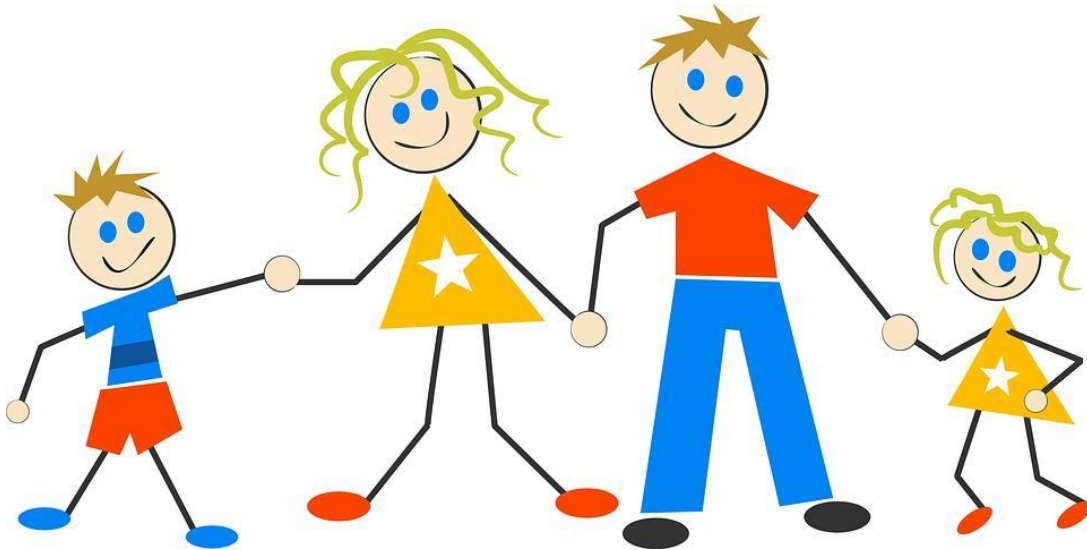


# Sault Ste. Marie Cooperative Preschool



## Parent Handbook



**“These materials were developed under a grant awarded by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential.”**

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## **Philosophy**

The Sault Ste. Marie Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program is committed to providing a nurturing, secure, educational setting for young children and their families. With a safe, developmentally appropriate, but challenging environment, children learn, explore, and make age-appropriate choices as they experience their world and its challenges. Our play-based programs develop each child's unique potential, recognizing individuality as the basis for all growth measurements. The process enhances physical, communication, emotional, social, creative, and intellectual growth. Staff and families continually work together to help young children achieve growth. We believe that long-lasting partnerships between school, family, and community are essential components of children's success. Through the Creative Curriculum staff, children, and families partner with the community, learn to value diversity and to foster individuality, self-confidence, love of learning, responsibility, positive attitude, and respect for themselves and others.

## **Creative Curriculum®**

- At the SSM Cooperative Preschool, we have adopted the Creative Curriculum and its assessment partner, the GOLD Assessment tool. The Creative Curriculum empowers children to be confident, creative, and caring learners through play-based, hands-on investigations—a research-based approach that incorporates language, literacy, and mathematics throughout the day. The staff uses the GOLD Assessment tool to assess where the children are on all different levels and understand each child's needs based on developmentally appropriate milestones.

## **Criteria for Admission**

- For admission contact the Sault Ste. Marie Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program to see if your family qualifies according to guidelines set by the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP). If more families apply than there is space available, children with the greatest need (per the MiLEAP guidelines) will be admitted first. Children with the greatest need will then fill subsequent openings.
- Children must live in the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan or have prior approval from EUPISD before acceptance.
- Children in the Great Start Readiness Program must be at least four years of age on or before September 1. Children who turn 4 years of age after September 1, but on or before December 1, may be enrolled if all eligible four-year-old children have been enrolled and there are additional vacancies within the GSRP classroom. A copy of a birth certificate or other proof of age is required.
- Copies of the following documents are required prior to acceptance: birth certificate and proof of income. Immunization records and current health appraisal (within the last year) must be provided after acceptance but prior to enrollment. Health appraisals must be updated annually. Parents must provide the school with an updated copy.
- Proof of Immunizations are required as follows:  
4DPT, 1MMR, 3 Polio, 3 Hepatitis B, HIB series, PCV series and Varicella (chicken

pox) unless a parent signs a waiver and complies with the immunization exemption rules of the Health Department. A copy of your child's immunization records and any updates along with a well child check-up must be on file at the preschool. If your child has not yet received all required vaccinations, a schedule of appointments to receive age-appropriate vaccinations must be provided.

- GSRP recognizes that children who stay up to date on checkups and immunizations are healthier and help control the spread of illnesses in the center. Parents are strongly encouraged to stay up to date on health checkups and immunizations. Failure to comply will result in the child's removal from the program.
- Additional items may be requested as evidence of the MiLEAP's at-risk factors (i.e., proof of income, doctor's notes for health risks or, IEP's, etc.) and will need to be provided.
- Necessary enrollment and registration forms must be completed prior to the beginning of school. This includes the Emergency Contact and Consent Card (Child Information Record).

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

- Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicant for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements are notified that SSM Cooperative Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability in its admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs, activities, or policies.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

- Information presented to SSM Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program will remain confidential and not be disclosed to parties other than SSM Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program staff members and the MiLEAP without written consent of parent(s) or guardian(s). You will be asked to sign a release of information at the end of the year so that your child's records can be shared with his or her next school.

### **Weekly Schedule and Attendance Policy**

- Regular school attendance promotes a successful school experience and provides children with a predictable routine. For this reason, we encourage regular participation for the children in GSRP.
- Children in the SSM Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program will attend 5 school day sessions per week, Monday-Friday.
- Children are expected to attend school on a regular basis.
- If a child must miss school, please notify the teacher with a reason for absence.
- There are times when it is appropriate for your child to miss school. If your child is sick, please do not send them to school.
- If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be called to come pick him/her up. If you cannot be reached the person you named as your emergency contact or named as other persons to be released to on the Child Information card will be contacted.

## **Schedule of Operation**

- Hours of Operation of the Staff: 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Hours of Operation for the Students: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Before/after care is available for students at rate of \$15/day.
- Each family is provided a program calendar prior to the first day of school. Refer to the calendar for information regarding the first day of school, last day of school, school breaks, or other days the classroom may not be open.
- School/Snow Day Cancellations: The Sault Cooperative Preschool will observe and comply with the Sault Area Public Schools in the event of weather or other natural disasters related closure. If the day seems questionable, please listen to the local radio broadcast or local television station and check our family Facebook page. Parents can safely assume the school is closed if the Sault Area Public Schools announce closure.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

- If you withdraw your child from the preschool, please provide notice in writing. We would like to recognize your child's involvement and participation in our program, and allow classmates time to say their goodbyes.

## **Notes/Messages**

- If you need to contact us during the school day, please call 906-632-9761.
- Administration questions or concerns can be emailed to the GSRP Administrator at saultcooperative@gmail.com.
- Administration and staff will share pictures of daily activities or important dates/reminders on the private family Facebook page, as well as in the cubby room on the white boards.

## **Daily Activities**

The daily routine is the order of the day's events, each with a specified amount of time. This schedule is the same every day, although time periods are occasionally altered due to special circumstances. Having a daily routine gives students a sense of control and allows them to work independently. In addition, the regular organization of the day's events helps them develop important concepts about sequence and duration. The concepts play a central role in early mathematics and scientific thinking.

### **Student Drop Off**

Each child must be signed in daily in the attendance log book. **It is vital in case of emergencies, (i.e. fire, etc.) that the attendance logs are accurate every class session.** Students should enter the cubby room and leave outdoor clothing/shoes and backpacks in their designated spot and then head up to their classroom.

### **Free Play/Small Groups (60+/- minutes)**

The kids will explore the activities that are out in the room, while learning to make their own decisions on what they want to do. Activities will include, but are not limited to: art project, science activities, books, sand/water play, small group activities lead by the teachers, gross motor play.

### **Carpet Time (30+/- minutes)**

Students will gather on the big rug on their designated areas, where they will see/do their job for the day, listen to a story, and have group discussion on the topic of the day.

### **Technology/Letter Practice (20+/- minutes)**

While snack is being prepped by the classroom assistant/or parent helper, the kids will do alphabet activities with the lead teacher on the computer.

### **Snack/Free choice (30-40+/- minutes)**

Snack is provided family style to the students. After they are done, they get to have free choice while the other children finish their snack and the teachers clean up.

### **Outdoor play/wrap up (30+/- minutes)**

Providing the weather is above 15°F according to the thermometer, the students will go outside for 30 minutes each day. There are days when this time is moved to earlier in the day to provide to get winter clothes on and still have time to play. They will have a mixture of free time and structured time. Please send your child to school with weather appropriate clothing. During the winter months, this means snow pants, boots, hats, mittens, and coats.

Times can vary with each class and group dynamics (i.e. age and size of class.)

Our teachers' welcome children to bring objects that can be used for learning experiences during the session. However, it is best to make arrangements in advance. Please refrain from bringing toys that are apt to cause a problem of possession, or very small things that are apt to get lost. **No guns, money, sharp objects, balloons, candy, gum or cookies are allowed.**

*\*Each teacher has a daily session plan which is available for viewing upon request.*

### **End of Day**

Each child must be signed out daily in the attendance log book. **Again, this is vital (in case of emergencies and/or end of day classroom checks) that the attendance logs are accurate.** Prior to dismissal, parents should check the class bulletin board in the coatroom and take all paperwork that is in your child's cubby tray. Please be on time to pick up your child, as the teachers and assisting parents need to clean the rooms and have the post-session discussion with the teacher. A teacher, or teachers assistant, will be in the hall to discuss plans or answer any questions you may have. The person picking up an enrolled child must be at least 16 years of age, unless the school has written permission on file from the parent or guardian. When you leave the building, be certain that only your child is leaving with you, as the road and parking lot are very close to the exit.

### **Rest/Quiet Time Policy**

- Students attending a school day program will participate in a rest/quiet time daily. Children will be provided with a mat/cot to lie on. Children will not be required to rest for more than one hour and alternate quiet activities will be provided for those children who do not sleep. Children who are sleeping

and do not wake up independently will be gently awakened using soft touches, opening of the blinds, and conversation. Children are expected to assist with putting away their sleeping mat.

## **Transportation Policy**

- The SSM Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program is a self-transport program. Students must be walked to and picked up from the cubby room/entryway inside the school by a parent/guardian.

## **Outdoor Exposure**

- Children who are in a school day program will receive a minimum of 60 minutes per day of physical outdoor activities. Outdoor time is held on a daily basis unless there is inclement weather or special circumstances. Children need to have weather appropriate clothing for participation in outdoor activities. Please refer to the *Daily Activities* section of this handbook.

## **Discipline/Guidance Policy**

- The Great Start Readiness Program uses discipline as a learning opportunity. As a result, we implement guidance that is caring, but firm. Consequences are short, consistent, immediate and logical. Emphasis is placed on providing affection, order, security, and unconditional positive regard for every child. Because a positive self-image is our main concern, any form of negative procedures or consequences will not be used. This includes shaming, threatening, depriving, or corporal punishment.
- Enrollment will not be denied and children will not be excluded based on challenging behavior, disability, or the need for individualized planning and intentional teaching.
- The adults in the GSRP classroom will assume the following roles:
  - Encourage children to do things for themselves
  - Treat conflict situations with children matter-of-factly
  - Approach children calmly and stop any hurtful actions
  - Acknowledge children's feelings
  - Teach conflict resolution strategies
  - Ask children for solutions and encourage them to solve the conflict together; and
  - Support children when they make decisions.

## **Tuition Policy**

For children who qualify for GSRP there is no tuition charge, and parents incur no cost for program elements such as any aspect of meal service including sending in snacks or meals from home. The program incurs the cost for individualization at meals unless changes are part of a special education Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

- Parents will be notified, in writing, of the tuition policy upon enrollment into the program.
- Parents will be notified of any changes to the tuition policy a minimum of 30 days prior to the change. Sub-recipients are not to make changes to the tuition policy without the approval of the EUPISD.

- All Head Start and GSRP policies and regulations are applied to the GSRP/Head Start blended slots, with the highest standard from either program adhered to. A Head Start program must not prescribe any fee schedule or otherwise provide for the charging of any fees for participation in the program (HSPS 1305.9). Therefore, children enrolled into the GSRP/Head Start Blend must not be charged tuition.
- In order to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements for a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and to comply with state law requiring special education services to start at birth, GSRP eligible children from over-income families who are enrolled and who also have an Individual Education Program (IEP) must not be charged tuition.
- Income is calculated at the time of enrollment.
- Parents with questions should begin at the sub-recipient level with the classroom teaching staff. If the question cannot be answered, the parents can refer to the grievance policy stated in the Parent Handbook.

## **Parent Involvement**

- EUPISD GSRP programs involve parents to the maximum extent possible, in ways that work best for the child and his/her family. Parents will be given many opportunities to become involved in their child's preschool experience. Opportunities include, but are not limited to, participation in local and regional advisory groups and data analysis teams, participation in the School Readiness Advisory Committee and Great Start Collaborative Board as well as direct involvement in the classroom by volunteering in the room or doing work outside of the classroom that contributes to the function of the program. Parents are invited to work with the teaching team on goal setting and to participate in home and center visits throughout the school year. Teaching teams will communicate with parents on a regular basis and maintain frequent and informal interactions with families to help strengthen the relationship between home and school.
- Additional information will be provided to parents upon enrollment.

## **Early Care and School Readiness Committee**

Parents are invited to be part of the region-wide committee that is responsible for quality early care (child care), kindergarten readiness efforts, and school age success through 3rd grade. The committee will be responsible for reviewing and making recommendations about:

- Collaboration with and involvement of community volunteer and/or social service organizations in addressing all aspects of educational disadvantage
- Partnership with the local GSC, Regional Resource Center, and others to build the capacity of local community agencies to promote school readiness.
- Collaborative recruitment and enrollment process to assure that each child is enrolled in the program most appropriate to his or her needs and to maximize the use of federal, state, and local funds
- Data analysis of early childhood programs to include; GSRP, Head Start (tribal & non), preschools, Great Parents/Great Start, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and Early On



- Curriculum alignment among programs
- Nutritional services utilizing federal, state and local food program support as applicable
- Health and developmental screening process
- Referrals to community social service agencies, as appropriate
- Parent involvement
- Classroom Coach and Child Outcome data
- Continuous improvement efforts
- Transition into preschool or kindergarten

This committee serves as the ISD-wide data analysis committee. This group will convene a minimum of three times per year and will consist of teachers, parents, administrators, community partners, and ISD early childhood staff.

### **Local Parent Advisory Groups**

- Another opportunity for parent involvement is the local GSRP parent advisory committee with a focus on local considerations, including recruitment/enrollment, Classroom Coach results and child outcome data. This committee minimally meets twice each program year. The committee has one parent representative for every 18 children enrolled in the program, with a minimum of two parents or guardians. The local GSRP parent advisory committee also has representation from the GSRP teaching staff and support of other GSRP administration. Parents who would like to be involved with the committee will be offered training and will help shape the future of the GSRP.

### **EUP Family Coalition**

- Great Start recognizes the importance of getting an early start to prevent unhealthy and unsafe conditions for children so that their future is brighter. The EUP Family Coalition voluntarily come together to work collaboratively and raise awareness of the importance of investing in a comprehensive early childhood system. This coalition is engaged in activities such as our School Readiness initiatives, fundraising and sustainability of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, Early Learning Scholarship and many other activities that promote children and families in our communities. Parents who would like to be involved with the committee will be offered training and will help shape the future of the GSRP.

### **School Readiness Advisory Committee**

- Parents can also become involved with the School Readiness Advisory Committee (SRAC). This committee meets two times per year, once in the fall and once in the spring. One of the tasks of the SRAC is to annually review and make recommendations about: 1. Collaboration with and involvement of community volunteer and/or social service organizations in addressing all aspects of educational disadvantage; 2. Partnership with the local GSC, Regional Resource Center, and others to build the capacity of local community agencies to take part in GSRP; 3. Collaborative recruitment and enrollment process to assure that each child is enrolled in the program most appropriate to his or her needs and to maximize the use of federal, state, and local funds; 4. The choice of an approved curriculum; 5. Nutritional services utilizing federal, state and local food program support as applicable; 6. Health and

developmental screening process; 7. Referrals to community social service agencies, as appropriate; 8. Parent involvement; 9. PQA and Child Outcome data; 10. Continuous improvement efforts, and 11. Transition into kindergarten. Parents who would like to be involved with the committee will be offered training and will help shape the future of the GSRP.

## **Home/Center Visits**

- Parents play an integral role in their child's development. A strong partnership between staff and families is crucial to a child's success. Families in the GSRP will participate in two home visits and two center visits during the program year. Visits help maintain an open communication between the staff and families. The initial home visit serves as an orientation opportunity for the child and parents and helps us get to know each other. Center visits are held a minimum of two times throughout the program year to discuss overall development, child strengths, areas of concern, and results of assessments. Parents are provided with activities to help foster kindergarten readiness. A final home visit will summarize the child's development and transition to kindergarten.

## **Transitions**

- SSM Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program recognizes the importance of supporting transitions from one program to another. Before a transition to a new program, the teaching staff will complete the *EUP Early Childhood Transition Form* alongside the child's family. This form will help inform the child's new program of his or her strengths, needs, supports and skills. The transition form will then be sent to the new program.

## **Assessments**

- All children attending Sault Cooperative Preschool are assessed for academic and development process. Results are shared with parents during parent-teacher conferences. Staff will complete an annual development screen on each child using the ASQ, or Ages & Stages Questionnaires. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year using the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment. These conferences aid in communication for goals and skill development through the year, addressing needs and developing child specific action plans, as well as preparation for kindergarten transitions. Using these tools, the teachers can better gear their lesson plans to address not only the individual children, but the classroom as a whole. Should any child need further assistance, Sault Cooperative Preschool will support the students and parents, and connect them with those who can offer further assistance.
- In addition to the in-class assessments, the state of Michigan will conduct annual hearing and vision tests with every student.

### **ASQ, or Ages & Stages Questionnaires:**

- This system includes a series of questionnaires designed to identify infants and young children who show potential development problems. Each questionnaire has specific questions that can be answered by the teacher, parent, caretaker, or nurse, which are used to determine whether the child is on target or needs further evaluation. All children are evaluated using this tool within the first 45 days of enrollment.

If a child is identified as needing further evaluation, your child's teacher will contact you to discuss the next steps.

### **Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment:**

- This is an authentic performance-based assessment tool. It is designed to help classroom teachers document and evaluate children's skills, knowledge, behaviors and accomplishments across a wide variety of curriculum areas on multiple occasions in order to enhance teaching and learning and to keep track of each child's individual achievement. Students are observed during their regular classroom activities and their progress is recorded with a checklist, portfolio collection and summary report.

### **Special Needs (*Please also refer to the Support for Children with Special needs section of the handbook.*)**

- The students will be assessed using the Teach Strategies GOLD. By doing so we will be able to see what areas we need to focus on as a classroom and as individuals. If assessment shows that outside resources/extra supports are needed, then the teachers will set up a meeting with the parents to make a plan for what extra supports need to be put into place. For children who enter the program with diagnosed special needs or disabilities, parents and additional supports will be utilized for staff training, ensuring all needs of the child are being met. A written plan will be in place covering additional resources or supports needed.
- We accommodate extra resources coming directly into the school, such as speech, to ensure children are receiving all the support they need. Parents will be notified, and visiting resource teachers will make regular visits to provide their services.
- Through the use of the Creative Curriculum®, the teachers adjust their teaching styles and activities to better fit each child and how they learn. This allows our teachers to better accommodate children with special needs within. Creative Curriculum allows children to explore and learn the way that fits their learning style, temperament, interests, gender, life experiences, and culture, which enables children with special needs to also thrive within our program.
- For more information about these assessments, please contact the lead teacher.

### **Parent Notice of Program Measurement\***

- This GSRP is required to work with the MiLEAP (MiLEAP) to measure the effect of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). Information is sometimes collected about GSRP staff, enrolled children, and their families. Program staff or a representative from MiLEAP might: • Ask parents questions about their child and family. • Observe children in the classroom. • Measure what children know about letters, words, and numbers, etc. Ask teachers how children are learning and growing. Information from you and your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law. Questions? Please contact: Cara LaFaver, [clafaver@eupschools.org](mailto:clafaver@eupschools.org), (906)632-3373 ext 5113 the MiLEAP Office of Great Start, Early Childhood Education and Family Services, at MiLEAP-gsrp@michigan.gov, 517-373-8483, or 608 W. Allegan, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909.

### **Staff/Volunteers**

- The GSRP teacher is employed by SSM Cooperative Preschool. The lead teacher is highly qualified as outlined by the Great Start Readiness Program grant.
- Staff are fingerprinted to ensure that they have no criminal history.
- Teaching assistants meet the requirements of the MiLEAP.
- All staff are cleared to work with children using the Child Care Background Check program. Only those found to be “eligible” in the system will be employed.
- A staff member will not be employed if he or she has been convicted of child abuse/neglect or a felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual within 10 years immediately preceding the date of hire.
- Parents and Volunteers shall not have unsupervised contact with children within the Great Start Readiness Program. Volunteers will be supervised by employed staff at all times.

## **Staff Training**

- Staff within the SSM Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program have current certification in infant, child, and adult CPR and First Aid. Staff complete training on blood-borne pathogens. In addition to CPR, first aid, and blood-borne pathogen training all staff complete a minimum of 16 hours of additional training each year. Training topics include child development, curriculum, literacy, social-emotional development, child discipline, health/safety, nutrition, working with parents, and licensing rules.

## **Abuse/Neglect**

- Staff at the SSM Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program is aware that abuse and neglect of children is against the law. As teachers/child advocates we are required by Child Protection Law to immediately report suspected abuse and neglect of children to Children's Protective Services. The staff reviews the Child Abuse and Neglect reporting procedures annually.

## **Child Custody Policy**

- In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (i.e., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) the Great Start Readiness Program must be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.
- In the absence of a court order on file with the Great Start Readiness Program, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Great Start Readiness Program cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, the Great Start Readiness Program suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent’s right to immediate access.

## **Concerns about Child Development**

- The program will provide accommodations, resources and/or supports for children, families, and staff with disabilities.
- If a parent has concerns about their child’s development, they should begin by contacting the lead teacher. After discussions, the parents and the teaching team will develop a plan for addressing the concerns. This plan may include teacher-parent goal setting, aligned plans between school and home and frequent review of child data and progress.
- If the teaching staff and parents feel it is needed, the lead teacher will initiate the Response to Intervention process. A written referral for observation or evaluation will be written with the family.
- If further interventions are needed, a team will be formed to discuss how to best meet the child’s needs. The team may include: parents, the teachers, the building principal or agency head, the EUPISD Early Childhood Specialist, or other special education staff. The team will work together to learn more about the delay and what supports and services will best meet child and family needs.
- Accommodations to classroom routines, environment, lesson plans, etc. will be made to fit the needs of the child. If the team determines that staff outside the classroom staff are needed (i.e., speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, social work) the child can receive services within the classroom setting.
- If a child is already receiving services for a disability, the GSRP staff will join the IEP team and continue services.
- Families will be provided with information and will have a place on the team to help determine the best course of action. Supports, such as visual schedules and/or social stories will be provided to parents for use at home, if they would like them to help maintain consistency between home and school.
- For information about referring your child for a developmental evaluation visit: [www.buildupmi.org](http://www.buildupmi.org)

## **Support for Children with Special Needs**

**GOAL:** To ensure that SSM Cooperative Preschool provides a comprehensive, least restrictive learning environment that is inclusive of all children with identified disabilities and children who require additional help or support because of behavioral, health, or developmental issues.

- ***Importance of Plan***  
Early intervention with high-quality services can change a child’s developmental trajectory and result in later success in school, work, and the community. When children who have developmental disabilities—or are at risk for them—receive early and timely intervention, they show positive changes in health, language and communication, cognitive development, and social and emotional development. This written plan is intended to ensure that each child and family can receive the support they need as early as possible.

This plan will provide the explicit support and guidance that new and seasoned staff will need to ensure that all children are afforded the most optimal learning environment and opportunities.

### ***Tools, resources, and actions to meet the goal***

SSM Cooperative Preschool implements written guidance to support the inclusion of preschool children throughout the program. This guidance includes staff and family handbooks, feedback forms, and

individual child planning forms that share the importance of inclusion, as well as best practices for all children. If a parent has concerns about their child's development, they should begin by contacting the lead teacher and the teaching team will partner with the family to develop a written plan for addressing the concerns. The plan may include teacher-parent goal setting around routines, such as arrival/departure, meal, and rest accommodations, aligned plans between school and home, and frequent meetings to review child data and progress. Assessments may include but are not limited to: Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the Child Observation Record. Ages & Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition (ASQ-3) is a developmental screening tool designed for use by early educators and health care professionals. It relies on parents as experts, is easy-to-use, family-friendly, and creates the snapshot needed to catch delays and celebrate milestones. The ASQ-3 is used yearly and as needed throughout the year.

All children and families are made to feel welcome and supported. SSM Cooperative Preschool uses additional tools, such as the Conscious Discipline approach, to create a positive classroom community to ensure that all children feel accepted, loved, and supported by staff and peers. Program staff teach children about differences and acceptance by creating a community in which all children and families are valued. Staff actively model kindness, positive social communication, and problem-solving strategies, as well as use social stories to explicitly teach acceptance and empathy skills. SSM Cooperative Preschool introduces a working concept of diversity into the classroom, while empowering children by giving them the tools to foster confident and knowledgeable self-identities, empathetic interactions, and critical thinking skills. Children in the classroom are supported to treat and interact with all peers using empathy and problem-solving skills.

If the lead instructor and the parent feel that further evaluation is needed to better support the child, the lead instructor will initiate the Response to Intervention process. A referral for observation or evaluation will be written by the family. If further interventions are determined, a team will be formed to discuss how to best meet the child's needs. The team may include: parents, instructional staff, administration, the EUPISD Early Childhood Specialist, or other special education staff. The team will work together to learn more about the delay and best practices surrounding the delay and what supports and services will best meet child and family needs. Accommodations to classroom routines, environments, meal plan/menus, lesson plans, etc. will be made to fit the needs of the child. If the team determines that staff outside the classroom staff are needed (i.e. speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, social work) the child can receive services within the classroom setting. If the child is already receiving services for a disability, the staff will join the IEP team to continue and support services. Families will be provided with information on a daily basis and will have a place on the team to help determine the best course of action. Supports, such as visual schedules and/or social stories will be provided to parents for use as home, if they would like them, to help maintain consistency between home and school. For information about referring your child for a developmental evaluation visit: [www.buildupmi.org](http://www.buildupmi.org)

## **Grievance Policy**

- If a parent has a concern about their child, the classroom, or the program, the concern should be discussed with the teaching team. If a solution is not agreed upon, the parents should contact the SSM Cooperative Preschool GSRP Administrator. The Early Childhood Preschool Administrator and/or the Early Childhood Director can become involved if concerns are not met satisfactorily. Parents are welcome to contact the Early Childhood Preschool Administrator at the Intermediate School District to discuss any program concerns. The phone number is (906)632-3373 ext. 5113.

## **Multi-culture and Diversity in the Learning Environment**

**GOAL:** All educators in the GSRP will accept the legitimacy of children's home language, respect the home culture, and promote and encourage the active involvement and support of all families, including extended and nontraditional family units. The center also recognizes that family structures can look different and can be affected by family socioeconomic status, family composition, parent's level of educational attainment, abilities of children and family members, family's immigration status, family's religion, family's home and preferred languages, parent's sexual orientation, and the way that a family classifies its race and ethnicity.

- The SSM Cooperative Preschool program uses various mediums to show differences in families and cultures. Materials in the classroom are developmentally appropriate, clean, safe, foster learning and are to reflect the home and community cultures and special needs of children in the program. Materials depict a wide range of non-stereotyped role models and cultures. Various home and community cultures are used in the classroom, and reflect children's interests, parental hobbies, employment and community traditions. We have an assortment of books and puzzles, and the dramatic play areas have ethnic dolls, food from varied cultures, dress up clothing representing different ages, gender, professions and ethnicities.
- Staff attends training throughout the year to further their education in areas of cultural competence and special needs. We have made it an integral part of our program for all children to feel accepted and comfortable in the classroom with their peers, as well as in the school. This includes their parents, family and other cooperative members. No matter their culture, special needs or circumstances, children should feel welcome, safe and confident within the class, and be able to identify themselves in lessons, books, role play, and dramatic play. Furthermore, their families should see their child is well represented and supported.
- Children in GSRP are given the opportunity to learn about art, music, drama, and dance from different cultures. Field trips are designed to give children a wide range of experiences.
- Approximately 35% of children in the Eastern Upper Peninsula are Native American. GSRP works to embrace the rich Native American history and culture.
- When children or families have needs outside the scope of the center's abilities, they are given resources to help support them. A resource guide is available to all families. The guide contains information to help families know where to call when extra support is needed.

## **Program Evaluation**

- To ensure classroom quality, GSRP is evaluated once every three years by an Early Childhood Consultant using the Classroom Coach tool provided by the State of Michigan. In subsequent years, coaching is provided. The Early Childhood Consultant is employed through the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District.

## **Health Care Plan**

- Children's general health will be assessed upon arrival daily. If a child shows any sign of illness, he/she will be evaluated further and staff will determine if a parent needs to be called. Minor illnesses will be reported when they occur.
- The social and emotional health and well-being of children and staff in SSM Cooperative Preschool Great Start Readiness Program is of the utmost importance. To monitor the social and emotional health and well-being of children in the program, staff focus on recognizing, labeling, and validating children's emotions while helping them learn appropriate strategies to regulate them. Staff also take a whole-child approach to teaching and observation, taking great care in daily assessment of children's mood, temperament, communication, and needs and responding as appropriate. If daily observation indicates that further assessment is warranted, then staff will utilize the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional* screening tool.

## **Hand Washing Procedures**

Hands MUST be washed to avoid spread of illnesses and other infectious diseases. Below are times when hand washing is required while working/volunteering in this facility:

- Before handling food items, after personal bathroom use, helping a child with toileting, dealing with own/and or others bodily fluids (saliva, tissue discharges, blood containing bodily fluids, and other potentially infectious fluids).
1. Have a clean, disposable paper or single use cloth towel available.
  2. Water temperature should be between 60 degrees and 120 degrees F.
  3. Hands should be moistened with water and applied with soap.
  4. Rub hands vigorously together until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 20 seconds.
  5. Rub all areas of the hands- fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, jewelry, and back of hands.
  6. Rinse hands under running water until they are free of soap and dirt.
  7. Dry hands with clean, disposable paper towel provided.
  8. Dispose of the single service towel in a lined trash container provided.

A common-sense approach will help in the prevention of spreading many communicable and non-communicable illnesses. Appropriate hygiene and sanitation practices are required while working with young children and other adults.

## **Handling bodily fluids**

- Staff is required to have blood borne pathogen training, and must comply with the universal precautions



when there is a potential exposure to blood. Blood-borne pathogen kits are located in each classroom, and rubber gloves are available for use by our volunteers. Staff members will assist and take over any duties when a potential of exposure is present. This facility also utilizes sanitizing and disinfecting kits for other bodily fluid exposure (urine, feces, vomit). Teachers will have the primary responsibility in cleaning such exposures.

## **Cleaning and Sanitizing**

- Staff and parents will follow basic steps in cleaning and sanitization of all hard surfaces.
- All utensils and containers used for snack, that are non-disposable, will be washed using a dishwasher, and set at the “sanitizing” option of cleaning.
- All tables will be washed prior to snack and after snack, and any time needed during the sessions. Commercial sanitizers are available, and need to be used according to the manufacturer’s instructions. When commercial sanitizers are not available, sanitizing solutions will be used. Sanitizing solutions will consist of the following:
  - Water and unscented chlorine bleach with a concentration of bleach between 50-200 parts per million (1 tablespoon to ¼ cup of bleach per gallon of water). Test strips must be used to check the concentration of the bleach/water solution. This solution **MUST** be made fresh daily.
  - Bleach being used for items that may be put in children’s mouths **MUST** have bleach being used with an EPA number indicating an approval for food sanitizing.

Additional health care information on hand washing, sanitizing, and handling bodily fluids can be obtained at the Chippewa County Health Department. Other information, such as prevention of communicable diseases and signs and symptoms, can be obtained by the local health department, as well as the Michigan Department of Community Health: [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare); [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov); [www.michigan.gov/immunize](http://www.michigan.gov/immunize). The Center of Disease Control (CDC) recommendations on immunizations can be obtained from their website ([www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)).

## **Controlling Infection, Including Universal Precautions**

- In order to prevent the transmission of HIV (Aids), Hepatitis B and other blood borne pathogens, SSM Cooperative Preschool will use universal precautions. Universal precautions are defined as: Guidelines designed to protect workers with occupational exposure to blood borne pathogens. Medical examination does not always identify all people infected with HIV or Hepatitis B, or other blood borne pathogens, therefore, SSM Cooperative Preschool will consider all blood and body fluids infectious and will follow the following universal precautions as pertaining to school environments when coming into contact with blood or bodily fluids:
  1. Gloves will be worn for contact with blood, body fluids, mucous membranes, or open wounds, and for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids. Approved latex or vinyl gloves should be worn. Gloves are never to be washed and reused.
  2. Hands and other skin areas must be washed thoroughly if contact with blood or body fluids. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed.

3. Saliva is not considered by the Center for Disease Control to transmit HIV but it is a body fluid and mouth-to-mask ventilation devices will be available for resuscitation and shall be used by trained personnel.
4. Designated First Aid caregivers shall be required to attend or review video material on the following yearly:
  - a) Universal precautions
  - b) HIV/HBV infections/transmissions
  - c) Handling of infectious waste

## **Exclusion Policy**

- Children will be excluded from the program if there are injuries or contagious illnesses that endanger the health and/or safety of others. Children will not be excluded because of the need for additional support, assistance with toileting, or disabilities.

## **Health Related Resources**

The following is a list of resources available for preschool staff and parents who have questions concerning health related topics:

Comprehensive School Health Unit

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

[www.michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs)

Centers for Disease Control

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Michigan Childhood Immunization Registry

[www.mcir.org](http://www.mcir.org)

(888) 243-6652

Teacher's Resources

[www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2.htm](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2.htm)

Kids Health

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

## **Illness/Injury/Accident Protocol**

### **CHILD ILLNESS**

Please do not bring your child to the preschool if you think he/she may have a contagious illness. Children that have been ill during the night, or early in the morning, should stay at home. A child should also stay home if she/he does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the school activities. The staff cannot adequately care for the sick without compromising the care of other children.

### **A child is too sick to attend school if they have any of the following symptoms:**

- Fever: Above 100 degrees F taken under the arm, or 101 degrees F taken orally.
- Signs or symptoms of possible severe illness: sore throat with fever and swollen glands, earache, eye

discharge, yellowish skin or eyes, persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled or severe coughing (child gets red or blue in the face or makes a high-pitched whooping sound after coughing), difficulty breathing, wheezing, confusion or unexplained lethargy.

- Diarrhea: Changes from the child's usual stool pattern with increased frequency of stools; runny, watery or bloody stools, or child cannot get to the bathroom in time.
- Vomiting: More than two (2) times in the last 24 hours.
- Rash: With a fever or behavior change.

*Exposure to contagious diseases must be made known to the teacher immediately for the protection of others. Notice of the exposure (name excluded) will be put on the class bulletin board in the main entry.*

**A child is too sick to attend school if they have any of the following diagnoses from a health provider, and may not return until treated and/or are no longer contagious:**

- Infectious Conjunctivitis/Pinkeye: With eye discharge that is yellow, white, or green. Return possible 24 hours after treatment has started.
- Impetigo: Child may return 24 hours after treatment has begun and no longer has a discharge.
- Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever, or Other Strep Infections: Child must stay home until 24 hours after treatment has started and the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours.
- Scabies, Head Lice and Other Infestations: Child must stay home until 24 hours after appropriate treatment and is free of infestation.
- Chickenpox: Child may return six (6) days after the rash begins, or when all blisters have formed scabs.

*Exposure to infectious diseases must be made known to the teacher immediately for the protection of others. Notice of the exposure (name excluded) will be put on the class bulletin board in the main entry.*

Source: The ABCs of Safe and Healthy Child Care: A Handbook for Child Care Providers, DHHS, USPHS, CDC, 1996.

## **CARE OF ILL CHILDREN**

**When a child becomes ill with any of the symptoms noted above or an injury which requires parental attention while at school, these are the procedures which will be followed:**

1. Staff member will try to comfortably isolate the child in an area where the child can be supervised.
2. Staff member will immediately contact the parent/guardian, who will be requested to pick up the child as soon as possible
3. Toys, toilet and sink used by an ill individual will be appropriately cleaned before being used by other children. The preschool complies with FIA regulations on disposal of blood resulting from an accident.

A first-aid kit(s) is available in each of the bathrooms in the classrooms as well as in the office. First-aid kit(s) are also taken on field trips

## **Disclaimer**

- The preschool will take the necessary precautions to contain and prevent the spread of contagious

illnesses or diseases. However, the preschool cannot guarantee that contagious illnesses or diseases will be completely contained, or will not be spread to other children. Parents must recognize that, while at preschool, it is possible that the child may be exposed to a contagious illness or disease.

### **Contacting Parents**

- Immediately upon learning of a child's serious injury or medical condition, the teacher will turn over the direction of the class to the assistant teacher. The teacher will then stay with the child until the arrival of the parent, emergency contact, or medical personnel. The teacher will ask the teacher assistant to call the child's parents, using the list posted by the phone. The teacher assistant will also pull the child's emergency information sheet from the file so it is ready if needed. If the child's parents are not available, the designated emergency contact will be called. If the parents or emergency contacts cannot be located, we will call the child's physician and follow their instructions. This may include transporting the child to an emergency room or a doctor's office.

### **Accident Report**

- In the case of serious accidents (requiring immediate and/or subsequent medical attention), an accident report is to be filled out as soon as possible by the teacher, with input from witnesses where appropriate. A copy will be given to the child's parents, will be placed in the child's file in the classroom, and also will be sent to MACCP for insurance purposes.
- For minor accidents (scrapes, slivers, bumps, etc.), the teacher will give the parent an informal verbal report at pick-up time, with further discussion later if needed. At the after-class debriefing, the teacher will review the day's events, including any accidents that occurred. In the event of any concerns over the teacher's handling of an incident, the parent(s) and teacher should communicate directly with each other (following the school's grievance procedure). If necessary, the GSRP Administrator may mediate the discussion.

### **Administration of Medication to Students**

- Medication including: prescription drugs, over the counter drugs, or individual special medical procedures, must be administered by the parent or guardian. The teaching staff is not permitted to administer any form of medication or medical procedure.

### **Nutrition Policy**

- GSRP has a nutrition plan in place in order to help children get the nourishment and energy they need to learn and grow by providing healthy foods and by supporting families in choosing healthy foods for their child(ren). In addition, preschoolers who eat a variety of healthy foods and play actively several times every day are less likely to be overweight or obese. SSM Cooperative Preschool balances healthy eating with extended opportunities for children and staff to be active throughout the day and strives to educate staff, children, and families on the importance of being healthy, both physically and mentally.
- The Great Start Readiness Program follows the guidelines of the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Community and Health Systems Child Care Licensing Division. Foods served reflect the home and community cultures and are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar,

and salt. Parents who choose to send a snack or meal to school with their child should take into consideration the nutritional value of the foods they choose and should include foods that are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt. A list of recommended foods will be sent home to be used as a guide for choosing foods that support healthy growth and development. If parents choose to send in a special occasion food, it is asked that consideration be given to special needs diets and allergies. Please check with the teacher before choosing a food item. Snacks/meals are provided free of charge to the eligible GSRP children. Parents are required to complete a free and reduced lunch form.

- Menus are posted in the school entryway and on the family Facebook page.
- If your child has food allergies or the need for a special diet, please provide the staff with a written plan from your child's doctor.
- Food served in GSRP is prepared in a licensed kitchen.
- Meals are served Family-style and children are encouraged to serve themselves and eat a well-balanced meal.
- Classrooms are equipped with drinking fountains or cups for water are provided so that children have access to water throughout the day.
- Staff in GSRP model healthy eating and active movement so that children can observe healthy eating but also so that they fuel their bodies with the right combination of healthy foods in order to stay healthy. In turn, this provides a more consistent care for children because staff have better attendance when they aren't ill frequently.

### **Smoking/Drug/Alcohol Policy**

- Smoking tobacco, consuming alcohol, vaping and/or using/possessing illegal drugs are prohibited in and outside of the preschool at all times, including field trips.

### **Fire/Tornado/Lock-down Drill**

- Fire drills are a necessary precaution for safety.
  1. There will be no warning signal. As the bell sounds, all students should form a line ready for exiting.
  2. No Talking.
  3. Move quickly without running.
  4. Go where directed
- Lock-down drills will be conducted at least twice per school year. When in "lock-down" only law enforcement and emergency personnel will be permitted to enter or exit the building.
- Tornado drills will be conducted at least twice per school year. Students are to follow classroom instructions and remain silent while the drill is taking place.

### **Fire, Tornado/Severe Weather, and Natural or Man-Made Disaster Emergency Plans**

- Written plans for emergency situations are posted inside the center/classroom. Parents may obtain a copy upon request.
- When a drill occurs at school, parents will be notified by written communication that the practice event took place.
- In the event of an actual fire, lock-down, tornado/severe weather, natural or other man-made disaster event occurs, parents will be notified of the event as soon as it is safe to do so. If phone lines are unavailable, the staff will attempt to make contact with the parents via other forms of communication such as internet, radio and television.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **1. Life-threatening Emergencies**

- A. One staff member trained in CPR and First Aid stays with injured/ill child applying CPR and/or first Aid if needed.
  - B. One Staff member will call 911. For poison control 1-800-222-1212.
  - C. As soon as possible, contact the parent/guardian.
- If the child is taken to the hospital by car, and a parent has not yet been contacted or arrived, one staff member will accompany him/her with the child's Emergency Information Form.
  - If parents or other guardian cannot be contacted in the case of a life-threatening emergency, the Sault Ste. Marie Cooperative Preschool and Hospital Officials will be in charge of making crucial decisions as authorized by the Emergency Information Form.

### **2. Minor Emergencies**

- A. Staff trained in CPR and First Aid will take appropriate steps referring to emergency and first aid manuals as needed.
  - B. Incidents will be recorded on an Injury/Illness form in the classroom where the child is enrolled by a staff member who was present.
  - C. The incident shall be reported to the parent when the parent picks up the child that same day at the preschool. The parent will be expected to sign the Injury/Illness form, thus indicating his/her awareness of the incident. The Injury/ Illness form shall be kept in the child's file in the Preschool Office.
  - D. The incident shall be recorded in the Preschool's Accident/Illness & Medication log kept in the office.
- Parents are required to keep emergency information updated to reduce delays in providing emergency care for their child.

## **WHEN TO CALL 911**

- The teacher will call 9-1-1 under the following circumstances (or others that she deems life-threatening): seizure; respiratory distress (blue around lips, unresolved choking); cardiovascular event

(no breathing, no heartbeat); or head injury with altered consciousness; or other major traumas. Other accidents for which parents will be called (but not 9-1-1) include: apparent broken bones, head injury without loss of consciousness; severe cuts, bleeding, or bruising; fainting; rapid or labored breathing; severe wheezing; and other situations deemed serious by the teacher. The parent gives permission to the preschool to call 911 in the event of a serious emergency. Any costs or charges incurred for 911 emergencies are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian.