



# CENTRAL

## UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 301

### Early Childhood Program Guide



The Early Childhood team looks forward to working with you and your child! Please find additional information specific to our EC programs in this guidebook. Please keep in mind that the policies, practices, procedures, guidelines and expectations provided in the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook apply to all students and parents participating in the Early Childhood program. The Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook can be found at <https://central301.net/handbooks/>.

### Philosophical Approach

Central 301's Early Childhood programming is child centered with a hands-on, play based approach to learning.

### EC Hours

AM session: 8:30 – 11:00

PM session: 12:30 – 3:00

### Continuum of Services

Central District 301 has two Early Childhood Programs to meet the needs of our youngest learners, who are aged 3 to 5 (students that are 5 years old by September 1st are eligible for kindergarten).

- For those who qualify, our Early Childhood Special Education program (ECSE) provides specially designed instruction that includes services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy as determined by the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- For preschool-age children who do not qualify for special education services, we offer our tuition based Early Childhood Blended Program. Tuition students must wear underwear (does not include pull-ups) and be toilet trained.

### Early Childhood Program Structure:

#### Table work:

Students will have daily table work that reinforce both fine motor skills as well as concept development. Activities include a daily name paper, journal writing, puzzles, sorting, color and cutting, and exploration of a variety of manipulatives.

#### Learning Circle:

This is a structured time for your child that includes jobs, sharing time, music and movement, and a theme related book or activity. During the learning circle, the students participate in teacher lead, child centered, large group activities. The activities relate to the theme and introduce new concepts, reinforce previously learned concepts, and concentrate on language development.

#### Snack/Bathroom:

We have a daily snack time. Snacks are brought from home. The EC snack policy mirrors that of the school: please provide a healthy snack and drink daily for your child. EC is a PEANUT and TREENUT Free Zone. Please refer to the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook. We also use the bathroom as a class and work on Activities of Daily Living (ADL) such as toileting and handwashing.

#### Sensory/Motor:

Each day there will be a time for your child to develop gross motor and motor planning skills either inside or outside of the building. Please dress your child appropriately so that s/he may be outside when the weather permits. Snow and moderately cold weather do not keep the children inside. All children will participate in outdoor activities if the outside temperature with wind chill is above 10 degrees. Snow pants and boots are required for children to play in the snow. Each school has playground rules to follow.

#### Learning Centers:

This is a large part of the day for your child. Many different centers are set up in the room, which target all areas of your child's development. The centers also reflect the unit of study that the children are engaged in and encourage them to make choices, ask questions, problem solve, and build strong child and teacher relationships.

#### Library

Your child will receive weekly library experiences and will have the opportunity to check out books. The children love this activity and look forward to getting a new book each week.

\*Please remember to return the book each week. It is school policy that each checked book must be returned before another one can be checked out. This policy will be enforced so please return the books on time.

#### Social Skills

Each week a school social worker will be in our child's room to teach age-appropriate social skills. This focuses on the concepts such as following rules, being a friend, and labeling a wide range of feelings. The instruction aligns with the state's social and emotional learning standards.

#### Language Circle

We hear and use language all day every day! Each week a licensed speech-language pathologist will be in your child's room to teach a lesson that targets building expressive, receptive, and social language skills. The activities address skills related to the state's language arts and social-emotional learning standards.

#### Birthdays

The Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook states that birthday treats should be in the form of a non-food item such as birthday pencils or bringing your favorite story to have the teacher read for the class. Food items are not allowed as they can distract from the educational environment and are counterproductive to the health curriculum standards.

#### Attendance

If your child is going to be absent:

- If your child receives transportation, please call transportation as soon as possible. If necessary, you can leave a message at 847-464-6052
- Please call your school to report the absence.
  - HBT: 847-464-6008
  - PV: 847-464-6014
  - CT: 847-717-8000

For more information relevant to attendance please refer to the Attendance and Truancy section of the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook.

## Transportation

Busing is provided to early childhood students who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and the placement per IEP is the blended or instructional program. Busing is not provided to students with an IEP that receive walk in services and elect to enroll in the EC program. The parent/guardian should always be available at the residence at least 10 minutes prior to the pickup and drop off times. *Timeliness is very important; this will assure the bus remains on time for all other students and for arrival to school.* Please contact the Transportation Department should your child not require 301 busing for any reason (847-464-6052). Information about your child's bus stop and times will be emailed to you from the Transportation Department prior to school starting. After this time, if you need to make changes to your child's transportation, you may do so by completing the Student Transportation Form, which can be found on the Transportation website ([www.central301.net](http://www.central301.net)). Please note, all changes need 48 hours to be processed.

### General Bus Tips

- Check your specific school program's calendar for the first day of school and any additional days off, special times etc. Your child's program or school does not necessarily replicate District 301's general calendar.
- Our buses will NOT release early education students without a parent or guardian present. Our buses are not routed to enter driveways, cul-de-sacs or dead ends. We avoid having drivers backup during routes for safety reasons.
- Your child will utilize the Star Seat on the bus. This is similar to a five-point car seat. Please contact transportation if you have any questions.
- Parents are not allowed on the bus. The bus driver will assist your child on the bus and secure any safety devices.
- Food, drink and gum chewing are not allowed on the bus.
- If you need to change your child's busing information (drop off/pick up locations), you may do so on your child's Skyward account.
- Refer to the Bus Transportation section of the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook for more information.

### Car Riders

- The car rider area is supervised by staff during the designated hours to keep the children safe and traffic flowing smoothly. Please comply with the drop off procedure as determined by the building administration and heed the directions given by our staff members. They are there to keep your children safe. We all appreciate your patience when using this area.
- When dropping your child off, please plan to arrive at 8:25 (AM session) or 12:25 (PM session). Staff will begin unloading between 8:28-8:30 (AM session) and 12:28-12:30 (PM session). Students will not be allowed into the school prior to these times as there will be no staff to supervise them and the doors will be locked.
- After the above times, you must park your car in a parking spot and walk your child into the office using the front door. Children arriving after 8:30 AM or 12:30 PM are considered tardy and must be signed into school by an adult.
- When picking your child up, please plan to arrive between 10:55 - 11:00 (AM session) or between 2:55 - 3:00 (PM session) Staff will begin releasing students at 11:00 and 3:00.
- Staff members will escort students to/from the vehicles. Once your car is ready to leave the line, please do so carefully. If the car in front of you has pulled out, you may carefully pull forward, heeding the guidance of the staff member on duty.

- If the school bus has its stop arm out you cannot pass it. If you do, this may result in a traffic ticket.
- Do not pass vehicles in the car line.
- Staff members are not responsible for placing children in or removing children from car seats. Our top priority is to keep all of our students safe. Please visit the Secretary of State's Child Passenger Safety Requirements website:  
<https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/drivers/childsafety.html>
  - Keep Me in a Safe Seat Brochure-English
  - Keep Me in a Safe Seat Brochure-Spanish
  - Grandparents As Caregivers Brochure
  - Car Riders Additional Guidance

### Communication Via The Web

To reach an EC staff member through email, you should use the following format:

first name.last name@central301.net. For example: suzy.smith@central301.net

Your school's website is:

HBT: <http://hbt.central301.net/>

PV: <https://pv.central301.net/>

CT: <https://ct.central301.net/>

### Field Trips

The EC team typically plans a field trip for each semester. These might include a trip to the apple orchard, a local food store, or a petting farm. If you have any information on ideas for fun and affordable field trips, please contact your child's teacher.

- You will receive information as field trips are scheduled during the year.
- Chaperones may be needed for some of the field trips. Your child's teacher will contact you regarding chaperone opportunities. When you chaperone for a school sponsored field trip, only your EC child may attend.

For additional information, please refer to the Academic Policies section of the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook.

### Monitoring Progress

- All students are monitored and assessed using Teaching Strategies GOLD.
- All students will receive a GOLD progress report at the end of the 1st and 3rd trimesters.
- Children with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will receive goal progress reports at the end of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd trimesters.