

WELCOME TO PRESCHOOL!

We are happy to have the opportunity to work with you and your child.

Our hope is for your child to have a fun and exciting year of preschool.

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It is our goal to make sure that your child has a great beginning in school,
and is ready for the challenges ahead,
laying a foundation for lifelong learning and academic success.

Academy Mission Statement

To promote lifelong learning by nurturing academic excellence, positive character, and an appreciation of cultures.

GEE Mission Statement

Global Educational Excellence (GEE) empowers “schools of choice” by nurturing academic excellence, positive character traits, and an appreciation of cultures.

Service Provider

Global Educational Excellence was founded in 1998 to offer the highest quality educational services to public school academies. Its founders, Mohamad Issa and Dr. Said Issa, have had extensive experience in the management and leadership of schools. Mohamad Issa has worked with start-up schools for over ten years, providing business and management expertise to enable schools to maximize resources.

Dr. Said Issa’s medical training has given him a special perspective on the growth and development of children, a perspective that he has shared in his years as a founding board member of Central Academy. Together, they formed GEE as a vehicle for developing nurturing educational environments where all children are offered quality educational opportunities.

As the service provider for the academy, GEE manages financial information, human resources, the development and implementation of a curriculum, grant writing and government compliance, the maintenance of the school’s physical facility and environment, and student educational record-keeping. With the guidance of the School Board, GEE recruits and engages academy staff members, including teachers and administrators who are best suited to the school and its student community.



PHILOSOPHY

We believe that children learn best when they are involved in meaningful, purposeful activities that allow them to safely interact with their environment in authentic ways, constructing knowledge through planning, exploration, experimentation, and reflection.

ADMITTANCE

The Academy's first priority is to admit children who qualify for the Michigan School Readiness Program Grant and have a special relationship with the Academy.

Qualifying children must meet at least two risk factors as outlined by the Michigan State Department of Education School Readiness Guidelines and **be four years old on or before December 1st** of the school year in which they are to be enrolled.

If our program is full, students will be referred to other programs that have openings or placed on a waiting list.

GETTING READY

Required Paperwork

- Emergency Card
- Proof of income
- Eligibility Factor Documentation
- Birth Certificate
- Health Requirements:
 - Immunizations up-to-date
 - Medical Exam/Physical
 - Allergy Report required for children with allergies
 - Dental Exam recommended

A home visit will be conducted by your child's classroom teacher before school begins or at the beginning of the school year.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Children enrolled in Preschool will attend a full-day session four days per week, Monday through Thursday. **There is NO PRESCHOOL on Fridays.**

If you know your child will be absent for any reason, please call the school and notify your child's teacher within a half hour of the school start time.

If your child is absent due to an infectious illness, it is important to let the teacher know so that we can send a note home to other parents to let them know that their children may have been exposed.

Children who are absent from school for 12 consecutive school days may be dropped from the program. Every attempt will be made to contact parents before such an action is taken.

Children who have excessive absences will also be dropped from the program.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

It is very important for you to arrive on time so that your child can get the most out of the school day!

The time before school starts is allotted for staff to prepare for your child's school day. Please respect the hours of the center. Do not leave your child unattended before the scheduled drop-off time or after the end of the school day.

When dropping your child off at school, please accompany him/her into the classroom, sign-in, and make contact with the teacher so that she is aware that your child is at school.

A parent or guardian must sign your child in *and* out everyday.

It is our policy to charge a fee for late pick-ups. After 10 minutes, you will be charged \$5.00 and \$5.00 more for each additional five minutes you are late.

Excessive lateness dropping off and picking up students may result in dismissal from the program.

Central Academy Preschool

The busing services provided by Central Academy **do not** apply to Preschool. You **must** provide your own transportation.

Riverside Academy Early Childhood Center

Families who wish to have children ride the bus, must have their child ready to get on the bus by the scheduled time. Children will also need to be picked up at the scheduled time. A bus schedule will be available two weeks before school starts.

- It is important for parents to have children on the bus at the scheduled time. The busses will not wait for your child.
- It is not acceptable for parents to pick up children late from the bus and late fees may apply.
- There is no food or drink permitted on the bus.

CHILD RELEASE POLICY

Individuals other than a parent or guardian who are picking up children, must be at least 18 years of age, be listed on the emergency card and be prepared to show identification.

Any change from the usual pick up person or other individuals on the white emergency card must be submitted in writing and signed by a parent. We cannot allow anyone to pick up your child from school unless it is authorized by a parent. For safety reasons, this rule will be strictly enforced.

It is important that all information on your child's emergency card be kept up-to-date. Please let us know immediately if there are any changes to your contact information.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Home Visits

Children enrolled in Preschool will receive a personal visit at least two times during the school year.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Your child's teacher will schedule two parent/teacher conferences with each family during the school year.

Preschool Parent Advisory Council

This council is for parents and preschool staff to gather together and discuss relevant issues and make recommendations for program improvements. Program Quality is evaluated twice during the school.

Parent Communication

Communication between home and school is an important part of our preschool program. We believe that education is a partnership between parents, teachers, and the community. Communication is an important component of that partnership.

NOTE: It is important that all questions or concerns about your child or the program be directed to the lead teacher in the classroom.

VOLUNTEERING

Parents are welcome to come into the classroom at any time during the school year as long as it does not disrupt the classroom routine. You can come to observe silently or assist with the classroom activities. **Please tell the lead teacher the day and time (or the days and times) prior to your visit.**

- **All visitors to the classroom are required to sign in at the main office and wear a visitor badge.** Please be advised that siblings are not permitted in the classroom during school time even when accompanied by a parent.
- Parent chaperones are also welcome to join us on field trips. Please be advised that siblings are not permitted on the field trips even when accompanied by a parent.

We believe that when home and school work together, children have the positive support system that they need to be successful.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

We do not share information about your family or child without parental consent. We are not able to discuss personal circumstances of other children with you and we ask that you respect this policy in your conversations with staff.

The staff will keep in confidence all information that is legally confidential and will keep in confidence all information regarding children. You may obtain confidential information about your own child through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) procedures. Information about the procedure is available on the Academy website or at the school office.

We do ask that you refrain from discussing issues or problems about your child when children are present. We would be happy to arrange a time to discuss these issues with you privately.

CURRICULUM

Preschool is a unique and special time for your child. Our program is based on the High Scope Approach in which teachers and children are active partners in the learning process. The curriculum is built around learning activities in five main curriculum content areas; Language, Literacy, & Communication, Mathematics, Social Studies, Physical Development & Health, and Science & Technology. The heart of the classroom daily routine is the Plan-Do-Review process when children make a plan for their work time, carry out their plan, and reflect on their activities. In addition we plan activities that encourage development in each individual child's approach to learning, social and emotional development, and creative arts.

ASSESSMENT

The preschool staff will use a Child Observation Record to determine your child's progress. This is an ongoing assessment process that looks at observable early childhood milestones used by teachers which follows the curriculum described above. This assessment information will be shared at home visits and parent teacher conferences.

HEALTH POLICY

Our preschool program is for healthy children. Children who are ill will have difficulty learning and may not be able to participate in the regular school activities. Unfortunately, we do not have the facilities to care for sick children, so we have the following policy regarding illnesses. Parents will need to come to the center and take home any child arriving at school with signs/symptoms of being ill or who becomes ill while at school.

YOUR CHILD SHOULD STAY HOME WHEN HE OR SHE HAS HAD ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS DURING THE PAST 24 HOURS:

- Chills or fever; temperature above normal (98.6)
- Diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting
- Skin rash
- Red or watery eyes
- Sore throat
- ...Or any other symptoms that would cause your child to be uncomfortable at school

MEDICATIONS

If your child needs to be given medication during his time at school, you must do the following:

1. **Fill out a Request for Medication Form which is available from the lead teacher.** Note we will **not** administer any student over-the-counter medications (including Tylenol, Advil, aspirin, cold/cough medicines, etc.)
2. **Label your child's medication** with his or her name and give it to the lead teacher or office staff.
3. All medication **MUST** be in the **original bottle**.

ALLERGIES

For the safety of your child, please notify the school and the lead teacher of any and all allergies including bee stings, food allergies, or allergies related to plants or animals. In addition, we ask that you provide documentation from the pediatrician and procedures to follow should the child have an allergic reaction while in school.

INJURIES

Occasionally during the course of an active day, accidents may happen with your child. If your child is injured in any way he or she will be comforted and first aid will be applied. If the injury requires further medical attention, you will be contacted.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Meals and snacks will be provided by the Academy. Your child should bring their own food if there is a food allergy or any health issue related to food.

REST TIME

The state of Michigan requires that all children who are in a full day program have a quiet rest time. A mat or cot will be provided by the center.

OUTSIDE TIME

The state also requires that all children have the opportunity to play outside every day, weather permitting. All children in attendance will be expected to participate in outdoor activities.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

When the academy is closed, the preschool program will also be closed. School closings, due to severe weather and/or other reasons, will be announced on television channels 2, 4, and 7 and the local WAAM Radio.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

We believe that children look to adults for approval and guidance. We believe that the adults in the lives of children are responsible for helping them learn how to behave appropriately in a variety of situations. Guiding each child's social development in a positive way is an important component of our program. The children will learn strategies to resolve conflicts in a peaceful way.

We believe that prevention is the key to an effective discipline policy. Preventing problems is one of our most important goals. Many things affect the behavior of children, so we use a variety of strategies to help children learn what to do and what not to do. The elements of our program that serve as prevention for discipline problems are as follows:

- Creating a Physical Environment with Plentiful Materials
- Building Positive Relationships
- Establishing a Consistent Daily Routine
- Using Encouragement
- Expressing Appropriate Expectations
- Authentic Experiences and Learning Activities

All attempts will be made to meet the needs of every child, and it does happen sometimes that a child experiences unusual problems. If this is the case, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents, teachers, director, principal and other staff members. Appropriate referrals may be made and everything possible will be done to keep him or her in the program. The Academy reserves the right to exclude a child from the program for disciplinary reasons; if it is determined that it is not a safe environment for the child or for others.

Just Playing

by Anita Wadley

**When I'm building in the block room,
Please don't say I'm "Just playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play,
About balance, I may be an architect someday.**

**When I'm getting all dressed up,
Setting the table, caring for the babies,
Don't get the idea I'm "Just Playing."
I may be a mother or a father someday.**

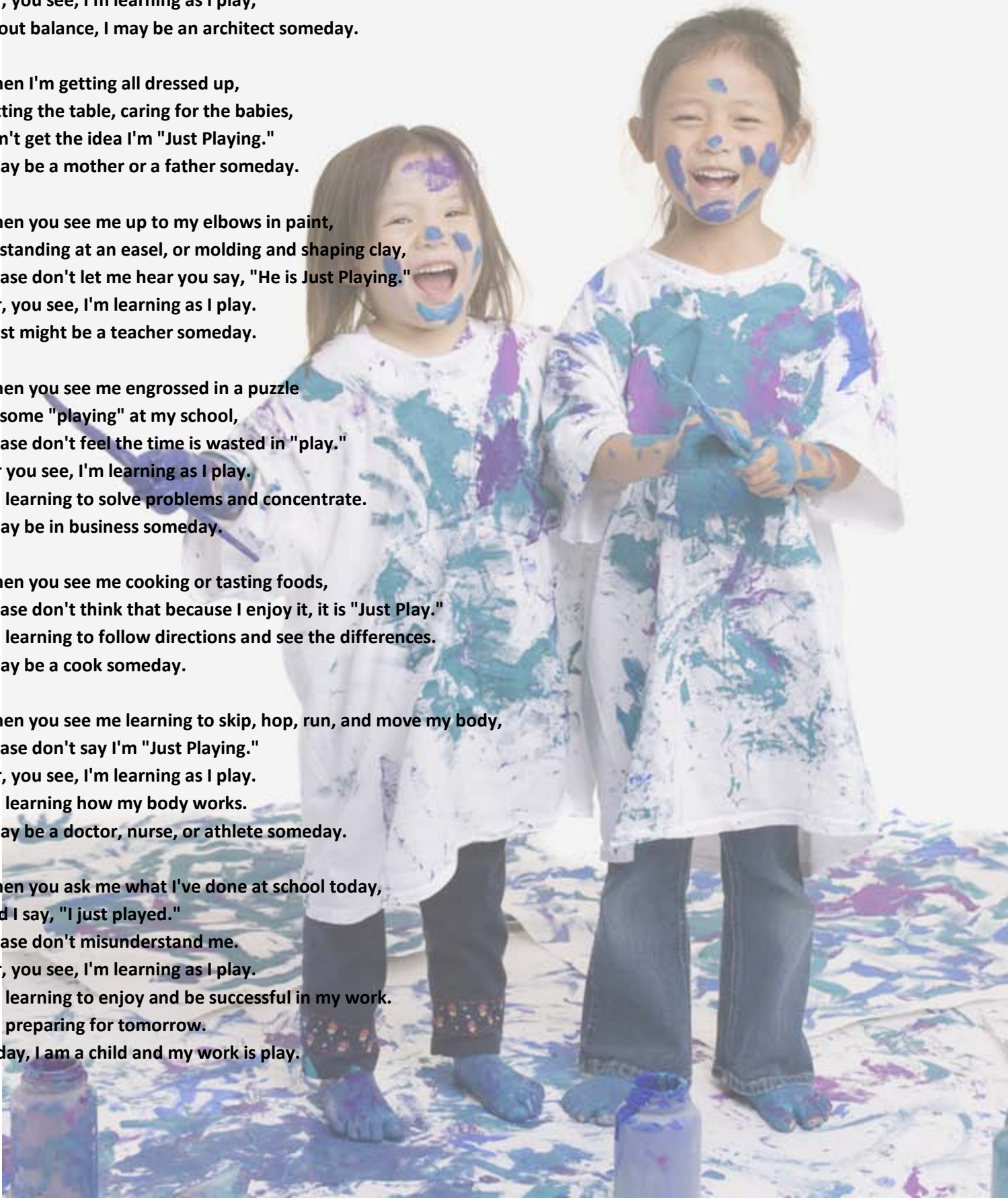
**When you see me up to my elbows in paint,
Or standing at an easel, or molding and shaping clay,
Please don't let me hear you say, "He is Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I just might be a teacher someday.**

**When you see me engrossed in a puzzle
Or some "playing" at my school,
Please don't feel the time is wasted in "play."
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate.
I may be in business someday.**

**When you see me cooking or tasting foods,
Please don't think that because I enjoy it, it is "Just Play."
I'm learning to follow directions and see the differences.
I may be a cook someday.**

**When you see me learning to skip, hop, run, and move my body,
Please don't say I'm "Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning how my body works.
I may be a doctor, nurse, or athlete someday.**

**When you ask me what I've done at school today,
And I say, "I just played."
Please don't misunderstand me.
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work.
I'm preparing for tomorrow.
Today, I am a child and my work is play.**



Family Handbook Contract

*Communication between parents and teachers is essential to a
quality early childhood experience*

- I have read the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

- I understand the preschool policies and procedures and I agree to abide by them.

- I understand that the preschool program is funded by the State of Michigan and that the program must follow the guidelines and rules as outlined for the Michigan School Readiness Program Grant and Michigan Child Care Licensing.

Signature: _____ Date ___/___/_____

Print Name: _____

Child's Name: _____