



Parent's Manual

**Operations Policies of
Mi Escuelita
Spanish Immersion Preschool
Updated August, 2021**

P. O. Box 579
Carrboro, NC 27510
201 Culbreth Rd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
Tel/ Fax: (919) 969 -7949
Email: miescuelitanc@gmail.com

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Philosophy | 3 |
| Admissions | 3 |
| Registration Procedures | 4 |
| Fees and Tuition | 4 |
| Teacher-Child Ratios | 6 |
| Operational Hours and Safety Procedures | 6 |
| General Schedule of Activities | 8 |
| Physical Activity Practices | 9 |
| Meals | 10 |
| Birthday Celebrations | 12 |
| Things Children Need | 13 |
| In Case of Illness | 14 |
| Medication | 15 |
| Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect | 15 |
| Transportation | 15 |
| Inclement Weather | 15 |
| Building Maintenance | 16 |
| Family Involvement | 18 |
| Parent-Teacher Communication | 19 |
| Parent Code of Conduct | 20 |
| Discipline | 21 |

Philosophy

Mi Escuelita preschool is a Spanish immersion program for children between 1 and 5 years of age. Our objective is to offer parents a safe, loving, and trustworthy environment where they may leave their children for childcare, and where children will be able to speak and learn Spanish.

Mi Escuelita began in 1995 as a mission of Pastor Maria Teresa Palmer and Iglesia Unida de Cristo, a Spanish-speaking protestant congregation in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Iglesia Unida founded this program as a ministry to the Spanish-speaking population, where parents could feel comfortable relating to Spanish-speaking staff and where Hispanic children could receive reinforcement in the language of the home.

Mi Escuelita incorporated as a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation in 1999, and enacted by-laws reflective of its proud history. We became an independent program in 2001 and continue with our commitment in serving Hispanic children and their families, as well as encouraging English-speaking families to enroll their preschoolers so they can learn Spanish language and Latin American culture at an early age. With each day's play, mealtime, naptime and stimulating activities in Spanish, English-speaking children acquire a second language naturally and Spanish-speaking children maintain fluency in their native language. Both groups of children gain or reinforce skills that educational research unequivocally demonstrates will serve them well throughout their academic lives. Simply put, students with bi-lingual skills do better in school and develop lifelong skills as contributing citizens of an increasingly global world.

Admissions

Admission is available to any child between 1 and 5 years old. Mi Escuelita admits students of any race, color, ethnic origin, disability, sex, gender identity, or religion, to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at school.

Admission decisions reflect Mi Escuelita's commitment to multicultural and pedagogical excellence by ensuring enrollment of a cross-section of students from both genders as well as the ethnic and socio-economic groups found in our community, and by ensuring that each class maintains a core group of Spanish-speaking children. Children are accepted in the order in which their applications are received. When possible, priority is given to Hispanic families and siblings of children enrolled in the program.

Registration Procedures

If you are interested in enrolling a child at Mi Escuelita, you may schedule to have a tour of the program. If you wish to register a child, you must submit a completed application and a \$35 nonrefundable application fee. As soon as there is an opening for your child, you will receive notification to give you the opportunity to enroll your child and provide you with a date by which you must submit a deposit of \$500 and a non-refundable \$230 confirmation fee to hold the space for your child. This fee will be used to pay for materials your child needs and uses during his/her first year at Mi Escuelita.

The deposit of \$500 will be used for the child's last month of tuition. These funds will be drawn upon only to credit the last month's tuition. (No interest is paid on this amount.)

An emergency medical release, copies of immunization records, and any other forms provided you by Mi Escuelita must be on file before a child can start attending.

Fees and Tuition

Tuition rates are approved by the Mi Escuelita Board of Directors each year. For monthly tuition charges, please refer to the school website.

Tuition is paid monthly and due on the first of each month. Any payments received after the 5th of the month are subject to a late payment fee of \$ 25 that will be added to the following month's payment. If the 5th is on a Saturday, Sunday, holiday or bad weather day, the last permissible day to make a timely tuition payment will be on the next day that Mi Escuelita is in session. Monthly tuition is the same throughout the year, including months with holidays or school closings due to bad weather.

Checks should be made payable to Mi Escuelita and clearly marked with the student's name. A \$35 fee will be charged for returned checks.

For income tax preparation, you can request the EIN (Employer Identification Number) of the preschool from the director.

Your child's first month's tuition is due in full on the first day of attendance at Mi Escuelita. This amount will be deposited and credited immediately. To avoid late payments and to more easily make tuition payments, please contact your bank to arrange automatic bank draft tuition payments. You must notify your bank if/when

your child's tuition changes and to stop the payments when your child stops attending the school.

Families are responsible for the full tuition payment every month regardless of absences due to family vacation, illness or other reasons – monthly tuition will not be prorated. Parents who have not paid their child's tuition by the 5th day of the month in which it is due will be notified. If payment of the tuition is not paid for one month, the family must contact the Executive Director for possible assistance or to make other mutually agreeable arrangements with the School. After two months, if tuition and late fees have not been paid, or if other arrangements have not been made with the School, the parents will be asked to withdraw their child from the School. Mi Escuelita is committed to working with parents to find an arrangement that will enable them to maintain their child's account in good standing. It is the parents' responsibility, however, to take proactive steps in contacting the School and working with the School to keep the child's tuition and late fees paid-in-full in accordance with this stated policy. With regard to withdrawal from Mi Escuelita, if a child's last day at Mi Escuelita will take place on or prior to the final weekday of the month, written notice of withdrawal is required by the last weekday of the preceding month. Failure to provide written notice by this date will result in a charge for tuition for the full month subsequent to withdrawal. For example, if the intention is to withdraw a child in the middle of June, notice must be received no later than the last weekday in May and a full month's tuition is due for the month of June.

Teacher-Child Ratios

At Mi Escuelita, we follow the highest voluntary enhanced requirements for staff child ratios.

The 1 to 2 year old class (Estrellitas (little stars)) has a ratio of 5 children to 1 adult. The 2 to 3 year old class (Solecitos (little suns)) has a ratio of 8 children to 1 adult. The 3 to 4 year old class (Lunitas (little moons)) has a ratio of 9 children to 1 adult and the 4-5 year old class (Cometas (shooting stars)) has a ratio of 12 children to 1 adult. A teacher and co- teacher are assigned to each class and a floater teacher is assigned to support any class when needed. In addition, classes will sometimes be assisted by Spanish speaking students from different programs (UNC Apples, CCSA AmeriCorps program etc.) as well as community advocates, and parent volunteers.

Operational Hours and Safety Procedures

All of our families are assigned with a door code to enter Mi Escuelita. This number should only be given to your emergency contact reference. Visitors need to be announced by using the doorbell. When you come in, do not permit access to strangers.

Mi Escuelita is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, on a year round basis. We ask you to please sign in and sign out the attendance sheet. Also ,the people that have authorization to drop off and pick up your child need to follow this simple routine.

Between 7:30 and 9:00, teachers assist children in making the transition from home and mom/dad/caregiver to the school environment. Between 9:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., children will eat their morning snack. If you would like for your child to have morning snack with us, it is important to allow him/her those 30 minutes to finish their snack and transition into the daily routine. It is very important that children arrive by 9:00am so that the teachers can start the project and activities for the morning on a timely basis and your child can have a smooth transition into their day. When a child is late, other children are reminded that their parents have left (or not returned yet) and separation anxiety has to be dealt with again. Often a chain reaction starts and children who were playing contentedly begin to cry with the new arrival. If you have an appointment scheduled in the morning, please call and let the office know that your child will be late.

Children must be picked up at the designated time for which they are enrolled. It is important for continued compliance with the NC Child Division regulations. Individuals picking up children must be a minimum of 16 years old. Any time a child is to be picked up by a person different from those who are authorized directly on

the child's enrollment paperwork, the parents must notify the Administration and teacher(s) personally, and in writing in advance. Also, the individual who comes to pick up the child must have an I.D. ready to show the teacher/front office.

In addition, when coming to drop off/pick up your child please park your vehicle in the designated area. In the case we have an emergency in Mi Escuelita, we must keep the fire lanes clear for emergency vehicles.

We ask that you please make arrangements to consistently pick your child up on time. On time means pick-up complete and ready to leave the building by 3:30 p.m. or 5:30 p.m., according to your enrollment schedule. There is not a grace period after the pick-up time. Families will be charged \$1 for every minute late after 3:30 or 5:30. Habitual late pick-ups will result in the following progression of corrective action in any school calendar year (September 1-August 31):

- Each violation: notice of late pick-up and late fee
- 3 violations: written warning
- 3 more violations: meet with Executive Director/2nd written warning
- 3 more violations: disenrollment from Center

Please note that calling to say that you will be late does not absolve you of complying with the policy and the resultant fees or potential consequences.

General Schedule of Activities

The classrooms follow a schedule every day. A daily routine helps the children feel more comfortable at school because they know what to expect. An example Schedule for the Cometas (4-5 years old) is as follows:

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| A.M. | | |
| 7:30-8:30 | Greet children/Free Choice/Bathroom | Saludo a los niños/Juego libre/Baño |
| 8:30-9:00 | Snack | Desayuno |
| 9:00-9:30 | Clean up/Bathroom | Limpiar/Baño |
| 9:30-9:50 | Circle time/Free choice | Tiempo para circulo/Juego libre |
| 9:50-10:30 | Free choice/Teacher directed activity | Juego libre-Maestra dirige la actividad |
| 10:30-11:00 | Free choice/Music and movement activity | Juego libre-Música y movimiento |
| 11:00-11:15 | Clean up-Bathroom | Guardar-Baño |
| 11:15-12:00 | Outdoor time | Tiempo afuera |
| | | |
| P.M. | | |
| 12:00-12:30 | Lunch | Almuerzo |
| 12:30-1:00 | Clean up/Bathroom/Story Time | Limpiar/Baño/Tiempo para leer |
| 1:00-3:00 | Rest Time | Tiempo para descansar |
| 3:00-3:30 | Snack | Entre tarde |
| 3:30-3:45 | Clean up/Bathroom/Free choice | Guardar/Baño/Juego Libre |
| 3:45-4:30 | Wash hands/Bathroom/Free choice | Lavar manos/Baño/Juego Libre |
| 4:30-5:15 | Outdoor Play | Tiempo fuera |
| 5:15-5:30 | Story time/Free choice/Departure | Tiempo de leer/Juego libre/Despedida |

Schedule Notes:

Mi Escuelita will adjust this schedule to reflect weather patterns. At the teachers' discretion, children will play inside when necessary to avoid the heat and sun, rain, extreme cold or high ozone.

Projects and centers focus on monthly themes, for example, "Different Cultures" or "Growing Things," and address 4 specific areas of development:

1. Physical Development - large and small muscle skills, awareness of his/her body capabilities.
2. Social Development - interactions with peers and adults

3. Cognitive/Intellectual Development - basic concepts and problem solving that will lay the foundation for future learning.
4. Emotional Development – affirmation, expression, and understanding of a child’s own feelings and other’s feelings.

Mi Escuelita realizes that our 5-year-olds will be attending kindergarten after leaving Mi Escuelita. We are committed to preparing the children for their first year in school by May of the outgoing school year.

Physical Activity Practices

Active Play

We schedule at least 120 minutes of active play time (indoor and outdoor) each day. We work to provide outdoor play time 2 times per day, even when the weather may not be optimal. With the exception of naptime, children are not required to stay seated for more than 30 minutes at a time. Play time of children who misbehave is never limited.

Play Environment

Our center provides both fixed and portable play equipment that promotes physical activity. We also have indoor play space suitable for whole body movement for bad weather days.

Supporting Physical Activity

Staff led activity is provided daily. We encourage involvement and model enjoyment of being active. We provide visual support for physical activity in the classrooms through use of books, posters, and pictures.

Screen Time

It is our intent to provide your child with many opportunities to investigate the world around them with concrete, hands-on learning activities while in school. Our center does not permit screen time (e.g., television, movies, video games and computers).

We continue to train our staff at least two times per year and explain why we have made the choice not to have screen time for the children in our care.

Meals

Each day at Mi Escuelita all children will eat a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Meal times are excellent opportunities for relaxed social and educational conversations. Children will be encouraged to try new foods. Food allergies of the children will be posted in the kitchen as well as the individual classrooms.

We discuss nutrition often at Mi Escuelita, and we talk about how important it is to eat foods that provide the body with the fuel it needs to function successfully. By providing healthy food for your children, you will be supporting this part of our curriculum.

Breakfast

Please make sure your child eats a healthy breakfast before school; it has been proven in numerous studies that eating a healthy breakfast greatly improves school performance.

Lunch

Children bring their own lunch from home. Lunch takes place in the classrooms. We suggest that your child's lunch contain a food from each of the food groups (Whole grains, vegetable, fruit, dairy, protein such as meats, beans or fish). Some suggestions include whole-grain bread, nuts, apple sauce, peanut butter, fresh or dried fruit, raisins, pretzels, hummus, small granola bars, soups, wraps, rice dishes, trail mix, sandwiches, cheese and crackers, pita breads, yogurt, and salads. Foods that we do **not** want in the classroom include jell-o or pudding, chips, gummies, cake, cookies, candy, chocolate, or treats with icing. These items will be returned in the child's lunch box.

Food that should be kept cold should be packed in an insulated lunch bag or box with an ice pack. Food that should be served warm should be in an insulated thermos. We recommend that each container be clearly marked with the child's name.

Mi Escuelita will continue to provide water throughout the day.

Snack

- Full-day students (7:30 am to 5:30 pm) should bring a nutritious lunch and two snacks.
- 3/4-day participants (7:30 am to 3:30 pm) should bring a nutritious lunch and one snack.

Allergies

We are not an allergen-free institution, but we do make accommodations for students with food allergies.

Breastfeeding

Because breastfeeding has been shown to be the best form of infant nutrition, providing a multitude of health benefits to both infant and mother, and because breastfeeding employees need ongoing support from childcare providers to provide their milk for their babies, our program is committed to breastfeeding and other developmentally appropriate feeding practices.

Providing Breastmilk

We invite mothers to breastfeed on site and/or provide breastmilk for us to feed to their children. Mothers may breastfeed enrolled children at any time during the day in the Estrellitas Class. Program guidelines regarding the provision of expressed breastmilk are given to all breastfeeding families upon enrollment.

There is always refrigerator space available for daily storage of breastmilk. At the end of each day, we return unused breastmilk to families. *We do not* provide freezer storage for breastmilk.

Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk. Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area will have an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water.

A refrigerator will be made available for storage of expressed breastmilk. Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breast milk in the center refrigerator. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with name and date.

Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies. The childcare center is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers, including providing an opportunity to breastfeed their baby in the morning and evening, and holding off giving a sippy cup, if possible, when mom is due to arrive.

Staff shall be trained in handling human milk. All childcare center staff will be trained in the proper storage and handling of human milk, as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers. The center will follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control in ensuring that breastmilk is properly treated to avoid waste.

Our feeding practices are flexible to the needs of families. For example, we can avoid large feedings at the end of the day before mothers plan to breastfeed. Families with children up 15 months should inform us of their preferences and instructions in writing on the infant "feeding plan".

Education & Support

We provide/participate in professional development on breastfeeding and other feeding and nutrition topics twice a year. Information about the importance of breastfeeding, and what we do to support breastfeeding, is provided to all families. Additional resources regarding breastfeeding, nutritional needs, and feeding are made available. Breastfeeding promotion information will be displayed. The center will provide information on breastfeeding, including the names of area resources should questions or problems arise. In addition, positive promotion of breastfeeding will be on display in the center.

Beverages

Our center encourages drinking water first to satisfy thirst and have drinking water available at all times. Parents can provide whole milk for children under age two and reduced fat milk (2% or skim) for meals to children age two or older. Soft drinks and sugary drinks (such as sweet tea or Kool-Aid) are not served to children.

Supporting Healthy Eating

Children and staff sit down together to meals. Staff makes an effort to model healthy eating habits. Staff does not eat or drink less healthy foods in front of the children. They talk with the children about trying and enjoying healthy foods. We provide visible support for good nutrition in classrooms through use of books, posters, and pictures. Food is never used to reward good behavior, or restricted for bad behavior.

Nutrition Education

We encourage staff to attend training in nutrition once a year. Teachers offer nutrition education to children at least weekly. Nutrition information is provided to families periodically.

Birthday Celebrations

At Mi Escuelita we always promote Healthy Celebrations. So if you decided to have a small celebration here at school, we encourage you to try the following options instead of bringing food.

- Games
- Piñatas
- Stories
- Art craft, etc

If you want to make goody bags to take home, you are welcome to do so, and everyone will open it at home with the supervision of their parents. Please make sure you include one for every child (including yours).

If you bring any food, it has to be store bought and wrapped. Also please consult with the teacher before bringing anything to eat and share at school.

Foods Offered Outside of Regular Meals and Snacks (Brought in From Outside)

Food brought in for celebrations or holidays should be generally healthy. We encourage fruits and breads or celebrations with non-food treats instead of candy or sweets. Our center avoids selling unhealthy foods as part of fund raising. Foods brought in for children with special dietary needs should also follow this practice.

Things Children Need

Children will be assigned a space in which to keep their belongings. Each child should bring a change of clothes appropriate for the weather, which will remain in the school to be used in case of accidents or spills. We recommend that children come with closed toe shoes at all times. Flip flops are not allowed in the playground and are considered a safety hazard.

Children who are using diapers should keep an adequate supply of disposable diapers and baby wipes.

We recommend that children in potty training and older children who are already using the bathroom wear clothing that is easy to handle. It is frustrating for children when their clothes are difficult to remove, especially when they are at an age when they want to do things by themselves.

Children will need their own small blanket for rest time and they may bring (1) soft toy for snuggling.

In Case of Illness

For the health of all the children and staff the guidelines listed below need to be followed closely.

If a child develops a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea during the day, parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately (within 40 minutes). If we are unable to reach the parents, we will contact other persons listed on the emergency form. We will also notify parents if children are crying excessively or cannot participate normally in the daily routine or are showing signs of discomfort.

Parents should notify the teachers when a child is sick and will be absent. We especially want to know if the illness is contagious, so that we may notify other parents. Children should remain at home at least 24 hours if their symptoms include, but are not limited, to the following:

| In Case Of: | Your child should not return until |
|--|--|
| DIARRHEA (loose or watery stools) | Diarrhea clears or physician has determined it is not contagious. Parent must provide written verification from physician. |
| VOMITING | Vomiting clears for 24 hours |
| FEVER (Defined as a temperature greater than 101 rectally or 100 axillaries, which persist after 30 minutes of rest without fever medicine.) | Fever has been absent for 24 hours without medicine. |
| PAIN (including stomach ache, headache, earache) | Symptoms have disappeared |
| SKIN SORE OR RASH | Physician or Health Dept has determined it is not contagious. Parent must provide written verification from physician. |
| EYE INFECTION | Physician or Health Dept has determined it is not contagious. Parent must provide written verification from physician |

In cases in which a child has been quarantined, a medical release may be required. Children should come back to Mi Escuelita when they are fully capable of participating in all the activities.

Medication

All medicines, including sunscreens and lotions, must be given to the child's teacher by the parent for check-in. The teacher will give the parent instruction about filling out the medication form and about where the medicine is stored. Parents may not bring or send medicine to the center without first checking it in with the teacher. They must come with a written physician prescription, in its original container. Teachers will follow the written instructions to administer the medications, but will not force medicine to a child who resists or refuses to take it. We inform the family immediately.

Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect

All North Carolina citizens are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. Our staff is trained about their responsibilities to recognize and report suspected child abuse. If you suspect abuse or neglect, you can report anonymously by calling the Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services Division.

Transportation

Transportation to and from Mi Escuelita is not provided. Parents are responsible for the transportation of their children.

Privately owned vehicles will not be used by the school to transport children to or from school except for events specifically designated as official Mi Escuelita field trips. Mi Escuelita will provide permission slips in advance of each field trip that includes a detailed description of the field trip and its purpose, and which will provide an opportunity for parents to give or withhold permission for their child to be transported to and from the field trip.

Inclement Weather

At Mi Escuelita, we make an effort to be open regardless of weather conditions. The safety of our staff members and families is always of great concern to us, so we hope that you understand when we have to make adjustments to our schedule.

Our Inclement Weather Policy is as follows:

In the event of inclement weather, we will evaluate the severity of road conditions and the ability for the necessary level of staff, based on state regulations, to safely reach the school.

A decision to delay opening or to close the school will be made as far in advance as reasonably possible, but no later than 7:30 AM on the morning of the closing. We will send out an email with delay or closing information as early as possible.

Please note that even if the school decides to remain open for any portion of the day, it is the responsibility of the parents to evaluate road conditions in the areas where they live and exercise good judgment in deciding whether it is safe to transport children to the school.

Additionally, in the event it is ever necessary to close the school early owing to inclement weather, it is imperative that we have all contact numbers and email addresses on file and that they are up-to-date. If we need to close the school early due to worsening conditions, we must know how to contact you. Please make certain that we have the necessary information on file so that someone can be reached during the workday in the event that we need to close.

If parents are required to pick up their children early, we call each parent or other designated contact person. No child will be allowed to leave with another parent unless we receive a call from the child's parents granting permission to do so.

Building Maintenance

It is the joint responsibility of the Mi Escuelita staff and parents, and the Hillside Church to maintain the physical facility. The teachers will maintain a daily, weekly and monthly cleaning schedule. The administration from Mi Escuelita and Hillside Church will be responsible for making arrangements for equipment and facility repairs. Below is the schedule for the cleaning of Mi Escuelita Spanish Immersion Preschool.

DAILY

The playground will be checked daily by Mi Escuelita staff.

All Teachers:

- Clean table after activities
- Clean table before and after each mealtime and snack time
- Clean up spills and accidents with the assistance of the children
- Empty all cleaning buckets at the end of the day
- Keep the hall clear and clean

Janitorial Service

- Empty all trash and garbage cans into outside dumpster
- Clean all toilets with disinfectant
- Clean all sinks with cleanser and disinfectant
- Sweep all classrooms, kitchen, halls, and office floors
- Mop all classrooms, kitchen, halls and office floors
- Line all trash and garbage cans with plastic liners
- Vacuum all carpets in classrooms and offices.

WEEKLY

All Teachers:

- Dust all classroom shelves
- Keep tidy and clean all interest centers and equipment
- Wash all washable area rugs used in the classrooms

Volunteers/Parents:

- Wash pillows, toys, and stuffed animals in classroom
- Wash all sheets and blankets used on mats for rest time (all parents take turns every Friday)

Designated Kitchen Teachers:

- Clean refrigerators
- Clean shelves and organize cabinets

MONTHLY:

Janitorial Service:

- Wax all classrooms, bathrooms, halls, kitchen and office floors

Exterminating service:

- Designated day (weekend) spray inside and outside the building for pests.

Other Cleaning Times:

- Playground grounds to be maintained by parents/volunteers to mow, rake.
- Special parent work days to do heavy cleaning chores (paint, cleaning toys, fixing equipment etc.)

Family Involvement

Parent Volunteers

Parents are always welcome at Mi Escuelita. We believe that it is very important for children to share their experiences with their parents and will make every effort to involve parents as volunteers in the morning program. Please contact your child's teacher or the director if you are interested in any of the following volunteer positions:

1. **Classroom maintenance:** Help clean toys either during school hours or taking some of them home on Friday after school and bringing them back on Monday morning. There will be a list in your child's respective classroom where you can sign in and select a day.
2. **Craft Helpers:** Help teachers with craft projects, for example taking materials home to cut, color, or assemble.
3. **Event Coordinator:** Organizes special events (such as teacher appreciation lunch) and parties for preschoolers, teachers, and parents.
4. **Special Guest:** Parents with special talents and skills are welcome to share them with the students. Please let us know if you are willing to share a special talent or interest.
5. **Board of Directors:** The board helps with running the preschool, fundraising, grant-writing, and other activities. There are monthly board meetings as well as committee meetings throughout the month.

Parent-Teacher Partnerships

Mi Escuelita believes that parents are a child's first teachers and the foremost experts of every child. Therefore the school has utmost respect for the rights and requests of parents.

We believe that optimum development in young children occurs when parents and teachers work together and support each other in the shared endeavor of educating and caring for children. In order to foster strong partnerships between parents and teachers, Mi Escuelita strives to:

- Form a bond with each family whose child or children are enrolled at the center;
- Be a support to the family with sensitivity given to personal and cultural differences;
- Be available for ongoing, informal discussions whenever concerns or questions arise;
- Schedule conferences at least twice a year to discuss each child's development;

- To include parents as much as possible in classroom activities, special events and ongoing planning; and
- To keep parents informed of important activities/happenings in the classroom that may affect the child's interaction at home.

In return Mi Escuelita asks parents to endeavor to:

- Form a bond with their child's teacher and classmates by visiting the classroom whenever possible;
- Support the work of Mi Escuelita by donating work hours to the school and participating in school projects/programs;
- Attend parent meetings to share input on program issues, receive important information and get to know the school families;
- Attend conferences scheduled by staff;
- Be available to teachers for ongoing, informal discussions when teachers have concerns or questions; and
- Keep teachers informed of important activities/ happenings at home that may affect the child's interaction at the school.

Parent-Teacher Communication will be achieved with

- Daily reports
- Newsletters
- Conferences.

It is expected that parents' interactions with staff will be professional and constructive, and the same is expected of staff when they interact with families. We all have the same goal of providing the best care possible for the children. We make every effort to model positive behaviors in all of our interactions and ask the same of parents, especially in front of the children. (see "Parent Code of Conduct")

Most daily and classroom-related issues can be handled directly with your child's teacher in an upbeat and positive way. If, however, an issue should arise that is not readily resolved with the classroom teacher, then you should bring those issues or concerns to the attention of the program's Executive Director. Your concerns will be carefully and thoughtfully considered.

Parents who disagree with the center's programs or policies should contact the Executive Director to discuss the differences. If the concern is not satisfactorily resolved during the conference, a parent may make a written request to the Chair of the Board. The Chair will then schedule a time for the Board to review the issue. All Board decisions shall be final.

Parent Code of Conduct:

Mi Escuelita strives to maintain a healthy, safe, professional, and productive family-oriented environment which is free from disrespect, discrimination, gossip, and harassment. As providers of child care, commitment, trust, and professionalism are the hallmarks of our trade. We ask that as a parent of a child in our care, you offer us the same trust, respect, and professionalism that we will offer to you and your family. There is a special value placed on the connections that we form between the children in our care and their families.

In regard to relationships with staff at Mi Escuelita, we draw attention to and ask that you uphold the following NAEYC core values:

- Respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual (children, family members, and staff)
- Help children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust, respect, and positive regard for one another

As a parent of a child enrolled at Mi Escuelita, I will:

- Treat staff and other families with respect and understanding,
- Model commitment, respect, and trust, serving as role models for children, other families, and staff members,
- Refrain from hurtful words or actions toward others on the center's premises,
- Adhere to Mi Escuelita's Behavior Management Policy when interacting with my own child on the premises or with other people's children,
- Communicate directly, clearly, and tactfully with staff members and teachers, sharing knowledge, information, and resources to reach common goals,
- Work cooperatively and proactively with teachers and staff members in an effort to continuously improve center and classroom effectiveness, and
- Appropriately share feelings or issues with my child's teacher or staff members to develop trust, checking for clarity and understanding

_____ Signature Parent 1 _____ Date

_____ Signature Parent 2 _____ Date

Discipline

The purpose of any discipline technique is to teach acceptable behavior and respect for the rights of others. Self-discipline is our goal and the methods employed at Mi Escuelita will be based on an understanding of the child's needs and the stage of development. Each parent is required to review and sign Mi Escuelita's Discipline and Behavior Management for inclusion in each child's file.

DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of the behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, Mi Escuelita will practice the following discipline and behavior management policy.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>We DO:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. WE encourage dialogue with the children.2. Reason with and set limits for the children.3. Model appropriate behavior for the children.4. Modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.5. Listen to and observe the children.6. Discuss choices the child can make to prevent inappropriate behavior.7. Provide the children with clear expectations and consequences of their behaviors.8. Treat the children as individuals and respect their needs, desires and feelings.9. Allow the children to deal with minor disagreements between them, if there is no apparent harm to either child.10. Explain things to children on their levels.11. Stay consistent in our behavior management program. | <p>We DO NOT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Physically punish the children.2. Make fun of, use profanity, make sarcastic remarks about, shout at, threaten or otherwise verbally abuse the children.3. Make the child feel bad or punish children when bathroom accidents occur.4. Relate discipline to eating, resting, toileting, or sleeping.5. Delegate discipline to another child.6. Place the children in locked rooms, closets or confined places as punishment.7. Criticize, make fun of, disrespect, or otherwise belittle the children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.8. Restrain children as a form of discipline unless the child's safety or the safety of others is at risk. |
|---|--|

Mi Escuelita opens up space and opportunities where the child has a chance to talk to the teacher about the incident or misbehavior and alternative appropriate behavior is suggested. When the child is returned to the group, the incident is over and the child is treated with the same respect and affection shown the other children.