**Cranston Public Schools**

**Early Childhood Department**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Cranston Public School District’s mission of inclusion, through a partnership involving regular education, special education, and families is to set appropriate challenges and goals for each student’s individual skills and abilities by providing educational and community services unique to their diverse needs. These services will enable each student to maximize feelings of self-worth, strengthen social relationships and enhance their ability to contribute to our society.

**PHILOSOPHY**

The Cranston Public Schools Preschool Programs are designed to provide developmentally age-appropriate experiences in a safe and nurturing environment. We believe that these experiences promote the physical, emotional, social and cognitive development within classroom activities of all children. Our program seeks to enable children to reach their potential regardless of their abilities. Children with special needs and age appropriate preschoolers serve as role models for one another.

The Preschool Programs reserve the right to exercise decisions regarding the appropriate placement of peer models into the program. Typical three to five year old children are accepted on a first come first served basis. The Preschool Programs are non-discriminating and accepting of children of all race, religion, and ethnic backgrounds.

**GOALS**

1. Provide a preschool curriculum for each preschool child based on individual differences and abilities.

2. Provide experiences that meet each child’s needs, which will stimulate learning in all developmental areas (physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and aesthetic awareness) and curricular areas (language arts, social studies, mathematics, physical education, health, nutrition, science, and fine arts) based on the RI Early Learning Standards.

3. Provide opportunities to develop relationships, promote participation in activities which are designed to develop children’s self-esteem and positive feelings toward learning and each other.

4. Provide opportunities for the preschool children to participate in small and large group activities to the best of their abilities.

5. Provide opportunities in all areas of language development – listening, speaking, reading, thinking, and expressing in a variety of ways.

6. Provide experiences in gross motor (running, skipping, climbing, etc.) as well as fine motor activities (writing, cutting, coloring, etc.).

7. Provide daily opportunities which include a wide range of music and movement activities.

**CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS**

Careful consideration is taken when placing children in particular classrooms. Parent requests for placement of peer models are considered, but they are not guaranteed. Children with IEP’s are placed based upon the services and instruction the IEP team has determined appropriate for each individual child.

**ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Peer models must be three years old to participate. A Child Outreach screening is recommended at the time of registration.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Cranston Public School District’s Preschool Programs provide individualized attention to preschoolers. Curriculum begins with developmentally appropriate practices, incorporating specially planned, structured interventions and procedures designed to address children of all abilities and needs. Integrated, half-day classes are held Monday through Friday. The teacher/child ratio is two adults; one early childhood/special education teacher and one certified teacher assistant to 15 children for each integrated class. Each of the integrated classes consists of fifteen children with various abilities, seven of whom are identified as children with special needs. The students identified with special needs demonstrate delays in one or more of the following areas: speech and language, cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, socialization, adaptive, and/or behavior/social emotional growth. Children with identified needs are placed in programs based in IEP team decisions. The teacher/child ratio in self-contained classes, is three adults; one special education teacher and two teacher assistants to ten or six children. Self -contained classes contain six or ten children, depending on their level of need.

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

***Individual Classroom Involvement***

Family involvement is a key component of the program. Families are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, a continuing goal is to build and maintain a relationship between families and staff. The Preschool Programs welcome families to become involved in their child’s preschool experience as much as possible. There are many ways to become involved! Classroom visits and activities, field trip chaperone, cooking with children, sharing talents such as music, crafts, and gardening, just to name a few. The list is endless, and you can be creative in how you are involved. In addition, there are Parent Teacher Organizations, several committees, conferences, communication through notebooks, social media, special activities and events. Throughout the school year there will be opportunities for all families to participate in district wide activities, with a focus on curriculum and student work/talents.

***Parent Teacher Organization***

Another way to be involved is to join the school’s Parent Teacher group. By joining the association, you can participate in planning and implementing special programs and activities for families. You can be a room parent and participate along with your child’s classroom teacher in planning special events for the children in the classroom. You may also join the Parent Advisory Committee, a district wide committee, specific to our Preschool Programs.

***Conferences***

There will be an Open House scheduled at your child’s school once a year. Your child’s teacher will discuss the program and review your child’s typical day. In regards to your child’s progress within the program, there will be a written progress report sent home in three times per year, in November, March and June. Two conferences will be scheduled during the school year. During the conferences, your child’s progress will be reviewed. If your child has an IEP, it will be reviewed and modified if necessary at least annually. Besides the formally scheduled conferences, you or your child’s teacher may request a conference at any time during the school year.

**DAYS / HOURS OF OPERATION**

Monday – Friday AM Program: 8:55 am – 11:40 am\*\*

 PM Program: 12:25 pm – 3:10 pm\*\*

\*\*See school calendar for details. \*\*\*See attached for specific school hours.

**TRANSPORTATION**

We recommend that all children arrive and depart within 5 minutes of the beginning and end of the day. Our preschool day is carefully balanced to provide a rich variety of opportunities to our young children. We respect that arrival and dismissal times are especially delicate for some young children. Please feel free to schedule a meeting to discuss and plan with your child’s teacher if your child needs extra adult attention at this time. It is our intention to offer each child a warm greeting and welcome to school each day, and to provide the same loving exchange at the end of the day. Parents are responsible for transportation of peer models.

***Bus Arrivals***

Children with special education needs who arrive on a bus will be met by a staff member and escorted into the building for safety purposes. Children will also be escorted out at the end of the day, and will be placed in seat belts or car seats for their safety. If transportation issues arise, we urge you to consult with your child’s teacher, who will assist you in contacting the transportation department to resolve issues. Only children with identified special needs are eligible for bus transportation.

**HEALTH REGULATIONS AND ABSENCES**

Children who show signs of illness such as a sore throat, earache, fever, vomiting, diarrhea or coughs must be kept home. **A child must be fever free, without the use of fever reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.** Children must remain home for at least 24 hours after medication begins for strep throat, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis or other communicable diseases. If a child becomes ill during school hours a parent will be contacted. It is the parent’s responsibility to have current telephone numbers on file at the child’s school in the event of illness or emergency. A child who becomes ill during school with any of the following symptoms will be kept comfortable until the parent arrives.

If your child will not be attending school for any reason please notify the school. All illnesses and communicable diseases (such as chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, etc.) must be reported to school immediately. Parents will be notified of a communicable disease that occurs in their child’s class. A standard form will be sent home with your child notifying you that your child has been exposed to a communicable disease and what symptoms to watch for. A child may return to the classroom when he/she is free of the disease.

If your child has an allergy or any other chronic health problems, please make this known to the teachers. They are not required to stay home for such conditions. Please let the school nurses know of any medications or prescriptions your child is taking and of any medical issues your child may have. The health and safety of all children enrolled in our program is of primary concern. We appreciate parental support and input to help maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for all our students.

**No prescription medication, non-prescription medication, vitamins or special diet will be given unless we have a signed and dated permission form from a licensed physician.** A medicine administration form is available from the school nurse and must be completed and returned to the school before we can administer any medication. Medicine must be kept in the original container and clearly marked with the child’s name, doctor’s name, and dosage.

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND INCLEMENT WEATHER**

On occasion, the Cranston Public Schools may need to close due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstance. If the Cranston Public School District is closed, then the Preschool Program is also closed. If there is a delay and Kindergarten is cancelled, then the Preschool Program is also cancelled. Please tune in to your favorite radio station or television channel to follow school closings during periods of inclement weather.

**CLOTHING**

Preschool experiences require many hands-on activities. While these are very meaningful to the children they may also be very messy. We ask that you please have your children wear clothes to school in which they are able to explore, play and even get dirty! Also, please make these clothes easy to get into and out of for toileting purposes. You will also be asked to provide an extra set of clothes that are seasonally appropriate in case any changes need to be made during the school day. All the children’s clothes should be marked with their name in permanent marker. Finally, we go outside frequently so please make sure your child is dressed for the weather. Winter clothing should include boots, mittens and hats. Consider providing sun block for warmer/sunny weather.

**FEES**

The Cranston Public Schools Integrated Preschool Program is offered free of charge for children who are identified as needing specialized education and have an Individualized Education Program (I.E.P.). The Integrated Preschool Program is open to typically developing peers for a fee of $50.00 per week. Payment is due on the first day of each school week. There is no payment due on the following three weeks: Holiday Recess, Mid-Winter Recess and Spring Recess (see School Calendar).

**REGISTRATION PACKET**

Registration Packets may be obtained from the Early Childhood Center, 45 Sprague Avenue. The packet should be filled out completely following the directions included with the packet.

Completed packets must be returned to the ***Early Childhood Center, 45 Sprague Avenue*. It is necessary to call for an appointment (270-8057).**

All forms **must be returned before the start date of your child.** Appropriate signatures from physicians **MUST** be secured in order for the medical form to be valid. Medical forms are only valid for the period of one calendar year.