing and accessories after a day of play.

The following guidelines help determine suitable clothing for children:

- Clothing the child can get messy or dirty.
- Clothing is easy for the child to put on and take off when using the toilet.
- Clothing loose enough to allow free movement without being so loose that it becomes entangled in equipment.

Parents are responsible for sending the following:

- Two Changes of clothing.
- Nap mat, sheet and/or pillow and blanket, snuggle item.
- Backpack or bookbag marked with his/her name.
- Backpack large enough for a child's communication folder, if the teacher uses one.

Share Day Items

Your child may bring an object from home on designated Share Days. This activity helps develop poise, self-concept, and language skills. It is a good idea to print names on all Share Day items. Do NOT let your child bring candy, gum, guns, knives , or any other suggestive material to school.

Toys from Home
The RISE School requests that no toys from home be brought to school. Bringing toys from home can be an overwhelming problem for both children and teachers in the classroom. Toys from home are usually not as durable as the program toys and may be easily broken. The program is not responsible for toys brought from home.

Security items are very important to a child, and teaching staff support their use, especially during transition times. Security items often include blankets, stuffed animals, or dolls. These transitional items or self-comforting items are respected by teachers. Families/parents should clearly label their child's items. As children adjust to the program and their need for a security item lessens, teachers put these items in a child's cubby where it is accessible as needed.

Teachers do not force a child to separate from a security item but help a child find new ways to be comforted and feel safe. The best items to bring from home are found "treasures." The teachers are always eager for a child to share these with the class. Children often like to share things from their house. The interest to bring a toy from home can be redirected from toys to treasures.

Celebrations and Holidays
Children's cultural heritage and celebrations are important parts of their personal social development. Fostering respect for cultural diversity is an important goal at the RISE School. Emphasis is always placed on respecting individual differences and beliefs. Families/parents are encouraged to share their cultural heritage with others in the program.

Activities related to traditional U.S. holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and July 4th are low-key, age-appropriate, and avoid specific religious beliefs. Plans are discussed with families/parents to ensure celebrations are sensitive to cultural diversity. Any family/parent wishing to share their cultural celebrations is asked to contact their child's teacher or the administrative office. Equally, families/parents may ask that their child not participate in these activities.

Any foods brought in for parties must be purchased from a facility with a commercial, nut free facility with listed ingredients. Home-made snacks are prohibited. If a family wishes to share a cultural cooking activity with the classroom children, they must arrange with the director to prepare the items at the program following regulated guidelines.

Birthdays
Families/parents who wish to celebrate their child's birthday at school are welcome, but not required, to provide a special snack for the children in their classroom, remembering that all snacks brought into the RISE School must be purchased from a facility with a nut-free, commercial kitchen, and home-made snacks are prohibited. Families/parents are asked to notify the classroom teacher at least one week in advance if they plan to provide a birthday snack.

Birthdays are important to children, and every effort is made to make the day special but not overwhelming to children. Teachers assist in simple observances such as singing "Happy Birthday" and passing out special snacks to friends. Lower sugar and nut free items are recommended. Balloons are not permitted, as they may be dangerous. If a child's family does not observe birthdays, please let the teacher know so an alternate activity can be planned for that child. Party invitations may not be distributed at school unless all children in the child's classroom are invited. Selected invitations should be delivered outside of school hours.

Animals
Animals offer exciting additions to the curriculum. The classrooms may have small caged animals, which are kept clean and healthy. Animals should only be brought to the center after permission has been granted from the Director. Certain regulations must be followed when animals are brought to the program:

- Documentation is required from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show full immunization of the animal.
- Animals must appear to be in good health.
- Animals must be free of fleas, ticks, and worms before entering the classroom.

Staff members and teachers will closely supervise all interactions between children and animal visitation and will instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Staff members will also make sure children within the classroom have no allergic reaction/symptoms to animals. Insects may be brought into the classroom if they are contained in an insect cage, plastic insect keeper, or plastic jar with a lid. If plastic jars are used, there should be small air holes in the jar's lid. Insects or other small creatures in glass containers are prohibited.

General Information

AHERA Notice
All schools have been inspected by an EPA-approved asbestos inspector, and a management plan is maintained in the Center as required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). The file is available for staff and parents inspection.

Most asbestos-containing materials in school facilities are in the form of floor tiles, are non-friable, and are well maintained. As far as is known, all friable asbestos in the school facility has been removed. Existing floor tiles are well maintained and, when necessary, are being abated as required by law. **(This notice is being reported to you as required by AHERA.)**

The UAH ELC facilities, physical infrastructure, are maintained by UAH and kept in compliance with all local, state, and federal guidelines related to fire safety, air and water quality, electrical, plumbing, and meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessibility requirements. Accessibility includes access to building, sinks, drinking fountains, outdoor play space, and all classroom and therapy areas.

Breathe Free Campus
The UAH campus is a BREATHE FREE facility. No tobacco or tobacco products are allowed in or around these facilities, and smoking is entirely prohibited. No smoking is permitted at any time.

Volunteers
All volunteers and interns are required to add value to the RISE School and maintain a consistent schedule. Approved volunteers may be utilized in your child's class to assist in the preparation and implementation of various daily activities. All volunteers/interns are required to have a background check. Volunteers and interns are under the direct supervision of qualified teaching staff at all times and are not counted in ratio for supervision of children.

Termination

A child may be terminated from the UAH ELC if a pattern of disregard for the established policies and procedures is demonstrated. A written notice will be provided to families concerning the possibility of termination, and, if the issue(s) is not resolved, a written notice of termination would follow.

Examples of reasons for termination include, but are not limited to the following:

- Extended absences (an unacceptable percentage of days attended).
- Disregard of the school's operating hours, including participation in the year-round schedule.
- Failure to complete required forms.
- Consistent disregard of the illness policy.
- Tuition delinquency.
- One-on-one intensive treatment needs of the child.
- Lack of commitment to RISE School.

Reminders

- Monitor your child for signs of illness, they should be 24 hours free of fever, vomit or diarrhea
- Our school day is 8:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Please park in the parking lot and enter through assigned hall door
- Morning drop off is from 8:00 a.m. - 8:20 a.m., South East hall entry doors will close and lock at 8:20 a.m.
- Afternoon pick up is 2:15 p.m.-2:30 p.m. South East hall doors will close and lock at 2:30 p.m.
- If your child is going to be absent, remember to send your child's teacher a message via Brightwheel or call the main office and leave a message. For security reasons, all doors will be locked after 8:20 a.m. During this time, families must enter and exit the building through the lobby entrance only
- If families have a change in address, telephone number, employment, emergency number(s), or family situation, that information should be provided promptly to the child's teacher and Assistant Director of Operations
- Brightwheel is the best form of communication with staff

Summary

The staff members of the UAH ELC hope that families find the information contained in this handbook to be helpful. Everyone is encouraged to ask questions and seek additional information as needed. The Center is designed to meet the needs of each individual child enrolled, as well as the needs of their family. Thank you for being a part of the UAH Early Learning Center "Where Everyone Shines!"

Resource Section (NAEYC R.2.05)

Early Intervention/ Special Needs Services

1. ***The Arc of Madison County***
   The Arc of Madison County works to fight for individuals with intellectual disabilities to have the same rights as everyone else. Their early intervention program serves children from birth to 3 years old with developmental delays. They provide special instructional activities, speech therapy, physical therapy, and other services based on the needs of the child and family.
   - 2300 Washington Cir NW
     Huntsville, AL, 35811
     Phone: (256) 696-5700
     Hours of Operation:
     Monday-Friday 8am-3pm

2. ***Alabama's Early Intervention System (AEIS) Huntsville District Office***
   AEIS provides services for infants and toddlers who are delayed by 25% or more cognitively, physically, socially, emotionally, or adaptively. Those services include counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, home visits, family training, and more. Additionally, services are free.
   - 3000 Johnson Road SW
     Huntsville, AL, 35805
     Phone: (256) 650-1702
     Hours of Operation:
     Monday- Friday 8am- 5pm

3. ***United Cerebral Palsy of Huntsville (UCP)***
   The UCP makes it their mission to be a dependable and exceptional resource for adults and children with cerebral palsy and other disabilities. Their commitment to eliminate the notion of limitations for individuals with disabilities has made them one of the largest health nonprofit organizations in the U.S. Their affiliates serve individuals with down syndrome, autism, physical disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries. The Early intervention program focuses on children from birth to 3 years of age with developmental delays.
   - 2075 Max Luther Dr NW
     Huntsville, AL, 35810
     Phone: (256) 852-5600
     Email: therapy@ucphuntsville.org
     Hours of Operation:
     Monday- Friday 8am-4pm

4. ***Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind- Huntsville Regional Center***
   AIDB gives children from birth to 3 years old a complete developmental evaluation to see if they are eligible for services. Their intervention services include, but are not limited to, assistive technology,

family training, home visits, social work, interpreter services, and audiology. AIDB also offers American Sign Language (ASL) classes every spring and fall semesters and in the summer.

- 4092 Memorial Parkway SW Ste 105
  Huntsville, AL, 35802
  Phone: (256) 539-7881
  Hours of Operation:
  Monday-Friday: 8 am-4:30pm

5. ***Madison Speech: Pediatric Speech Therapy***

Madison Speech is an organization that individualizes speech therapy to address a variety of speech impediments. Their goal is to provide the best services to meet the needs of children to enhance social development as well as educate families and caregivers. They accept Blue Cross Blue Shield, Tricare, United Healthcare, Medicaid, and private pay.

- 103 Intercom Dr Ste C
  Madison, AL, 35758
  Phone: (256) 464-9464
  Hours of Operation:

  Monday-Thursday 8am-5pm

Healthcare

1. ***Madison County Health Department***

The Madison County Health Department serves to "promote, protect, and improve" the health of families residing in Madison County. They offer a variety of services such as family planning, WIC, immunizations, and clinical services. They also provide services to men, teens, and seniors.

- 301 Max Luther Drive NW
  Huntsville, AL, 35811
  Phone: (256) 539-3711
  Hours of Operation:
  Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

2. ***ALL Kids***

ALL Kids/ CHIP is a low cost health care coverage program that serves children under the age of 19 and lives in Alabama. Their services cover vision, dental, and mental health care, as well as immunizations, checkups, and many others. This program is provided through the Alabama Department of Public Health. (ALL Kids is under the CHIP program and uses Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama for the medical services listed above.)

- **ALL Kids/ CHIP**
  Toll Free 1-888-373-Kids (5437)
  P.O. Box 304839

Montgomery, AL, 36130
Hours of Operation:
7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

- **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama**
  495 Wynn Dr NW
  Huntsville, AL, 35805
  Phone: Benefits: (256)726-9100 or 1-800-760-6851
  Mental Health/ Substance Abuse: 1-877-297-0089
  Hours of Operation:
  Monday- Friday 9 am- 5pm

3. ***Alabama Medicaid***
   Alabama Medicaid is a government health insurance program that serves families with a limited income. Adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults, and individuals with disabilities can all apply for coverage. AL Medicaid covers behavioral health, dental, preventative, transportation, and many other services.
   - 6515 University Dr. NW
     Huntsville, AL, 35806
     Phone: (256) 890-3152
     Hours of Operation:
     Monday- Friday: 7:30 am -4:30 pm

4. ***Community Free Clinic***
   The Community Free Clinic serves residents in Madison County, AL who are ineligible or not on Medicaid or Medicare. They provide free healthcare and education to individuals without healthcare benefits. It is an organization where doctors volunteer their time to see and care for these individuals.
   - 410 Sivley Road SW
     Huntsville, AL, 35801
     Phone: (256) 533-2910
     Hours of Operation:
     Tuesday & Thursday: 9am-7pm (appointment only)
     Wednesday: 9 a.m.-3 p.m (appointments and prescription refills)

5. ***Thrive Alabama***
   Thrive Alabama is a healthcare center that provides a variety of services such as pediatrics, women's health, behavioral health, health education, primary care, substance use, and so much more. Their vision is to be the number one provider of affordable and inclusive healthcare. They have many clinics in the Huntsville area.
   - **Adult Primary Care**
     3500 Memorial Pkwy SW
     Huntsville, AL 35801
     Phone: (256) 536-4700

Hours of Operation:
Monday-Thursday: 8am-5pm
Friday: 8am-Noon

- **Pediatrics**
  3007 Memorial Parkway SW, Suite C
  Huntsville, AL, 35801
  Phone: (256) 429-4500
  Hours of Operation:
  Monday- Friday 8am-5pm
  Friday: 8am-Noon

Food Banks

1. ***Huntsville Assistance Program***
   The Huntsville Assistance Program provides an emergency food pantry and emergency financial assistance. HAP strives for a future where hunger and financial crisis are no longer an issue. They also help with rent, utilities, or mortgage payments as well.
   - 1001 Monroe Street SW
     Huntsville, AL, 35801
     Phone: (256) 539-2320
     Email: HAPCentral@HuntsvilleAP.org
     Pantry hours: Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays: 1pm-3pm
   - 103 Gin Oaks Court
     Madison, AL, 35758
     Phone: (256) 325-0871
     Pantry Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays: 1pm-3pm

2. ***Manna House***
   The Manna House is a program from the Huntsville Dream Center that provides food for individuals and families in need. They have a nightly distribution on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 3 pm to 6 pm. The outdoor church is open to everyone on Saturdays from 11 am to 1 pm.
   - 2110 S Memorial Pkwy
     Huntsville, AL, 35801
     Phone: (256) 653-7883
     Email: fran.mannahouse@gmail.com

3. ***Asbury United Methodist Church- Food Pantry***
   Asbury's Food Pantry receives donations from church members, the Missions in Action program, and other communities. The pantry is open every Wednesday from 2-3:30 pm and the first Saturday of each month from 12:30-2pm for families and individuals in need of food. To receive groceries, a photo I.D. is required, and you must wait two weeks between visits.
   - 980 Hughes Rd
     Madison, AL, 35758

Phone: (256) 534-2424
Hours of Operation:
Monday: 9am-11am

4. ***The Salvation Army***

The Salvation Army provides 56 million meals a year through its many hunger relief programs. Their mission is to meet human needs without prejudice and spread the word of God. They also help in other ways such as providing financial help during the holidays, shelter for the homeless, worship services, youth programs, and emergency services.

- Food Distribution
  305 Seminole Dr. SW
  Huntsville,AL, 35805
  Phone: (256) 536-8876
  Hours of Operation:
  Monday-Sunday: 8:30am-4pm

5. ***Food Bank of North Alabama***

The Food Bank of North Alabama's mission is to "feed the hungry and create solutions that will end hunger tomorrow." They provide food for over 200 pantries, shelters, and children's programs in 11 countries. Their hunger relief programs include "Feeding Neighbors in Need", "The Good Food Project", "Backpack Programs", "Grocery Store Donation Program", "Disaster Response", and "Snap Outreach".

- 225 Finney Dr SW
  Huntsville, AL, 35824
  Phone: (256) 539-2256
  Hours of Operation:

  Monday- Friday 8 am- 4:30 pm