



Family Handbook

Revised 08/2019

“Funga Alafia...we welcome you!”

Thank you for entrusting *Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University-Educational Research Center for Child Development* to provide loving, quality child care and early education. We look forward to having you in our *ERCCD* School Family!

Every family plays an integral role in the growth and understanding of the children. You are cordially invited to visit and participate in classroom activities. *ERCCD* evaluates our ability to meet the needs of all children and fosters growth in cultural, social, emotional, cognitive, language, physical and early literacy development. Our staff can provide you with materials to read and referrals to agencies and organizations that may assist you with financial or parenting needs.

The ***Educational Research Center for Child Development*** engages children in best practices to offer services that promote ***early learning experiences***, and hope to provide a school environment, rather than just “daycare”. Our curriculum is designed to encourage children to explore and experience the world around them. Using, play-based activities and critical thinking skills that are guided by intentional, and driven staff, we are excited to help your child learn and grow!

FAMU ERCCD is an auxiliary service under the Florida A&M University Division of Student Affairs

ERCCD Vision:

“We are developing Lifelong Learners...the Rattler way!”

ERCCD Mission:

The mission of **FAMU-ERCCD** is to provide a safe, nurturing and **culturally rich** environment, where children can develop **emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually.**

ERCCD Philosophy:

The philosophy of the **ERCCD** is that all children are valued, deserve to be loved and provided with skills to think independently, act intelligently and live effectively as individuals in society. We understand that the preschoolers of today will be the planners, creators and leaders of tomorrow. It is our goal to develop a lifelong quest for learning!

ACCIDENT REPORTS

Families receive an Accident Report if their child is injured at ERCCD or during an ERCCD sponsored activity such as a field trip.

The reports provide information about the date, time, location, and nature of the injury, first aid provided and action steps taken.

Families are asked to sign the reports and receive a copy.

Originals of all reports are kept on file in the ERCCD office.

ACCREDITATION

ERCCD is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools AdvancED Early Learning Schools. The accreditation is renewed every five years and an improvement process evaluates the center every 2 ½ years. A copy is posted in the front office.

ALLERGIES

Families must inform the office *in writing* of any allergies and complete a MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM for products that will aid in an allergic reaction.

Families should check the meal and snack menus each week and remain informed of the substitution that will be provided for any foods your child should not eat. Substitutions are **highlighted**. Allergies are posted in the center and a **red** allergy mat is placed at meal time for food allergies.

Insect repellent/Sunscreen may applied before their child goes outside to play, be mindful that sprays may be an allergy irritant for others. Please apply before school.

For re-application, families must:

Complete the MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM, purchase the lotion (or spray) of their choice and label the bottle/tube with the child's first and last name.

Teachers will notify Families when their child's supply is running low.

Teachers will not apply a child's medicine to another child.

ARRIVAL

ERCCD arrival time helps children follow a predictable daily routine. Always confirm arrival with the staff in the area for accountability and effective communication. Ensure that your child is supervised before leaving.

1. Families will sign children in and out at the touchscreen computer in the front office.
2. Help your child make a commitment for the day and greet the staff
3. Put belongings away, wash hands and make a note in the communication log of daily information.

Children must be in their classrooms by 9:00 am daily for routine predictability.

Tardiness, per emergencies, will be indicated by emailing the center prior to 9:00 am.

Failure to contact the center prior to late arrival, jeopardizes coverage plans and may result in absence for the day. Frequent tardiness must be addressed and may be denied.

AUTHORIZED PICK-UP

Children will only be released to persons on the Authorized Pick up List.

Families may revise the Authorized Pick up List in writing with the front office.

In case of an emergency, Families may call and inform the office that a person who is not on the list will pick up the child for a specified time.

Pick-Up persons will be asked for picture identification and must be over 18 years of age.

If an unauthorized or questionable person attempts to pick up the child, the child will be held in the classroom or office until a parent or guardian can be contacted.

BABYSITTING

An ERCCD teacher who accepts a baby-sitting job does so, independent from the center and not as an employee of FAMU.

ERCCD/FAMU cannot be held responsible or be held liable for actions or incidents that occur when an employee is engaged in work outside their employment with ERCCD/FAMU.

Staff will not be permitted to sign children out while on shift. Late pick-up procedure will be followed and the family will be responsible for fees. If Families wish to have a staff person as an authorized pick up, their name must be added to the child's Authorized Pick-Up List.

BEDDING (FOR CRIBS AND MATS)

All bedding will be sent home each Friday to be laundered or as soiled.

All bedding must be labeled with the child's first and last name

Primary

Infants (3 mos-11 mos) rest in cribs. Families provide crib sheets. ***Pillows, quilts, comforters and soft items are not allowed in cribs for breathing safety.*** If a blanket is used, the infant is placed at the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the crib mattress, reaching only as far as the infant's chest. The infant's head remains uncovered.

Preschool

Children ages 12 months and older nap on mats. Families provide a small blanket, crib-size sheet (optional), small pillow (optional), small plush item (optional).

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

ERCCD uses Conscious Discipline® as a framework for providing classroom management and self-regulation. Our behavior modification techniques include, but are not limited to, redirection, positive reinforcement, and guiding children in appropriate choices towards expectations. We believe that mistakes are opportunities to learn and young children will need help learning to make good choices. **OOPS! Reports** are written to identify behavior causes, and teacher support; families may be asked to support the learning with tips for home. An **Strategic Plan for OOPS!** may be created for to identify a child's triggers and provide tools to help the self-regulation progress. **Village Meetings** are offered for

multiple families and staff who have experienced an incident and want to problem solve together. All parties will agree to meet and a set of goals will be established for the meeting. See our website link under “CURRICULUM” to join our staff in learning behavior and social-emotional techniques.

Children are not disciplined through the rewarding or denial of food, sleep, toileting or outdoor play. FAMU-ERCCD does not use corporal punishment, psychological abuse, coercion or derogatory remarks as a form of discipline. FAMU-ERCCD teachers strive to work with each child to help him/her achieve self-control and age appropriate self-managed behavior. FAMU-ERCCD teachers work with families, behavior specialists, physicians, and therapists, as requested. If a child’s behavior is potentially harmful to themselves, others or center property, FAMU-ERCCD staff will remove a child from an area to calm or re-enter with skills to be successful. Extreme, violent and harmful behavior that is not managed by intervention and support may result in termination from FAMU-ERCCD.

Families are expected to partner in the center’s efforts by regulating their adult behavior and respecting the above approach in the center.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES/ CELEBRATIONS

We believe that celebrations are for many occasions. New baby in the family? Let’s celebrate! Last week before moving to a new city? Let’s celebrate! Classes may have a celebration that they plan as a group. Please share in those as well. Birthdays are a milestone and way for children to share in their own growth, we encourage staff and families to celebrate with us. *Coordinate your event with your child’s teacher.*

FAMU-ERCCD teachers strive to support healthy eating habits in young children. In the event of multiple birthdays in the same month, families may be asked to come up with an alternative or joint party to limit sugar intake for our young friends.

Families provide celebrations for their child at school during the best time that they can visit. They may provide accessories such as plates, napkins, hats, games, etc. Please check all items for age appropriateness. They are also encouraged to donate a book or other educational item to the child’s classroom.

Family is welcome to attend a child’s celebration and will sign-in in the front office. During family celebrations, ERCCD staff will provide supervision and monitor the needs of the children enrolled in ERCCD. Visiting families may not leave additional children with staff.

BITING

Biting is a common occurrence with young children as they learn to respond to dislikes, upsets, sharing and communication. An article is posted in all infant and toddler classrooms. All children will be monitored to look for non-verbal cues that may lead to biting. Teachers model and encourage language and appropriate responses to assist children to develop acceptable behaviors. Teachers will also work with Families to

identify resources to share with their child and methods for addressing the biting behavior.

When a child is bitten, the child receives immediate first aid. The bite is washed with soap and water. An accident report will be written and given to the family.

Families are called immediately if a bite breaks the skin, or leaves visible bruises.

When a child bites, it is recorded on an **OOPS Report** to help the staff assist the child in preventing a recurrence. Verbal children who bite, may be communicating a more severe concern and an OOPS Strategic Plan will be created.

BUILDING SAFETY PROCEDURES

The entry lobby at ERCCD has a coded lock.

Families are given a personalized door code and **must not share the code with others or any children.**

Families should not hold the door open for another person or family. (**Enrollment changes, custody arrangements and other factors may be unknown. Sharing door access jeopardizes the safety of the children and staff. Failure to comply will result in termination.**)

Classroom exit doors at ERCCD are locked at all times.

Families, visitors nor staff will not enter or exit through these doors unless prompted by center staff.

For safety reasons, Teachers are asked not to prop them open unless approved by Administration.

In the event of an emergency drill or lockdown, all visitors must comply with the safety instructions of the center staff.

CHILD SAFETY including ABUSE AND NEGLECT

We respect your rights as guardians and we hope to partner with you in nurturing your children.

It is imperative that we share information regarding children's loss of interest in eating, resting, hygiene and toileting concerns. Inform the center of any changes or bruises so that staff can be informed. Accidents or incidents at home can be supported with awareness.

Let us know if we can help.

Please note that ERCCD teachers and staff are obligated to report in good faith, reasonable suspected child abuse, abandonment, and neglect to the Florida Department of Children and Family Services.

Families must adhere to the ERCCD Discipline Policy and must refrain from physically punishing children in the center.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Children with special needs and disabilities are accommodated at ERCCD.

ERCCD staff work collaboratively with early interventionists, public school personnel, physicians, therapists, and others involved in the care and education of the child at the request of Families and/or the recommendation of physicians to implement IFSPs and IEPs.

ERCCD encourages specialists and therapists to work within the classroom.

Teachers may request parent permission to attend therapy and medical appointments to gain more information or training to better work with the child and his/her family.

Upon request, whole child diagnostic services are provided through the Early Steps Program for children under three years

Evaluations and follow-up conferences may be conducted at ERCCD.

Payment for the fee-based services of consultants and specialists are the responsibility of the Families. ERCCD cannot bill insurance companies.

CLOTHING

Children wear Uniform shirts and comfortable, washable bottom attire.

Children must wear shoes that fit well, stay on their feet and are closed-toe. Sandals must have straps. Rain boots are helpful for outdoor, nature play in our garden and mud kitchen areas.

Send to school:

- **TWO complete sets of clothing** in a Ziploc bag, including underwear and socks. **A FAMU shirt or plain black shirt is requested.** Accidents happen and children need to be able to change into dry, clean clothing. Sometimes getting messy and dirty is part of learning. Please do not ask that your child not take part in a messy activity or that he/she stay clean all day.
- A sweater, sweatshirt, or jacket to keep in the closet.

Labeled all clothing items with your child's first and last name. Ensure that the **clothing is seasonal.**

CONFERENCES

Families and Teachers will plan to meet for a developmental conferences at least once per school year.

Families and/or teachers may request an additional conference to discuss care or concerns.

Families can expect that teachers will share the child's Learning Portfolio, Assessment findings and discuss the child's growth and development.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Children's records are kept in secure files in the ERCCD offices.

Child files are shared with the child's teachers and Families/Guardians only.

Families may provide written permission for files to be shared with others.

Accident Reports- copies are given to Families and originals kept on file in the front office.

Visitors should report any issues directly to the staff for communication to Families, it is NOT ACCEPTABLE to give verbally or electronically share about children to other Families or Social Media.

CUSTODY

Families who have legal restrictions on custody of their children must bring copies of the appropriate legal documents to the center's office to be added to the child's file.

It is ERCCD's policy to provide copies of the child's records, achievements, evaluations, etc. to both Families upon request, unless there is a legal requirement to restrict access to information.

DEPARTURE

Always confirm departure with the staff in the area for accountability and effective communication. Ensure that your child is acknowledged before leaving.

1. Families will sign children in and out at the touchscreen computer in the front office.
2. Collect belongings, wash hands and check for notes or assignments in the designated classroom areas for written information.
3. Review your child's commitment for the day.

Children must be out of their classrooms by 5:30 pm daily for staff to prepare to depart. Evening care participants be out of the center by 9:30 pm.

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSESSMENT PLANS

Assessment methods are aligned with curriculum goals, provide an accurate picture of children's ability and progress, are appropriate and valid, provide meaningful results for all children, including English language learners and children with special needs, provide teachers with clear ideas for curriculum development and daily planning and are regularly reviewed to ensure they are providing the necessary information.

Depending on the age and needs of the child, developmental growth is assessed using the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)*. The children are re-evaluated every six months to one year. Teaching Strategies Objectives will be used to observe the daily activities and progress for each child's development.

Assessment Schedule

- ✓ Prior to enrollment, children enrolled in the School Readiness program of the Early Learning Coalition are assessed with the *ASQ* by Coalition staff. Every one to six

months, children are re-assessed by ERCCD staff. Frequency is determined by the ASQ recommendations for re-assessment based on the child's age.

- ✓ At Orientation or during the first week of enrollment, each child's developmental overview is documented by ERCCD staff using an in-house checklist.
- ✓ Weekly, children's developmental progress is observed and documented, summaries are provided from the teacher.
- ✓ Each semester *ERCCD will use the Creative Checklist or TSG Checkpoints to document children's learning progress.*

NOTE: Children may be re-assessed more frequently than recommended by ASQ and/or with other screening and assessment tools if Teachers and Families seek additional or more in-depth information regarding a child's developmental progress.

Developmental Assessment Tools

- ✓ **Teaching Strategies Gold (see website link Curriculum)**
- ✓ **The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (see website link Curriculum)**
- ✓ **Creative Curriculum Checklist (see website link Curriculum)**
- ✓ Portfolio for Observation and Activity Documentation
- ✓ Additional assessment tools may be administered by early childhood professionals such as speech/language therapists or behavioral specialists as needed, with parent consent.

Confidentiality of Assessments

Screenings and assessments completed by early childhood and/or medical personnel are stored in the ERCCD Office.

Family Involvement in Assessments

Families receive information about the administration and use of the ASQ at Orientation. Families have opportunities to share observations from home and to contribute to the assessment process.

All screening/assessments are discussed with families at Family conferences at least once per year.

Family conferences are held as needed when new or additional screens/assessments are completed at the request of families or professionals who are supporting or assisting families.

Communication with Families Regarding Assessments

Families receive a written Conference Summary at the end of each parent-teacher conference. If a parent chooses not to attend a parent conference they will still receive a written report of their child's progress.

Copies of the ASQ and *TSG Checkpoints* are available to Families at their request.

DIAPERS (Including pull-ups)

Families provide their child's diapers, pull-ups, and diaper wipes, please see classroom communications from Teachers for notices of low supply.

The child's first and last name should be written on each box and container.

Cloth diapers must have an absorbent inner lining and the diaper must be completely contained in a water-proof outer covering.

Soiled cloth diapers are wrapped in a plastic bag and returned to Families each day. They are not washed at the center.

When transitioning, families should consult with their teacher to agree on a **TOILET TRAINING PLAN**. Plan to send a "suitcase" of underwear and bottoms for accidents.

Changing Procedures

Diapers are routinely changed at least every two hours when the children are awake, when children awake from naps, and generally, when a child is wet or soiled.

Teachers use vinyl gloves during diaper changes; please notify the office if your child is allergic.

Soiled clothing is changed immediately.

Families must label all diaper changing items with their child's first and last name.

Teachers may use lotions, creams, powders, etc., as requested by Families, during diaper changes only if Families provide the cream, powder, etc., in its original container and complete a **MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM**.

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS AND FOOD ALLERGIES

Families will provide restrictions and food allergies, in writing, to the front office.

Families may update as necessary, in writing.

Families will complete the FOOD PROGRAM PARTICPATION AND APPLICATION, ALERGY AND CONSENT TO POST and Allergy information will be posted in the center and a **red** allergy mat will be used at meal times.

Accommodations are made whenever possible to protect children with food allergies.

Please note: ERCCD Centers are NOT peanut free.

Milk substitutions will be provided for children with **Child Care Food Program Medical Statement for Children with Disabilities and Special Dietary Conditions**. The physician must provide specific information about what foods the child cannot be served.

Special Milks that are not creditable must be provided by the family and served after the Food Program Components are set on the table. See List in the Front Office.

Food substitutions are made for children with special dietary conditions and are **highlighted** on the menu.

DIVERSITY

ERCCD is a multi-cultural, multi-lingual learning environment.

All children and families are treated with respect and consideration.

Teachers may ask Families for assistance with phrases and words in the child's native language to enable communication with the family while the child is learning English. Parent and families' cultural and religious customs are acknowledged and supported through meals, activities and special events.

Families are encouraged to participate and share in our celebrations or suggest new events.

Teachers initiate activities and discussions that build positive self-identity and the value of differences.

Teachers intervene when children tease or reject others.

Teachers are active in identifying and countering any teaching practices or curriculum approaches or materials that are degrading with respect to gender, sexual orientation, age, language, ability, race, religion, family structure, background or culture.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ENROLLMENT

ERCCD accepts children between the ages of 3 months and 12 years.

Children are enrolled in available spaces, according to age ratios and group sizes that can be accommodated in our programs inclusively.

FAMU STUDENTS and STAFF receive priority placement for on-campus convenience. A families' affiliation is verified each semester and ERCCD reserves the right to request University identification information.

ERCCD also accepts children from the Community to provide quality early childhood education to young children from diverse populations.

E-MAIL: famuerccd@famu.edu

An e-mail address helps ERCCD electronically mass communicate information to Families. Families who wish not to be included in mass emails should inform the front office and see the website for general information and updates.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Should dangerous weather strike, Families should check the FAMU homepage (www.FAMU.edu) for information about emergency closings and/or evacuations.

Families may call the ERCCD offices at (850) 599-3267 for a recorded message regarding closings and anticipated re-open dates.

Families will receive information about emergencies on campus via e-mail, cell phone and/or text message through FAMU's emergency contact system, if registered with FAMU Campus Safety.

Tuition Fees are not automatically prorated during emergency closings.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Families will provide at least two emergency contacts that can reach a child within 30 minutes of an emergency.

It is the responsibility of the family to keep their child's emergency contact list up to date. Changes to the contacts may be made in writing as soon as feasible.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In the event of an extreme building safety concern, FAMU Campus Safety will be notified and the children will be evacuated if the Director or FAMU officials determines that the center is, or may become, unsafe for children.

Families will be notified to pick-up children immediately and may be contacted using the FAMU Emergency Contact System (e-mail, cell phone and/or text message) with information regarding their child's temporary location.

Teachers carry Emergency Backpacks during emergency evacuations which will contain supplies and medications, if applicable.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND CONDUCT

ERCCD promotes parent partnerships that contribute to the center's early childhood education.

Families are expected to actively support their child's experiences at ERCCD.

Monthly, families are expected to plan a minimum of one hour to volunteer in their child's classroom.

Families are encouraged to join the Children's Investment Team (CIT) for volunteer scheduling, advocacy, fellowship and resources.

DISTRACTION FREE ZONE: Families are encouraged to converse with children during drop off and pick up about their activities and learning for the day; ***refrain from dropping or picking children up while distracted by cell-phone conversations. Children should not enter the center while engaged in a tablet or electronic device, game or headphones.***

Families and Staff must refrain from inappropriate, adult discussion, conduct and gathering in the center classrooms, lobby, parking areas or when attending field trips.

We are confident that the school family model will guide appropriate experiences however, adult conduct that is inappropriate evokes the right to dismiss the visitor or terminate the family from ERCCD. FAMU Campus Safety will be asked to assist with separation, if deemed necessary by staff.

FEES

Families are expected to submit payments timely to avoid service interruption or collection reporting.

The annual registration fee is non-refundable at due at the time of enrollment.

A fee for late payment of Monthly Tuition late fee and Pick-up are automatically charged to applicable accounts.

Tuition Fees are contracted for a program term, either August to May (School Year) and/or June-August (Summer Program)

TERMINATION FORMS are required to suspend payment and the space may be given to another child. If a child withdraws for an extended period of one month or more, a new registration fee will be charged.

Please see the ERCCD website, www.famu.edu/childcare for current fees.

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips *on-campus* and *Cascade Trail* may be impromptu to add to the developmental enrichment of our program. With quality staff supervision, children will be walked or use strollers to travel

Children of all ages occasionally go for walks as an alternative to playground play.

Sunscreen and bug repellent are applied as necessary and with a MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM.

Teachers carry Emergency Backpacks during all field trips which contain contact information, allergy lists, supplies and medications, if applicable.

Off-campus field trips will be scheduled to provide quality transportation and parent participation.

Transportation with ERCCD requires that children under 7 have a booster or car seat.

Children without a seat or who arrive tardy, may remain at the center, if coverage permits.

In some cases children may need to be picked up from the center and returned when the field trip ends.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire Drills are conducted monthly in accordance with local fire code and licensing requirements. Emergency evacuation routes are posted at each exit in each classroom.

Infants are carried or transported in evacuation cribs to a designated safe place.

Children ages 1-5 year olds are guided by teachers to a designated gathering place.

Teachers carry emergency backpacks with them during fire drills and evacuations.

FIRST AID/CPR/AED

At least one staff member holding current First Aid and CPR certification for infants and children are always present in each group of children.

FORMS

Forms referenced in this handbook are available in the ERCCD offices, and can be locally faxed or e-mailed to or from Families and physicians, ERCCD fax number: (850) 599-8534.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Families are encouraged to discuss concerns about their child or their child's classroom with their child's teacher as soon as appropriate. If necessary, additional classroom coverage may be provided for a private meeting and space to discuss details and plans. Teachers may request that Families attend a parent-teacher conference to discuss the concern. Families and/or teachers may request that the Director/Administrator attend the meeting.

If Families are not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting with the teacher(s), they may request a meeting with the ERCCD Director to discuss their concerns. Each meeting will have a specific decision for moving forward.

HAND WASHING

To keep us safe and prevent the spread of germs, children and their families must wash their hands when entering an ERCCD classroom and before sitting for meals at drop off. Handwashing procedures are posted above each sink and listed in detail below.

Teachers and children will wash their hands before and after meals, after outside play time, after playing in water, after handling bodily fluids (e.g. blowing or wiping nose, coughing on a hand, etc.), after handling pets or other animals, after visiting other classrooms, using the toilet or diaper changes, before/after administering medication, after handling garbage and at other times as needed.

Families are encouraged to have their children wash their hands before leaving ERCCD.

HAND-WASHING & SAFETY PROCEDURES

All children and adults use liquid soap and running water upon entering any classroom. All teachers and children rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under finger-nails; rinsing well, drying hands with a paper towel; and avoiding touching the faucet with just washed hands.

Automatic Hand Sanitizer stations are available for visitors and volunteers throughout the front of the center.

Staff utilize Universal Precautions by wearing gloves when contamination by bodily fluids may occur.

Staff do not use hand washing sinks for bathing children or for removing fecal material. Hand washing and food preparation do not occur at the same sink.

ERCCD has designated sinks for hand washing and food preparation should be done in the kitchen.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT

All children enrolled at ERCCD must provide a current Florida Certification of Immunization (Form 680) and Part II Medical Evaluation (DH3040), available from the child's physician, before the child may enter the classroom.

Families must provide the updated documents on or before the expiration date of the documents.

Families receive an in-person and e-mail notice 60 days prior to the expiration date of the Certificate of Immunization and Medical Evaluation forms.

Notice of a scheduled appointment with a physician **cannot** be accepted for an expired document.

If a child's medical or immunization records become outdated the child will not be permitted to attend ERCCD until the proper documents are received.

Families will be responsible for continued tuition during their child's absence or terminated to provide space for another child.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Preschool Program	Monday-Friday 7:00 AM-5:30PM
Afterschool Program	Monday-Friday 3:30 PM-5:30PM
Evening Care Program	Monday-Thursday 5:30 PM- 9:30 PM

ILLNESS

Children may be sent home when the Administration poses a possible health risk to others in the center or deems the child is too uncomfortable to receive necessary care in the center. ERCCD staff understand that when children are sick, it interferes with jobs and school work, however, please do not ask us to allow your child to remain at ERCCD when he/she is considered unwell for care.

Families should notify the ERCCD office if their child will be absent due to illness, as soon as possible. Prior to return, families must communicate if their child has been diagnosed with a contagious condition that may have been exposed to the childcare center.

According to the State of Florida licensing standards, children may not be in childcare if they are ill. Illnesses include, but are not limited to:

Temperature of 101 degrees F or higher, and/or of the following:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Severe coughing with phlegm or mucus
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Stiff neck
- Conjunctivitis (May return to school 24 hours **AFTER** antibiotic drops)
- Open skin lesions
- Head Lice
- Contagious diseases and conditions

When a child's illness prevents him/her from participating in classroom activities or the child's condition is potentially contagious, the child will be removed from the classroom to the front office. The child will be kept comfortable and Families will be called.

An adult must pick up the child within 30 minutes. Updated contact numbers ensure that a parent or family member can be reached at all times.

Children who are sent home because they are ill must remain at home for 24 hours after all symptoms are gone (without fever reducing medication).

Restrictions on classroom activities and/or outside play due to chronic non-contagious conditions must be documented by a physician. Reasonable accommodations will be made to meet medical recommendations, such as longer or more frequent naps. However, the center may not be able to meet every need. Families will be contacted to provide the necessary care.

If Families consistently send their ill child to the center or frequently do not pick up an ill child in a timely manner, ERCCD reserves the right to dismiss the family from ERCCD.

IMMUNIZATIONS

ERCCD is required to have a current, Florida Certification of Immunization (Form 680) and Part II Medical Evaluation (DH3040) on file for each child enrolled.

Families that wish to be exempt from immunization requirements must provide a RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION FROM IMMUNIZATION FORM from their physician.

Upon notice of a contagious condition, families may be asked to remove non-immunized and under-immunized children from the classroom for their child's safety.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

When children are picked up after the center's closing, Families will be billed a Late Pick-Up fee.

The charge is \$1.00 per minute for 30 minutes, then an additional \$20.00 is added, totaling \$50.00 and then the \$1.00 per minute fee will continue until pick up.

Upon availability, the child may be placed in evening care after 31 minutes, stopping the late fee at \$50.00, but then beginning the hourly rate for evening care services.

Late fees are be posted to the child's next tuition bill.

When a child remains at ERCCD for longer than one hour past closing time, Campus Security and the Florida Department of Children and Family Services may be notified.

As a courtesy, we understand that emergencies occur, ***calling the center to indicate a 5-10 minute late pick-up, will only be tolerated ONCE without late fee charges.***

ERCCD respects the right of staff to depart at their clock out time, as such, ERCCD reserves the right to dismiss a child from ERCCD if the child is repeatedly picked up late.

MEALS (children 6 months and older)

ERCCD serves meals and snacks that meet the standards of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Care Food Program (CCFP).

ERCCD is committed to serving quality foods and introducing young children to a variety of textures and tastes.

Families must complete a Food Program Application and Participation form at enrollment.

Infants must complete Infant Feeding Form denoting formula served to children.

Infants will be offered fluids from a cup when the Families and teachers agree that the child is developmentally ready to use a cup, with a flow stopper.

If families have other requests, see DIETARY RESTRICTIONS.

The menu is posted weekly on the Parent Board in the office and in the Multi-Purpose Room.

- Breakfast is served from 8:00 am to 8:30 am, children who are not seated and recorded by 8:30 am by ERCCD Staff, will not be served through the food program. Families will be required to sit with the child and/or provide their own breakfast. Children should not be brought to the meal area past 9:00 a.m.
- Lunch is served between 11:30 am and 12:30 pm.
- Snack is served between 3:00 pm and 4:00pm.

ERCCD serves family style meals and children are taught to feed and serve themselves with adult guidance and portion control. Children are encouraged to have healthy conversation and use table manners.

ERCCD provides meals through the USDA Child Care Food Program (CCFP) and serves breakfast, lunch and an afternoon to all children.

All meals meet the USDA CCFP standards for nutrition and serving size.

One and two year olds are served whole milk. Children over 24 months are served non-fat or 1% milk.

Milk and Food Allergies and/or Meat Alternatives must be documented on AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES under ALLERGY AND CONSENT TO POST.

Families may choose one of the following CCFP options:

- *Participation in the CCFP.* The child will be served all components of each meal as shown on our menus. Families may provide additional food items if they desire. In that case, the child will be served all the components of the ERCCD meal AND the items sent from home. Parent-provided items cannot be served in place of the ERCCD menu items.
- *Participation in the CCFP with meat alternatives.* The child will always receive the meat alternate as shown on the menu.

Additional mini-snacks (not on the CCFP) may be served mid-morning and after nap, depending on the age and the needs of the children.

MEALS FOR INFANTS (children up to 6 months of age)

Nursing mothers are welcome to come in and nurse their babies at any time of day. The Lactation room is in the front office

Families have the option of using one of the ERCCD formulas; provide formula from home, or bottled breast milk.

Families should provide clean, unused bottle is used for formula. There should be a minimum of 4 bottles, daily.

All bottles and caps must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name; contain measured water for each feeding.

If providing formula, Pre-made bottles will not be used. Teachers discard formula bottles after one hour.

Breast milk, should be in the bottle and will not be kept more than 48 hours in a refrigerator.

All used bottles are rinsed, not washed and sent home daily.

ERCCD can provide a milk-based formula and a soy-based formula; as well as pureed foods and cereals.

Teachers will prepare warm bottles and baby food in bottle warmer. Infant items are never warmed in a microwave oven.

Infant food is typically served at room temperature.

Infants unable to sit are held for bottle-feeding; all others sit in an age appropriate chair to be fed.

Infants are not given bottles while in a crib or bed; bottles are not propped at any time.

Infants are fed on demand and according to instructions received from Families.

Bottles are not typically used in the toddler classes.

MEDICATION

ERCCD staff will administer over-the-counter and prescription medication with appropriate documentation from a doctor.

A new MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM must be filled out for each medication and for each illness.

Medication must be in the original container with dosages clearly marked.

Prescription medication must show the child's first and last name and dosage instructions.

A doctor's signature may be required for both over-the-counter and prescription medications, depending on the purpose and length of use.

Families who are physicians should not sign their own child's medical forms.

ERCCD will not use medicine to reduce a fever during child care, *see ILLNESS*.

NAIL GROOMING

Accidental scratching and conflict may cause injury to the skin.

Please ensure the children's skin safety by clipping nails regularly to the nail bed.

Center Staff should maintain appropriate grooming of their own nails to increase hygiene and reduce injury to children.

NEWSLETTER

ERCCD will post a newsletter to our website (www.famu.edu/childcare) quarterly that contains interesting information about each classroom as well as tips for Families and notices of upcoming events.

An additional copy will be in the front office monthly.

NO SHOE POLICY (SPECIFIC CLASSROOMS)

In an effort to assure floors are clean for young crawlers, shoes are not permitted in these classrooms.

Families and visitors must remove their shoes before entering the classroom. Bare feet are not encouraged in these classrooms. Shoe covers or washable socks may be available.

Infants are not required to wear "indoor shoes" however Families may provide non-slip soles for crawlers and walkers to wear during the day.

OUTDOOR PLAY

All children, including infants, must spend some time outside at least once per day, unless dictated by weather service alert to remain indoors.

Children may play outside in drizzling rain with the absence of thunder or lightening in the area; Families should always provide outerwear appropriate for daily weather.

Children will go outside when it is cold; Families must provide outerwear appropriate for the weather.

Children will engage in messy play and shoes may be damaged. Send children in shoes appropriate for preschool play.

Children one year old and older will go outside at least twice a day.

Infants may be taken outside to play in a covered, or ground protected area or taken on a walk in a stroller or buggy.

Staff supervise children by sight and sound at all times.

PARKING

Parking is provided for families visiting the center, however, ERCCD is not liable for tickets Families receive while visiting FAMU.

Visitor passes may be obtained through University Parking Services on Wahnish Way.

PAYMENTS

Tuition Fee Payments must be MONEY ORDER or CASHIERS CHECK.

Payments are to be placed in the drop box outside of the

Payments are due by the 1st of each month and late after the 5th with Late Fee penalty.

Payment by cash or personal check is NOT ACCEPTED.

PETS IN THE CLASSROOM

Fish are the only permissible pets in the classroom due to allergy and safety concerns.

Families are informed if a new pet will be joining the classroom before the pet arrives.

Pets are contained in appropriate habitats.

Classroom teachers may catch and release insects or frogs for limited science study.

PHONE CALLS/TEXTS

The center office lines are 850-599-3267 and 850-599-3618. If you reach a voicemail during business hours, we are assisting the children and staff. Please leave a message.

Teachers generally do not accept phone calls or texts during their teaching time.

When Families need to speak with a teacher, they should call the ERCCD office. The office will arrange for the teacher to accept or deliver a message to return the call when appropriate.

PHOTOS

Photos of the children are often taken by ERCCD staff. Some are posted in the center and classrooms; some are added to the child's portfolio; some are posted in Student Affairs Foote Hilyer 308 and our private Instagram page @erccdkids.

Families and staff may request to follow the photos posted on Instagram, however they may not be reposted or shared.

Families may express written desire to not have their child's photo used for advertising or educational purposes as outlined in the PARENT LETTER OF AGREEMENT.

Photos may be taken by FAMU and local media for publication.

ERCCD has limited control over photos and videos taken by non-ERCCD persons (i.e. photos taken by other Families or media at special events or in public places) but discourages at every opportunity.

Photos or videos taken by non-ERCCD persons are not governed by our policies.

PORTFOLIO

Teachers monitor each child's growth and development with a Learning Portfolio.

Portfolios contain samples of children's work that are representative of skills learned.

Portfolios travel with the child from classroom to classroom and are given to the family when the child withdraws.

Portfolios are shared with Families at parent conferences, however, Families may view the Portfolio at any time.

RATIO / GROUP SIZE

ERCCD follows the following teacher/child ratios within group size during both indoor and outdoor activities.

Ages	Maximum Group Sizes	Adult to Child Ratio
Infants (6 wks-12 mo.)	4-6	1:4
One Year Olds (12-28 mo.)	6-12	1:6
Two Year Olds (21-26 mo.)	11-18	1:11
Three Year Olds (30-48 mo.)	16-25	1:15
Four/Five Year Olds	20-30	1:20, 1:11 VPK

RESEARCH

ERCCD serves as an educational site for students and faculty of the colleges and departments of FAMU and other research institutions.

All requests for observation will be approved and fully supervised by a FAMU professor or researcher.

Families receive a letter describing IRB approved research and the participation required prior to the start of a study.

Only children who's Families have given written consent may participate in research activities where the child's personal identity is used.

It is not uncommon for children to be invited to participate in several coursework, non-research studies each year.

REST TIME

Infants nap on demand.

Infants are put to sleep on their backs. An infant may be put to sleep in another position if ordered by a pediatrician. A written document signed by the child's pediatrician is required.

Toddlers & Preschoolers' nap should not exceed 2:30 pm, daily. Children have a choice of napping or resting quietly.

RETURNED CHECK FEE

There is a \$25.00 charge for returned checks submitted to fundraisers.

The returned check fee will be charged to the applicable account.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

ERCCD provides all the learning and hygiene materials needed in the classroom.

Teachers may ask for specific materials through the center via MATERIALS REQUEST FORM to meet specific children's or project needs.

Families may also be asked to support the Classroom Wish List that aids the teacher's special activities.

SHOW AND TELL

Teachers encourage children to share items and stories from home.

Please check with your child's teacher to find out when children may bring items from home and what items are acceptable.

Toy guns and knives and books or toys that depict violence, discrimination or inappropriate behavior are not allowed at any time.

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

ERCCD centers are smoke-free environments.

Smoking in ERCCD classrooms, on ERCCD grounds, or on the FAMU campus is not permitted. Strong smoke odors are discouraged. Families are welcome to freshen up in the adult restrooms, if needed.

SUMMER PROGRAM

ERCCD offers a theme-based summer program to provide flexibility for the learning environment and allow staff vacations.

Children participate in a wide variety of learning activities which include regular field trips and outdoor activities.

Infants and Toddlers may take different field trips depending on the activity.

Meals are provided unless sack lunches are requested for a special field trip or activity.

School-aged children are eligible to enroll in the full day summer program.

SUPERVISION

It is ERCCD's policy that children are well supervised at all times.

Teachers will position themselves in the classroom and changing areas so that infants and toddlers can be seen and heard.

Toddlers and preschoolers are primarily supervised by sight and occasionally use sound only. Staff will frequently maintain sight on children who are in the bathroom, a center area or napping.

Administration regularly monitors classrooms via observation rooms and non-recording monitors.

ERCCD STAFF POLICY ON SUPERVISION (EXCERPT FROM 2018 REVISION)

- **Supervision Method:** Our approach to supervision, “Being *PRO*active” includes the following *PRO*fessional components:
 - **Programming** requires a knowledge of the children in your classroom, including knowing each child’s range of skills, interests, ability to interact with others and developmental stage. Knowledge of the children in the classroom helps teachers to monitor and enhance skills that promote children’s positive behavior. When a child is upset, an adult immediately investigates the cause of the problem.
 - **Provision** involves being able to see all of the children. Staff position themselves to be aware of the entire classroom. All children are monitored by sight and/or sound at all times. Maintain an accurate mental headcount of the children in the area.
 - **Proximity** involves regularly glancing/moving around the classroom and playground to see children’s involvement and what is happening in the area. When a child needs attention, teachers do not talk across the room, but move to where the child is.
 - **Protection** is predicting and preventing undesirable or unsafe behavior from occurring. Children are redirected to other areas/activities when undesirable behavior is imminent or occurs. The area *Safe Place* is positioned so that a teacher can aide in self-regulation tools and still see the other children in the group. This technique helps ensure the safety of all children.
 - Supervision of all children in areas that are near equipment where injury may occur, requires the use of the above methods **and** being in close proximity to the children.
 - Following the above procedure indicates that staff will not be consumed by electronic devices, conversation or sleep, which prohibits optimal supervision.
 - Children waiting to be picked up due to illness or injury may be kept safe, comfortable, and under close supervision in the office to allow one on one care.
- **Rest/Naptime Supervision**
 - Staff position themselves so they can hear and see sleeping children.
 - Teachers will get up and rotate around the room to check on every child every 15 minutes.
 - At least one additional staff member is in the building to assist with any difficulties that may occur during nap/rest time.
 - Sleeping children should not have their heads covered.
 - Teachers use appropriate strategies to assist children to sleep (e.g., rubbing backs, talking softly, dimming lights, playing soft music, etc.). Rooms will not be kept too dark (by blocking all windows) during naptime.
 - Nightlights or soft lighting will be used in the primary rooms to ensure all infants can be seen and so that staff and visitors do not trip on anything when walking through.
 - Employees may not sleep with a child during nap.
 - Children who awake early or do not sleep are supervised and provided quiet activities.
 - (*Primary-Preschool*) Infants, one’s, and two’s nap times are recorded on an individual daily report form that goes home with parents.
- **Playground Supervision**
 - Group ratios will be maintained while outside on the playground (i.e. outside time is not the time to go inside to plan or prep, get food/drink, use the restroom, etc.).

- Staff position themselves near large equipment. Staff will position themselves in different zones of the playground to ensure that all areas are well supervised.
- Staff supervision focus is interaction with children and promoting safe play; informal visiting among staff is not permitted.
- Children needing to use the bathroom should be escorted inside and monitored by sight and sound.
- Classroom doors are kept closed when children are outside; doors will not be propped open. Enter through main access doors or multipurpose room patio. It is important to let someone know when your group is outside and expect to return.
- Water pitcher and water bottles are taken outside and kept in the shade when it is likely children will request drinks.
- Each time children are on the playground, toys will be brought out from sheds or storage areas and sandboxes will be uncovered. At the end of outside time, all toys are cleaned up and trikes parked inside the “parking house”; at the end of the day, the sandbox and any water/sand tables are also to be covered.
- Playgrounds should be continually monitored for trash, debris, and broken toys. If toys are broken they should be removed from the playground and discarded.
- The playground gate is *kept locked at all times*. Families must enter the building, sign out their child, and then go to the playground for pick-up when they come at times children are outside playing. You should have the child to wash their hands in the outdoor bathroom and clean their face before departing.
- If children can't play outside, then activities indoors providing large motor movements will be provided, and indoor classroom supervision guidelines apply.
 - Children will go outside for 30 minutes in the morning and afternoon, this time will be limited in times when it is very cold/hot.
 - All children, including infants, must spend some time outside at least once per day, weather permitting. Children one year old and older will go outside at least twice a day. Infants may be taken outside to play in a protected area or taken on a walk in a stroller or buggy.

TEACHING METHODS

Teaching activities are based on developmental ages, early childhood appropriate practices and are play based progressive learning experiences.

Teachers and administrative staff work as a team to implement a variety of curriculum tools and learning activities according to specialized needs.

Teachers interact with children to assess their strengths and needs and use that knowledge to develop individualized teaching methods.

Teachers gain information from Families about family home values, beliefs, experiences, and language to enrich their classroom activities

Children are encouraged to develop self-help skills, make appropriate choices, solve problems and communicate.

The daily visual schedule for the children's classroom routine is posted and available for the parent

Through the course of a day children will have opportunities to participate in gross and fine motor activities, science, math, early literacy, music, art, and dramatic play activities.

Additional activities such as cooking and other specially planned activities are regularly implemented.

Children are provided opportunities and materials that encourage them to engage in discussion with one another.

TOILET TRAINING

Children begin toilet training at ERCCD when it is developmentally appropriate.

Teachers and Families will discuss how best to approach toilet training at home and in the classroom, please complete a TOILET TRAINING PLAN.

Families are encouraged to support toilet training at home when their child is engaged in toilet training at ERCCD.

Please keep extra clothing in your child's cubby, including underwear, socks and shoes.

You may send a small suitcase, if necessary ☺

Soiled clothing is placed in a plastic bag and sent home each day. Clothes will be rinsed and washed when feasible.

TRANSITION TO A NEW CLASSROOM

Children are transitioned to a new classroom when it is developmentally appropriate and when space is available.

Moving a child to a new classroom is a joint decision of Families and Teachers; however may be deemed necessary for the enrollment of new students.

Children participate in a week or more of transition activities such as visiting the new classroom and participating in recess and circle time. Time in the new classroom is gradually increased before permanent transition occurs.

Families are welcome to visit the new classroom and schedule a meeting for a brief *Transition Meeting*, prior to a conference

TUITION ASSISTANCE

Any Families in need of tuition assistance may apply to the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend (ELC) at 850-385-0504. Families are responsible for any balance of the ERCCD fee remaining after the ELC payment and are expected to pay their share of the fee by the 5th of each month. Failure to remit payment will result in center late fee. ELC requires that payment balances are cleared by the 15th of each month.

Families are responsible for payment at the full rate for any days not paid by ELC.

Eligible Student Families may consent to participate in the CCAMPIS (Child Care Access Means Parents in School) program as funds permit, and must meet all eligibility and compliance requirements.

ERCCD may dismiss children from the program if the fee balance surpasses \$250.00.

UNIFORMS/SPECIAL ATTIRE

Each day, unless specified by ERCCD, all children, including infants and toddlers, will wear a *black Uniform shirt/one-sie (embroidered with the FAMU-ERCCD logo)* and a bottom of their families choosing.

Families will purchase embroidered shirts from ***Clothesline Embroidery (850) 877-7191*** and are responsible for payment.

Children who are not in uniform, may be provided a shirt, at cost to the family.

FAMU t-shirts may be worn occasionally on Fridays.

African Attire is used for several special events and Families should plan to acquire by October of the School Year.

VPK students will purchase a Cap and Gown as well as special attire for their graduation activities.

VISITORS

All visitors, including Families, must sign in, get a visitor's badge and wash their hands. Visitors must plan to interact with children, free from cell phone distractions. Failure to adhere may result in visitors being asked to step outside until calls and texts are complete. In the interest of child confidentiality and safety, if other family members or friends wish to visit, they must make arrangements with the ERCCD Office prior to their visit.

Families interested in assisting with specific activities should speak with their child's teacher to align volunteer hours with classroom projects/events.

Hand sanitizer is provided throughout the building.

FAMU-ERCCD partners with the local Universities to provide volunteer and student practicum experience, those students will apply, meet our orientation requirements and follow the same procedure as family visitors.

Photos and video must be taken using the ERCCD approved media devices for safety and privacy of all center members.

VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN (VPK)

ERCCD is an approved VPK provider.

Children must be four years old by September 1st and must provide the Eligibility Certificate from the Early Learning Coalition in order to receive the voucher.

The State of Florida covers the 3 hours of the VPK program for all Florida residents.

Tuition credits are applied to monthly bills. Families are responsible for paying for wrap-around care.

Families of children enrolled in a VPK class must comply with an attendance policy established by the state of Florida and must complete the Monthly Attendance Form at the end of each month, in addition to signing in and out daily.

ERCCD completes and submits individualized assessment to the Florida Office of Early Learning for school readiness skills that indicate developmental growth and delays.

Children who do not meet attendance requirements may lose VPK funding. The child may be allowed to remain in the center but will be required to pay full tuition and may be moved to another preschool class. VPK students require a 1:11 teacher: child ratio from 9 am to 12:15 pm (VPK hours) 1:20.

At the completion of VPK, children who eligible for kindergarten transition to ERCCD school age fees for Summer Camp.

WAITING LIST

ERCCD maintains a waiting list for the center, when spaces are unavailable.

Spaces are provided based on age availability, university student status, need for care and best fit to the program.

Joining the waiting list does not guarantee enrollment as spaces may not become available for all families inquiring placement.

Paying the registration fee while on the waiting list is not permitted.

WATER DAY ACTIVITIES

Children participate in water day activities, as the weather permits.

Children should arrive at the center in their bathing suits when submerging water activities are planned.

Children in diapers or pull-ups must have a diaper designed for wear in water. Swim diapers may be offered by the center. See the teacher for the current supply.

Each child must have his/her own towel. Labeled with first and last name,

Children should wear shoes that can get wet.

Be sure your child has a complete set of clothes to change into, including underwear, shoes, and socks.

Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. Children are encouraged not to drink the water; children with open sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play.

Water is drained and fresh water is added when a new group comes to play.

Staff dress out to engage children, will maintain a watchful eye for children in the play areas and shall remain in arms reach for optimal safety.

WEBSITE

ERCCD maintains a website at www.famu.edu/childcare.

Please check the website regularly for other information about ERCCD.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Families are required to complete a **TERMINATION OF SERVICES FORM** and return it to the office at least 2 weeks prior to the child's last day. This is applicable for any expected absence greater than 5 consecutive days.

Families are requested to provide updated contact information for records.

FAMU-ERCCD
Contact Information
#C02LE0176
Phone: 850-599-3267
Fax: 850-599-8534
Email: famuerccd@famu.edu
Website: www.famu.edu/childcare
Address: 459 FAMU Way Tallahassee, Florida 32307

ERCCD reserves the right make changes, in whole or part, to this handbook, as necessary.