

Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Readiness Program Parent Handbook



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Mission Statement

The Great Start Readiness Program's (GSRP) purpose is to provide an atmosphere that encourages social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and creative growth and development of the child. The program follows the guidelines within that of the GSRP, and the State of Michigan's daycare licensing, to ensure the best overall learning experience for the child as a whole.

Program Philosophy

The Great Start Readiness Program believes that each child is unique, each contributing their own special set of interests, needs, and abilities. We strive to meet each child's emotional, social, intellectual, and physical development. We feel children learn best in a caring and creative learning environment. Patience, sharing, responsibility, and teamwork are practiced through participating in the daily routine of GSRP.

Curriculum

HighScope Curriculum is a state-approved curriculum for GSRP, meeting the Standards of Quality and Curriculum guidelines the State of Michigan has set forth. In HighScope's vision of preschool education, children are doers and problem solvers, and adults are partners who share in children's discoveries and gently guide their learning. We call this approach active participatory learning. Young children build or "construct" knowledge of the world — finding out how the world works through direct experience with people, objects, events, and ideas. The HighScope® Preschool Curriculum is built around 58 developmental milestones called key developmental indicators (KDIs) in 8 curriculum content areas that are closely aligned with state and professional standards. The KDIs define what we teach; the hows are provided by our teaching practices for the classroom learning environment, daily routine, and adult-child interaction. HighScope Curriculum for Preschool is based on five fundamental principles. They guide practice and help us understand the reasons for intentionally setting up and operating preschool programs in particular ways.

These are the five principles:

- Positive interactions and relationships with adults provide a critical foundation for successful learning.
- Social-Emotional competence is a significant factor for school success.
- Constructive, purposeful play supports essential learning.
- The physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions.
- Teacher-family partnerships promote development and learning.

Developmental Screening

GSRP uses the Ages and Stages 3; an approved developmental screening tool, with every child enrolled. GSRP staff will discuss results with parents. If there are concerns in any area, a referral may be made to a therapist who has specialized training and who may be able to provide parents and staff with ideas for strengthening the child's skills. Referrals will never be made without parental permission. Referrals may be

made for small muscle movements or sensory issues (occupational therapy), speech and language development (speech therapy), large muscle movements (physical therapy), and/or a child's ability to manage strong emotions and behavior and get along with others (school social workers or behavior specialists).

Child Assessment

COR Advantage is the approved Child Assessment tool in all Delta and Schoolcraft County GSRP classrooms. *COR Advantage* can be used to support all types of learners, including children with special needs and children with advanced knowledge and skills.

COR Advantage is an observation-based instrument which provides for the systematic assessment of young children's knowledge and abilities in six broad categories of child development. It is both a valid and reliable child assessment that measures the developmental trajectory of all children, from birth through kindergarten, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities. *COR Advantage* focuses on children's naturally occurring activities rather than their performance on tests, allowing for a broader assessment of each child's development. A comprehensive assessment like *COR Advantage* can show teachers and parents where a child's strengths are as well as areas to focus more attention on getting ready for kindergarten.

The *COR Advantage* 9 Categories of Assessment are:

- Approaches to Learning
- Social Emotional Development
- Physical Development & Health
- Language, Literacy, & Communication
- Mathematics
- Creative Arts
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies
- English Language Learners (Optional)

Standards

GSRP is licensed by the Bureau of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs in the State of Michigan and complies with all of the standards put forth by that department. Its operation is governed by the State of Michigan's At Risk Preschool Program and meets or exceeds their guidelines. GSRP is also *licensed* through the State of Michigan and has to follow the same rules as a childcare facility.

Program Measurement

GSRP is required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to measure the effect of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program. Information is sometimes collected about the GSRP staff, enrolled children, and their families. Program staff or a representative from MDE might:

- Ask parents questions about their child or family

- Observe children in the classroom
- Measure what children know about letters, words, or numbers
- Ask teachers how children are learning and growing

Information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child would be identified. **IT IS PROTECTED BY LAW.**

Questions? Contact mde-gsrp@michigan.gov or 517-373-8483 or MDE, Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services, 608 W. Allegan, P.O. Box 30008 Lansing, and MI 48909

Student Selection & Placement

The enrollment process begins with a joint registration through the Delta-Schoolcraft ISD and Menominee Delta Schoolcraft Community Action Agency (MDSCAA). Parents are notified of registration via public announcements, school newsletters, billboards, websites and social media. Parents fill out a preliminary application and have an interview with GSRP/Early Childhood program staff.

During the months of July and August, completed applications with documentation are reviewed and given priority based on income and other factors of potential risk to school success. All families are considered to be on a waitlist until final determinations can be made on placement. Families are notified of acceptance by email, phone or mail. Any remaining candidates remain on the waiting list and efforts are made to place them at other sites as available. Waitlist families may look for alternate high quality child care or preschool by going to www.greatstarttoquality.org. All parents are encouraged to seek information on how to help their child get ready for kindergarten at www.great-start.org.

All applications are processed at the site in which they are received. Placement with a program will be based on each family's individual situation and allow for the maximum amount of children placed in a program. Family income is the most determinant factor for eligibility for GSRP.

- Families under 300% poverty must NOT be charged tuition (Includes all GSRP/Head Start blend families)
- Families in which the GSRP child has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) documenting services needed for success in the classroom must NOT be charged tuition.

Household Size	Quintile #1 Federal Poverty Level* 1 - 50%			Quintile #2 Federal Poverty Level* 51 - 100%			Quintile #3 Federal Poverty Level* 101 - 150%			Quintile #4 Federal Poverty Level* 151 - 200%			Quintile #5 Federal Poverty Level* 201 - 250%			Quintile #6 Federal Poverty Level* 251 - 300%		
	ANNUAL MAXIMUM	MONTHLY MAXIMUM	WEEKLY MAXIMUM	ANNUAL MAXIMUM	MONTHLY MAXIMUM	WEEKLY MAXIMUM	ANNUAL MAXIMUM	MONTHLY MAXIMUM	WEEKLY MAXIMUM	ANNUAL MAXIMUM	MONTHLY MAXIMUM	WEEKLY MAXIMUM	ANNUAL MAXIMUM	MONTHLY MAXIMUM	WEEKLY MAXIMUM	ANNUAL MAXIMUM	MONTHLY MAXIMUM	WEEKLY MAXIMUM
1	7,290	608	141	14,580	1,215	281	21,870	1,823	421	29,160	2,430	561	36,450	3,038	701	43,740	3,645	842
2	9,860	822	190	19,720	1,644	380	29,580	2,465	569	39,440	3,287	759	49,300	4,109	949	59,160	4,930	1,138
3	12,430	1,036	240	24,860	2,072	479	37,290	3,108	718	49,720	4,144	957	62,150	5,180	1,196	74,580	6,215	1,435
4	15,000	1,250	289	30,000	2,500	577	45,000	3,750	866	60,000	5,000	1,154	75,000	6,250	1,443	90,000	7,500	1,731
5	17,570	1,465	338	35,140	2,929	676	52,710	4,393	1,014	70,280	5,857	1,352	87,850	7,321	1,690	105,420	8,785	2,028
6	20,140	1,679	388	40,280	3,357	775	60,420	5,035	1,162	80,560	6,714	1,550	100,700	8,392	1,937	120,840	10,070	2,324
7	22,710	1,893	437	45,420	3,785	874	68,130	5,678	1,311	90,840	7,570	1,747	113,550	9,463	2,184	136,260	11,355	2,621
8	25,280	2,107	487	50,560	4,214	973	75,840	6,320	1,459	101,120	8,427	1,945	126,400	10,534	2,431	151,680	12,640	2,917
For each additional family member add	2,570	214	49	5,140	428	99	7,710	643	149	10,280	857	198	12,850	983	248	15,420	1,285	297

Admissions

- For admission contact the Great Start Readiness Program to see if your family qualifies according to guidelines set by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). If more families apply than there is space available, children with the greatest need (per the MDE guidelines) will be admitted first. Children with the greatest need will then fill subsequent openings.
- Children must live in the Delta or Schoolcraft County in Michigan or have prior approval from DSISD before acceptance.
- Children in the 4 year-old program must be at least four years of age, and less than five years of age, by September 1. Children who turn 4 between September 2 and December 1 can be considered for enrollment after September 1 if there are still openings and the regional eligibility and enrollment processes are followed. A copy of a birth certificate or other proof of age is required.

Nondiscrimination Policy

- 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 (chickenpox) 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.
- Additional items may be requested as evidence of the Michigan Department of Education'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)

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 Three Lakes Academy 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 Great Start Readiness Program will remain confidential and not be disclosed to parties other than Small Wonders Great Start Readiness Program staff members and the Michigan Department of Education 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 Small Wonders Great Start Readiness Program will attend 4 school day sessions per week, Monday-Thursday.
- Children are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Excessive absences may result in termination from the program.
- 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: 8:00 a.m to 3:45 p.m.
- Hours of Operation for the Students:
 - 8:30 a.m - 3:30 p.m.
- Beginning and end of program:
 - September 11, 2023- Students' First Day of School
 - May 16th, 2024- Students' Last Day of School
- School/Snow Day Cancellations: Please check local news and radio stations for weather related school closings.

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. A child may no longer be included in the program if:

- They have excessive absences
- They do not meet the health/licensing requirements by the required deadlines
- The parent fails to follow program policies
- A team including the teaching staff, parents and administrators believe that there is a more appropriate setting the child can transition to

Notes/Messages

- Your child will have a daily folder in his or her backpack that contains daily work. Please review the documents at the end of the day.
- If you need to contact us during the school day, please call (906) 786-9300 (ext. 311) and leave a message. Teachers avoid answering the phone during class hours so the focus can be on your child. If you have an emergency, please call the main office.

Daily Schedule of Activities

8:25-8:30 a.m Arrival/Sign In

8:30-8:45 a.m Breakfast

8:45-8:55 a.m Large Group Time

8:55-9:00 a.m Morning Message

9:00-9:10 a.m Planning Time

9:10-10:10 a.m Work Time

10:10-10:20 Clean Up Time

10:20-10:30 a.m Recall Time

10:30-10:50 a.m. Small Group Time

10:50-11:30 a.m Outside Time

11:30-11:40 a.m Bathroom/Wash hands/Prepare for Lunch

11:40-12:15 p.m Lunch/Brush Teeth

12:15-12:45 p.m Quiet/Resting Time

12:45-1:00 p.m Reading Buddies on Mondays/Story Time

1:00-1:45 p.m Work Time

1:45-1:55 p.m Clean Up

1:55-2:15 p.m Small Group Time

2:15-2:20 p.m Wash Hands for Snack

2:20-2:35 p.m Snack

2:35-2:45 p.m Prep for Outside & Dismissal

2:45-3:25 Outside Time

3:25-3:30 Parent Pick-up

Rest/Quiet Time Policy

Students attending a school day program will participate in a rest/quiet time daily. Children will be provided with a 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 Small Wonders Great Start Readiness Program will not have bussing. Please walk your child directly to the classroom door.

Outdoor Play and 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.

Inclement Weather Reminders

Local media stations will carry notices of school closings. You can also look online at the school social media or website for notices, if possible. Should severe weather conditions develop during class time, you may be asked to make arrangements to pick up your child or plan for an early bus drop.

Extra Clothing

Please send a change of clothes including underwear and socks in a gallon size Ziploc type plastic bag with your child's name on it (Head Start Blend Programs provide these for families). It will be stored in your child's locker, cubby, or backpack. Even if your child RARELY has a bathroom accident, other types of spills, messes, and unexpected events may require a change of clothing.

Dress and Supplies

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and tennis shoes (flip flops and high heels are NOT recommended). Daily activities include active and **messy** play and the children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. The child's name should be placed on all outdoor clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all the personal possessions. The only supply that is required is a backpack, without wheels and LARGE enough to transport the communication folder and projects home. Please send it EVERYDAY. If you do not have the means to provide a backpack, please inform your teacher.

Discipline/Conflict Resolution Policy

The GSRP philosophy is rooted in the understanding that children learn best through positive and meaningful experiences. Teaching staff guide children to help them learn to collaborate with their peers and to enhance their growth and development.

Staff will be as consistent as possible with classroom expectations so that the children will know what is expected of them and to help foster successful social interactions. From time-to-time in every preschool classroom, there are conflicts between children. It is a natural part of being in community and teaching staff has been trained to fully support a conflict resolution process with children. Respectful communication is modeled in order to foster a collaborative learning community and to keep children safe. The steps to resolving conflicts include:

- Treating conflicts matter-of-factly, so as not to communicate shame or judgment.
- Diffusing conflicts before moving into problem-solving; approaching calmly, getting on the children's level and stopping any hurtful actions.
- Acknowledging children's feelings and actively listening to all viewpoints.
- Partnering with children to learn what happened, what upset the children and name the problem and come up with possible solutions.
- Guiding children to come up with possible solutions and choose one together. Adults empower children by modeling and supporting language, ensuring that all viewpoints are expressed.
- Providing follow-up support in case children need to reconsider the problem, tweak the agreed-on solution or encouragement regarding an effective solution.

Each classroom has a cozy, intimate area for a singular child, with soft and calming features such as pillows, diffused light, stuffed animals and books. The quiet area is designed to feel private for the child, yet adults can always see and supervise the child inside. Children learn that they may choose the quiet area when they are upset, anxious or simply want some time alone. Sometimes an adult may encourage a child to use the quiet area, accompany the child, and when the child is calmer, discuss the problem with the child in a manner appropriate to the child's development.

Program staff will never be abusive or neglectful nor use corporal, humiliating, or frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child will be deprived of snack, rest, or toileting use as a means of discipline. In rare situations, adult staff and a child may leave the classroom for a short time to calm, such as a walk down the hallway. Restraint is only used when it is critical to protect the safety of the child or others.

Parents are always contacted when there is severe and challenging behavior. It is most effective when parents and teachers partner to develop a plan of support, with strategies for home and school. Together, decisions are made about follow-up meetings to determine if strategies are working and whether to reach out for additional support from a DSISD Social Worker or Behavior Specialist. In rare occasions, a different setting may be in a child's best interests; in this situation GSRP staff would help to sensitively transition a

child and family to the next educational setting.

Tuition Policy (Sliding scale tuition)*

Depending on income level, parents may be required to pay tuition, but 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)

- Families whose income falls at or below 300% of FPL pay no tuition for GSRP. The fee is a per child fee, not a per family fee.
- School-Day GSRP shall charge tuition to enrolled families over 300% of the Federal Poverty Level and shall charge the GSRP fee only for the portion of the day supported by GSRP.
- 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 DSISD.
- Tuition fees collected by the sub-recipients will be documented and a receipt will be given to the parent at the time of payment.
- 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.
- Parents who pay tuition may not incur expenses for other portions of the program, such as meals or transportation.
- Tuition rates will not be adjusted due to absences unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which case the staff will evaluate the situation and with the approval of the DSISD Early Childhood Specialist, rates may be adjusted.
- Income and tuition fees are calculated at the time of enrollment. During the academic year, if the family situation changes, families may request a re-calculation of income to determine a lower tuition.
- 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.

**2023-2024 Great Start Readiness Program
Sliding Fee Tuition Scale**

Annual Tuition Rates	GSRP/Head Start Blend	Children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP)	Below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level	251%-300% of the Federal Poverty Level	301% and up of the Federal Poverty Level
School Day Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$290.00/year	\$480.00/year

1. Sub-recipients will be responsible for collecting tuition.
2. Fees collected must be used within the GSRP program year during which they were collected and must be documented in accordance with the guidance provided to each subrecipient.
3. Children enrolled in a GSRP/Head Start Blend must not be charged tuition.
4. Children with Special Education IEP’s that call for inclusive preschool services do not pay tuition. They are exempt from the sliding scale tuition.
5. Districts must disseminate tuition policies to enrolled families and program staff. The policy must be included in the district’s GSRP handbook
6. It is the responsibility of the individual school district/LEA/community partner to determine payment schedule (annually, quarterly, monthly, weekly) and how/where payments are made.
7. Late payment fees are permitted only to recoup collection costs
8. Parents with questions should contact their local district

*Some programs may have families that pay straight tuition (different then sliding scale tuition) that are not funded by the state. These families will be given their tuition fees upon enrollment.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement with emphasis on increased awareness of child development is a component of GSRP. Parents are invited to complete a response sheet to determine their level of comfortable involvement on program or area-wide advisory committees, or other group sharing roles. A minimum of two, 1-hr home visits and two 45-min parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled with each family during the year. Either the parent/guardian or the teacher may request additional conferences at any time. Additional information can be found in the *Home Visits & Parent-Teacher Conferences* section.

Because of state regulations concerning class size and teacher ratio, it is not possible for children to bring friends or siblings to visit. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the classroom, although advance notice is requested due to DHHS clearance regulations.

Classroom time is not the best for discussing individual children as the teacher may not be able to talk freely. Teaching and managing the children comes first during class time. The teacher will be available to talk with you after the children are dismissed for the day or will schedule a time when it would be

mutually convenient.

GSRP believes that parent involvement and support is crucial for a child's success. Parents and family members are viewed as partners and colleagues of the early childhood staff, with both having their own areas of responsibility and expertise. Being involved in the day to day activities of the classroom will provide good role models for the children and positive modeling for parent(s).

Ways to be Involved in the Program

- DSISD 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.

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:

- Partnership with the local Great Start Collaborative, Great Start to Quality 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 and non), preschools, Home Visiting programs including 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
- Child Outcome data
- Continuous improvement efforts
- Transition into kindergarten

Additional Opportunities for Parents and Families

- **Parents as Teachers** is for families who are pregnant or have children from birth-age 5. A parent educator comes right to the home with developmental information for the exact age of the child(ren) and fun activities to do together through play. This program is individualized to meet the needs of each family. Parent educators address questions and concerns about development, behavior or simply the stresses of parenting, and offer tips and information to guide and encourage parents in this, their most important role. *Parents as Teachers* is a great option for families on the waitlist for preschool or for younger children when a preschool or school-age sibling is at school.
- **The Great Start Parent Coalition** is open to anyone who wants to see young children reach their full potential. Coalitions are running in both Delta and Schoolcraft Counties. Their main purpose is to:
 - Increase parent participation in early childhood planning and decision-making
 - Serve as a “voice” for parents in the community as well as strengthen the commitment of parents on behalf of young children
 - Assist in building public support for early childhood investment through advocacy and education activities

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.

Assessments

- Children in the GSRP are assessed for academic and developmental progress. The assessments provide information across domains identified in the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten* (ECSQ-PK): social and emotional development, intellectual development, language and early literacy development, creative development, physical development, health; early learning in math, science, social studies; and use of technology. Results of the assessments will be shared with parents during center and home visits, or when the teaching team or parents would like to discuss them so that shared learning can take place in both the home and school setting. Recommendations for further developmental evaluation will be discussed and parental permission obtained prior to referrals.

- Assessments include: the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the *Child Observation Record (COR)*
- *COR Advantage* is both a valid and reliable child assessment that measures the developmental trajectories of all children, from birth through kindergarten, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities. COR Advantage focuses on children’s naturally occurring activities rather than their performance on tests, allowing for a broader assessment of each child’s development.

COR Advantage’s Categories:

- Approaches to Learning
 - Social and Emotional Development
 - Physical Development and Health
 - Language, Literacy and Communication
 - Mathematics
 - Creative Arts
 - Science and Technology
 - Social Studies
 - English Language Learners (Optional)
- 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.
 - For more information about these assessments, please contact the lead teacher.

Parent Notice of Program Measurement*

- This GSRP is required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) 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 MDE 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: Our Early Childhood Department at the DSISD 906-786-9300; The MDE Office of Great Start, Early Childhood Education and Family Services, at mde-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 *Delta-Schoolcraft Intermediate School District*. 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 Michigan Department of Education.
- 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 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. All staff will complete the required health and safety training for child care providers located in MI Registry.

Abuse/Neglect

- Staff at Small Wonders 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.

Support for Children with Special Needs

GOAL: To ensure that *Small Wonders GSRP* 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

Small Wonders 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. Small Wonders 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. Small Wonders 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 DSISD 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 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 log onto: www.ProjectFindMichigan.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 building principal or agency director. The Early Childhood Specialist and/or the Early Childhood Director can become involved if concerns are not met satisfactorily. Parents are welcome to contact the Early Childhood Specialist at the Intermediate School District to discuss any program concerns. The phone number is (906)786-9300.

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.

Staff in the GSRP make every effort possible to make all families and children feel comfortable and valued at the center. A plan is put in place to ensure that our program reflects on and incorporates children's unique cultures into our learning environment. When a child enrolls in GSRP, the family completes a Family Input form that allows them to share with staff what the child's interests are, important values and traditions, information they want staff to know about the child, and what areas they would like more support or information on. Children are screened annually using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and the results are used to plan for children individually. It is important that all children and their family's values are embraced by the staff so that children can be proud of who they are and gain confidence while in our program. Being aware of others' differences and learning to accept them at a young age helps create a culture of acceptance and tolerance both within our learning environment and beyond. It is important to our staff to be aware of children and families' uniqueness so that they can understand and support them in the best way possible. In GSRP, the HighScope curriculum is implemented. This curriculum supports and embraces the families' cultures and

encourages staff to reflect the traditions and values of each family in the daily routine, environment, and lesson planning.

Materials in the classroom are developmentally appropriate, clean, safe, foster learning and are to reflect the home and community cultures and special needs of the children in the program. Materials depict a wide range of non-stereotyped role models and cultures.

The home and community cultures of each class are used to choose materials to be included in the classroom. Materials that reflect children's interests, parental hobbies and employment and area traditions are integrated into all areas of the classroom as well as in projects and lessons presented on a daily basis.

Examples of materials that foster diversity include snowmobile helmets, jackets, gloves, etc., during racing season, camouflage during hunting season, real cameras and phones, cooking utensils, brief cases and purses, dress up clothes for various occupations, cleaning tools, carpentry tools, photos of family members, sports clothing, books, eyeglasses, etc...

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.

Staff are trained at least annually on practices relating to cultural and diversity. After training takes place, practices are reviewed and adjustments to the classroom routine, lessons, and environment are made as needed. When staff are culturally knowledgeable, they are able to be more responsive to children and family needs and are able to foster family values and traditions.

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.

Health Care Plan

Goal: To ensure that all children have access to a safe learning environment in which optimal health and well-being is fostered.

Tools, Resources, Strategies to Support the Goal

Staff work with local health departments to ensure that most-up-to-date information is provided to parents regarding immunizations, well-child checks, and screenings, i.e. dental, hearing, and vision. This information is provided to each family at the start of the program year and as needed. The program uses COR Advantage and Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 to communicate information regarding developmental outcomes and milestones. Information is shared in the beginning of the year during the initial home visit and throughout the year during conferences and home visits, and as needed. In the case of illness or accident/emergency, staff will follow the following written plans: Illness Care Plan and Accident Care Plan. Instructions for care, contact, and follow-up are explicitly defined in these plans. At the beginning of the year, each parent is provided a copy of the Parent Handbook which details all plans related to health, safety, and wellness. Staff members are available

to parents in a variety of ways to answer questions or provide feedback, such as email, phone conversation, text messaging, and face-to-face meetings.

Daily Assessment of Children's Health

Children's general health is assessed upon arrival daily using a basic health screening checklist. 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 illness will be reported on the daily communication form using the manner of preferred contact for each family. Accident reports and illness reports are also completed when necessary. A copy is provided to the family and a copy is kept in the child's file.

Health Appraisals and Immunization records are required during the enrollment process and maintained in the child's file. They are updated annually and as needed.

Staff refer to local doctors, dentists, and specialists in the community depending on the need, using the Great Start Collaborative Resource Guide (per county) and the local resource and referral website, great-start.org

This plan is important to children, family, and staff because it provides explicit written guidance regarding children's health and safety and increases positive communication surrounding this topic across the program. It is extremely important that a child regularly sees a doctor, and this message is conveyed through conversations during the initial home visit and written information is provided at that time and as needed.

Basic health and safety management procedures contribute to the prevention of childhood illness and communicable diseases. A safe environment prevents and reduces injuries for young children who are only beginning to recognize dangerous situations. Good nutrition is important to the physical and intellectual development of young children. Expecting a child to learn and grow in an environment that is unsafe and unhealthy is unfeasible and inappropriate. Establishing an environment that supports health, safety, and nutrition is an integral part in supporting the child's development and learning outcomes.

Program Evaluation

The GSRP is evaluated two times per year by an Early Childhood Specialist using the Program Quality Assessment-Revised tool provided by the State of Michigan. The Early Childhood Specialist is employed through the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District.

Children and Staff Hand Washing

Hand-washing has long been established as one of the most important things we can do to prevent the spread of illness.

In our preschool, hand washing requirements for workers are as follows:

- Upon arrival at school/center
- Before and after setting up snacks/food for student consumption.
- Before and after helping students use the bathroom.

- After handling items soiled with body fluids such as blood, drool, urine, stool, or discharge from nose or eyes
- After handling an ill child.
- After using the bathroom or taking care of other personal needs (i.e, nose wiping), and eating.

In our preschool, hand-washing requirements for students are as follows:

- Upon arrival in the morning.
- After using the bathroom.
- Before and after eating food.
- After they have touched a child who may be sick or who has handled soiled items.
- After blowing/wiping their nose

Requirement method for hand-washing is as follows:

- Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm water and soap.
- Wash between fingers and back of hands and wrists.
- Rinse hands well under running water and dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.
- Turn off water using a paper towel instead of bare hands. This helps prevent acquiring new germs on already clean hands.

Handling Children’s Bodily Fluids

- In preschool, universal precautions shall be observed in order to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM). Gloves will be worn for all tasks that may cause exposure to blood or OPIM shall be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual.
- After removing gloves, preschool workers will wash their hands as recommended in our hand-washing policy

Cleaning and Sanitizing of all Equipment, Toys, and Surfaces

- Tabletops will be washed before and after food is served and as they become soiled.
- Toys will be washed when they come in contact with a child’s mouth or saliva.
- Equipment will be washed weekly or as needed. Process for sanitation:

There shall be a 3 Step Process for Sanitation for tabletops:

1. Clean with soap and water
2. Rinse thoroughly
3. Spray with bleach water.

Process for sanitation while on field trips:

- Bleach wipes will be used while on field trips and out of the proximity of running water.

Controlling Infection, Including Universal Precautions

- In order to prevent the transmission of HIV (Aids), Hepatitis B and other blood borne pathogens, *Small Wonders* GSRP 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, *Small Wonders* GSRP 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 Public Health

www.michigan.gov.mde

(989) 373-7247

Centers for Disease Control

www.cdc.gov

Michigan Childhood Immunization Registry

www.MICR.ORG

(888) 243-6652

Teacher's Resources

www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2.htm

School Health

www.Schoolhealth.org

Illness/Injury/Accident Protocol

Our goal is that every child will be safe while in our care.

Illness Care Plan

When a child shows signs of illness such as cough, nausea, or lethargy a call will be made to the parent for transportation home. If unable to reach a parent, the next person on the emergency card will be notified.

- Students, staff, or volunteers with fever above 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea or constant cough will be sent home.
- If the center becomes aware that a staff member, volunteer, or child in care had contracted a communicable disease, then the center shall notify parents of both of the following:
 - a. The name of the communicable disease
 - b. The symptoms of the disease

Illness/Accident Care Plan

For minor injuries such as small cuts, bruises or abrasions:

- Students will be given immediate first aid care by the preschool staff in accordance with their first aid training. Parents will be notified in writing or by phone.

For more serious injuries such as open skin wounds, bloody noses or bumps to the head:

- Students will be transported to the School Office for medical care. The parent will be notified by a note or phone call.

For major emergencies such as seizures or unconsciousness:

- 911 will be called from the nearest phone. The parent will be notified immediately. Program Serious Accident/Illness Emergency Plan will be followed. A copy of this can be obtained from the Great Start Readiness Program staff.

Administration of Medication to Students

- The administration of medication by school personnel shall be authorized in writing and only performed in exceptional circumstances when administration by the parent at home is impossible or extremely difficult. Medication will be administered only by authorized school personnel. This authorization to administer medication shall be issued only in compliance with the following conditions:

A. The *Request for Administration of Medication* form must be signed by the student's parent/guardian and filed with the building principal.

B. Written instructions signed by the parent/guardian and the student's physician must be furnished and shall include:

1. Student's name, address, telephone number

2. Physician's name, address, telephone number
3. Pharmacy name, address, telephone number
4. Name of medication, beginning date of administration
5. Prescribed dosage, frequency and duration
6. Parents shall be responsible for informing the district if the child has experienced side effects from the medication the child is to receive
7. Termination date for administering the medication
8. Special handling and storage instructions

C. Medication for students in preschool must be brought to school by an adult and in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. Refill of the medication is the sole responsibility of the student's parent/guardian.

D. The school nurse or other designated preschool personnel will:

1. Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication.
2. Keep a record of the administration of the medication which will include: date, time, dosage and person administering the medication along with the initials of an adult witness (this witness can be any school employee/or adult).
3. Keep medication in a locked cabinet.
4. Return the unused medication only to the student's parent/guardian (a student may return his/her inhaler).
5. Any medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of the school year.

E. The student's parent/guardian assumes responsibility to immediately inform the building administrator or his/her designated representative of any change in the child's health or change in the medication, including the discontinuation or modification of the medication.

F. In no instance are District personnel to administer an initial dose of new medication to any student.

G. Forgotten doses of home medication will not be made up at school.

H. Student self-possession and/or self-administration of medication for preschool are prohibited unless the student's health is endangered by this prohibition.

Over the Counter Medications

- Children in need of OTC medications, including, but not limited to pain reliever, diphenhydramine, cough drops, and topical medication (antibiotic cream, hand/body cream, sunscreen, insect repellent) will only be administered with written parental consent and following all administration directions on the label of the medication.
- Parents will be notified when children are given OTC medications at the center.

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. Small Wonders 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 classroom and sent home with children.
- 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.
- The Michigan Model for Preschool modules are used throughout the year to help teach children and families about being healthy, both physically and mentally. A copy of the modules can be viewed at the preschool if parents would like to view them. Parent resources are also available.

COVID19

For information regarding planning, preparedness, and procedures related to the current health crisis, please see the building's *COVID 19 Preparedness and Response Plan*.

Smoking/Drug/Alcohol Policy

Smoking tobacco, consuming alcohol, 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.