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A National School of Excellence



Union Ridge School

4600 North Oak Park Harwood Heights IL 60706
(708) 867-5822

Educating Children since 1876

***KINDERGARTEN
AND
EARLY CHILDHOOD
STUDENT HANDBOOK***

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Union Ridge School, a caring diverse, educational community is to foster excellence in academic, physical and aesthetic, as well as social and emotional, development within a nurturing environment for all children, and in partnership with families and community members, so that all children achieve their full potential in becoming responsible and productive citizens.

VALUES

We believe that:

- All people can become productive members of society.
- Learning is a life-long process.
- All children can learn.
- All members of our community share the responsibility for success in learning for all children.
- A quality education fosters life-long learning.
- A quality education provides challenging, progressive, and innovative opportunities for all students.
- Union Ridge School plays a vital role in contributing to the successful development of the community.
- Quality education for all students comes about through open communication and trust among educators, parents and the community.
- Mutual respect and trust are essential for building productive human relationships.

THE GOALS OF OUR PROGRAM

We believe that a high quality program promotes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children within a safe and nurturing environment. A quality program also addresses and responds to the needs of the family. Further, we believe that the guidelines established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for a developmentally appropriate program will allow us to continue a high quality experience for young children.

Our curriculum is planned to meet the different needs, interests, and development levels of our students ages 3-6. Our program includes the following goals, strategies, and opportunities, as outlined by NAEYC in 1986.

- Experiences are provided that meet a child's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas – physical, social, emotional, and intellectual.

- Each child is viewed as a unique person with an individual pattern and timing – growth and development. The curriculum is designed so that interaction is responsive to individual differences and interests. Different levels of ability, development, and learning styles are expected, accepted and used to design appropriate activities.
- Interactions and activities are designed to develop children’s self-esteem and positive feeling towards learning.
- Teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration with adults, other children, and materials.
- Children select many of their own activities from among a variety of learning areas the teacher prepares, including dramatic play, blocks, science, math; games and puzzles, books, recordings, art and music.
- Children are expected to be physically and mentally active. Children choose from activities that the teacher has set up or the children spontaneously initiate.
- Children work individually or in small, informal groups.
- Children are provided concrete learning activities with materials and people relevant to their own life experiences.
- Teachers move among groups and individuals to facilitate a child’s involvement with materials and activities by asking questions, offering suggestions, or adding more complex materials or ideas to a situation.
- Teachers accept that there is often more than one right answer. Teachers recognize that children learn from self-directed problem solving and experimentation.
- Teachers facilitate the development of self-control in children by using positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirecting children to a more acceptable activity, and setting clear limits. Teachers expectations match and respect children’s developing capabilities.
- Children are provided many opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating, helping, negotiating, and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal problems. Teachers facilitate the development of these positive social skills at all times.
- Children are provided many opportunities to see how reading and writing are useful before they are instructed in letter names, sounds, and word identification. Basic skills develop when they are meaningful to children.
- An abundance of these types of activities is provided to develop language and literacy through meaningful experiences: listening to and reading stories and poems; taking field trips; dictating stories; seeing classroom charts and other print in use; participating in dramatic play and other experiences requiring communication; talking informally with other children and adults; and experimenting with writing by drawing, copying, and inventing their own spelling.
- Children develop understanding of concepts about themselves, others and the world around them through observation, interacting with people and real objects, and seeking solutions to concrete problems. Learning about math, science, social studies, health, and other content areas are all integrated through meaningful activities. Examples of these are when children build with blocks, measure sand, water, or ingredients for cooking, observe changes in the environment, work with wood and tools, sort objects for a purpose, explore animals, plants, water, wheels

and gears, sing and listen to music from various cultures, and draw, paint and work with clay. Routines are followed that help children keep themselves healthy and safe.

- Children have daily opportunities to use large muscles, including running, jumping, and balancing. Outdoor activity is planned daily so children can develop large muscle skills, learn about outdoor environments and express themselves freely and loudly.
- Children have daily opportunities to develop small muscle skills through play activities, such as pegboards, puzzles, painting, cutting, and other similar activities.
- Children have daily opportunities for aesthetic expression and appreciation through art and music. Children experiment and enjoy various forms of music. A variety of art media are available for creative expression, such as easel and finger painting and clay.
- Children's natural curiosity and desire to make sense of their world are used to motivate them to become involved in learning activities.
- Teachers work in partnership with parents, communicating regularly to build mutual understanding and greater consistency for children.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Asbestos Management Plan

Union Ridge School District 86 maintains an Asbestos Management Plan in accordance with Federal regulations. This Plan is available for review in the Office of the Superintendent.

Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

Early Childhood

Early Childhood Arrival

Early Childhood A.M. students will assemble at 9:05 a.m. by the parking lot door at the rear of the school. Parents must remain in their car during arrival/dismissal. Your child will be picked up and/or brought to your car by a teacher or teacher assistant. After your child is placed in your car, please move your car forward and pull over along or in front of the guard rails to seatbelt your child into your vehicle. Students arriving after that time should enter the building at the Main entrance.

Early Childhood P.M. students arriving by car should be dropped off by the parking lot door at the rear of the school. They will enter the building at 1:00 p.m.

Students who are walking will assemble at the southeast entrance of the school (Oak Park and Carl Cassata Dr.) at 1:00pm

Late Arrivals

All students arriving when a teacher or an aide is not present, or after 9:05 (ECAM) or 1:00 (ECPM) must enter through the main office doors on Carl Cassata. Parents will be instructed to walk their child to the classroom.

Early Childhood Dismissal

All Early Childhood A.M. and P.M. students will be dismissed from the parking lot door at the rear of the building.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten Arrival

Students who walk or are dropped off by car need to enter with a teacher at the north parking lot (rear Gym entrance) between 8:45 a.m. and 8:55 a.m. (After 8:55 a.m., Kindergarten students will need to be taken to the front office by a parent or guardian.)

Kindergarten Dismissal

All students will be dismissed at the rear door near the north parking lot (rear Gym entrance). Students and parents who walk must enter and exit through the playground area. A teacher will escort students who are picked up by car to their cars in the drive-through. Drivers should remain in line, in their cars until it is their turn to move to the Gym entrance.

Late Pickups

Any student not picked up within ten (10) minutes of dismissal time will be brought to the office where they may be picked up. Note: Kindergarten classes remain in session until 2:30. At that time students prepare for dismissal. It is unlikely that they will be outside until 2:40. Arriving to pick up students before 2:30 results in unnecessary traffic problems.

Student Pick-up Authorization Form

You will be asked to complete a Pick-up Authorization Form for your child. This form will indicate those people allowed to pick up your child from school as designated by you. PLEASE complete this form, as we will not release your child to ANYONE other than those indicated on the form. Also, both parents must sign the form! If you need to add or drop names on the form, you must put it in writing to your child's teacher. New people will have to show identification to the teacher before a child is released. Please be patient with us – it takes time for us to get to know faces and vehicles.

Traffic Safety

Parents may use the drive-through system to drop off and pick up students. Cars may enter the parking lot at the north driveway, follow arrows to the gate, drop off students, and exit through the south driveway. Supervision is provided for students when they are dropped off and picked up this way. There are no provisions for parking in the lot, as it is filled by staff and visitor's vehicles. Please do not stop in the line except when picking up your children at the gate/entrance. If you wish to meet your children at the door, park elsewhere, other than the lot and walk to the door where they are to be dismissed. Older siblings may be picked up at the parking lot door, if you inform the children to meet you there with your preschooler in the afternoon. Students and parents are not permitted to walk through the parking lot. Please understand and respect this as it is a matter of safety.

No Parking Areas

Parking and waiting is prohibited along Carl Cassata Lane and Oak Park Avenue, as specified by signs. Street parking is available west of the school building on Carl Cassata Lane. Police will be enforcing posted regulations from the start of the school year. Please do not park in the student drop-off area at the west entrance. We need to keep these areas moving. Parking in front of the school and waiting makes this very difficult.

School Bus Zone

Only school buses are permitted to stop directly in front of the school. This lane must be kept clear for buses as they arrive and depart. Please do not attempt to park or stop in the bus zone at anytime on school days.

Crossing Carl Cassata Lane

All students will be directed to cross Carl Cassata Lane at the intersection of Carl Cassata Lane and Newcastle only. Please instruct your children to cross only at this corner where they are protected by stop signs. The school will not permit children to cross the street except at this intersection in order to protect their safety.

Clothing

Children should be dressed in durable, comfortable play clothes, so that they can play freely and not worry about ruining clothes by spilling paint, juice, etc. (ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS MUST BRING A LABELED SET OF EXTRA CLOTHING IN A ZIP LOCK BAG FOR EMERGENCIES). Each item should be labeled and placed in a bag for classroom storage. A shirt, pants, underwear, shoes, and socks will be sufficient. All outside clothing, such as coats, hats, sweaters, and especially boots, should be labeled with the child's name so that misplaced items can be returned to the proper owner. WE will be going outside whenever the weather permits. Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Umbrellas used on rainy days should be left with a parent upon entrance to the building.

Early Childhood Snack

Snack is a center in our classroom. Milk and a variety of snack items are available each day. If your child is lactose intolerant a doctor's note to allow you to provide water for him/her is needed. Please make sure that the nurse and classroom teachers are aware of any food allergies that your child may have.

Illness

If your child is sick, PLEASE keep him/her home. Germs travel fast, especially at this age, and both your child and his/her fellow students will be more comfortable if sick children remain at home. Generally a child should not return to school until 24 hours after his/her temperature returns to normal without medication. Please contact the school office at 867-5822 in the morning if your child will be absent. When your child returns to school, he/she is required to bring a note explaining the absence. This is a requirement of the Illinois State Board of Education, as well as the Union Ridge School Board of Education.

Lunch Program

The lunch program at school is part of the Kindergarten Extended Day program which begins in October. Students may bring their lunch from home or order hot lunch in advance. Milk may be purchased daily or ordered in advance as well. Hot lunches for

students must be ordered in advance and include milk. Menus and order forms are sent home with your child each month. Hot lunch is ordered on a monthly basis. Payment for lunches (cash or checks made out to Union Ridge School) must be returned in an envelope with the order form by the date indicated on the form. Credit will be issued to a student if he/she is absent on a day lunch is ordered. Order forms will be available when paying school fees. Your child may be eligible for free or reduced priced lunches or free milk. Please ask for more information from the school office.

Soft drinks are not permitted in the lunchroom, nor are carryout lunches from McDonald's, Burger King, or the like.

Parents are Welcome

Parents are an integral part of our program. We encourage you to participate in your child's school experience. There will be opportunities for you to participate on field trips and in the classroom. We would appreciate hearing all questions, concerns, and comments regarding our program. This will enable us to better serve the needs of our children. Please refer to the "Visitors" section for school access.

Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences

Early Childhood

Formal conferences will be scheduled any time a parent or teacher expresses concern about a particular child. During scheduled conference days you will be provided with an opportunity for parent/child interaction in the classroom, or a formal conference with the classroom teacher (depending upon your child's teacher).

Kindergarten

You and your child will be invited to attend two scheduled conferences during the school year. We will use this time to discuss your child's school experience. Please make every effort to attend. You may, however, request a conference with your child's teacher at anytime throughout the year.

Physical, Dental, and Vision Examinations

The State of Illinois and the Union Ridge School Board of Education require physical examinations and certifiable evidence of immunizations. Dental and Vision examinations are also required for Kindergarten students. Schools are held responsible by the State for maintaining health and immunization records, and are directed to exclude pupils not in compliance with the law. All new Early Childhood students and all students entering Kindergarten must have a current physical examination recorded on the required medical form, including immunizations, before entering school.

Playground

The playground and equipment are reserved for the use of our school children during school hours, 8:30am to 3:45pm. Early Childhood and kindergarten students who have been dismissed from school and other community members are free to use the Union Ridge playground during non-school hours after 3:45pm. Union Ridge staff members will ask visitors to leave the playground during school hours and return after 3:45pm. This procedure will allow us to safeguard all children using our playground.

Read Everything!

Your child will be bringing home information to share with you. General distribution of school information will be passed to the youngest or only child on Thursday of each week. We are in the process of making all handouts available electronically. Please check the school website @ www.urs86.org for more information. Please READ EVERYTHING! This will enable you to be informed as to your child's day and to take an active role in it. "Special" days and activities are often planned. If you are uninformed, your child may be unprepared for these "special" times.

Toilet Training (Bathroom Habits)

All children must be toilet trained upon entering the program. No diapers or Pull-Ups may be worn. We will deal with occasional "wet" accidents by assisting the child in changing clothes. We, however, cannot change or cleanup a bowel movement accident. Parents will be called to change their child if he/she has a "messy" accident.

Visitors

Visitors to the school are encouraged, as we wish to enlist parents as partners in education. Please arrange visits in advance with your child's teacher. If you wish to set a conference with the teacher, please call and leave that message. The teacher will return your call as soon as possible. All visitors must sign in and receive a visitor's pass. To reach the Mall area, please walk downstairs through the lunchroom so as not to disturb other classes in session. Remember to return your visitor's pass and sign out at the office when leaving the school. After the first few days of school, parents are requested to drop off their children at the door and refrain from entering the building with strollers and younger siblings. An important aspect of our program is adjusting to the school environment.

August 2012

To: Union Ridge Students and Parents/Guardians
From: Mr. Mike Maguire, Principal
Re: Union Ridge School Student Handbook /Acknowledgement Form

All students are required to follow the Union Ridge School Student Handbook. Copies of the handbooks are now available on the school web site at www.urs86.org under "Parent Resources."

Contained within the handbooks are explanations and guidelines that make Union Ridge School both a safe and positive place in which to learn. It is important that both parents and students review the handbook. Close attention should be given to the sections on acceptable student behavior.

Please sign and return the bottom to your child's teacher/advisor on Monday, August 27, 2012. Thank you.

We have reviewed the contents of the 2012-2013 Union Ridge School student handbook. We understand the student responsibilities outlined within.

_____	_____
Student Name/Grade	Grade/Advisor
_____	_____
Student Name/Grade	Grade/Advisor
_____	_____
Student Name/Grade	Grade/Advisor
_____	_____
Student Name/Grade	Grade/Advisor
_____	_____
Student Name/Grade	Grade/Advisor
_____	_____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date