Welcome to the Preschool Team

As with any important endeavor, in order for your child to receive the best possible education, a TEAM effort is required. Our team at school looks forward to working with families in order to help your children make progress!

TEAM ROSTER

Teacher / Speech-language-pathologist: Lisa Zartman - I am so thrilled to be working with your child this year. I’ve been with the ECSE program for quite some time (you know it’s been a while when you’d rather not share the rather large number of years since you graduated from college☺). In the past I have worked both as a preschool special education teacher and a speech-language-pathologist. For me, the LEAP classroom is the best of both worlds as it allows me to adopt both of these roles each day. LEAP is very special to me and I truly value the opportunity to partner with families in order to help their child make strides with speech and language skills. I look forward to a new year filled with milestones and victories for our students. Most of all, I’m excited to have a job where I get to laugh and play with sweet children all day. Thank you so much for sharing your child with us!

Instructional Aide: Linda Doss - Hello my name is Linda Doss. I am pleased to be the IA for LEAP. I am married and live in Columbia. My husband and I have two grown daughters. Our oldest lives in Kansas City and teaches middle school. Our youngest will be a freshman at Mizzou this year. I went to college at Truman State in Kirksville where I received my degree in early childhood education. I received my teaching certificate at the University of Missouri here in Columbia. I have worked with children and families as a life long career and I look forward to meeting and working with all of you.

Speech-language-Pathologist: Amy Marrero: Hi! My name is Amy Marrero. I am so excited to work with my preschool friends this year! I am a Columbia native, but I received my B.S. and M.S. in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, TX. After graduating, I was employed for 7 years at Cook Children’s Medical Center, in Fort Worth, as a speech pathologist working with children with a variety of speech and language needs. When my daughter was born, my husband and I headed “home” to Columbia where I continued to provide speech therapy services in the home through First Steps/BCFR, contracted my services with the Moog School for the Deaf, and then came to work at CPS for ECSE where I am in my 11th year! My husband and I have 2 children, a daughter and a son, and we love to be outside! I’m looking forward to a fun school year!

Speech—language—pathologist—Nicole Hatchett: Hello! My name is Nicole Hatchett and I am a certified speech-language pathologist. I am also affectionately known by my students and co-workers as “Ms. Cole”. I obtained my undergraduate degree in Communication Science and Disorders from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and my Master’s degree in Speech-Language Pathology with an emphasis in Deafness from Fontbonne University in St. Louis Missouri. I have been providing speech and language services for children birth to five for more than 10 years in the Columbia area. I have been full time with Columbia Public Schools Early Childhood Special Education Program for eight years now. I am passionate about what I do and I absolutely love working with young children. It is wonderful to have a job I truly love. When I am not working, you will find me with my family. My husband, Mike and I, have two wonderful children Jack and Anna. We love to bike, camp, watch Mizzou Football, and spend time on our family farm. I am looking forward to working with the LEAP program this year and am especially excited to get to know you and your child.
Columbia Public Schools
Early Childhood Discovery Center
(573) 214-3430

1. Address: 901 Rain Forest Parkway
Columbia MO, 65202

Phone Number: 573-214-3430

ECSE Coordinator: Amy Wilson
Receptionist: Hope McCrary
School Nurse: Jacque Truesdell 573-214-3431
Teacher / SLP: Lisa Zartman
Instructional Aide: Linda Doss
SLP: Amy Marrero
SLP: Nicole Hatchett

2. Hours:
AM session: 8:50-10:50 Monday –Thursday
PM session: 12:50-2:50 Monday –Thursday

In addition some children will receive additional individualized speech therapy services before or after the class period at the discretion of their IEP team.

Classroom activities start promptly at the beginning of the session. It is important that you are prompt when picking up your child due to the classroom scheduling. Thanks for your help with this.

3. Pick Up / Drop off policies:

Doors will be locked during the school day for security purposes. They will be unlocked 5 minutes before the start of each class session. Please, wait in the front foyer for your child’s teacher to walk him/her to the room. Remember to remain with your child until a teacher is present. A child should never be left alone. At the end of the school session, the teacher will bring students 2 at a time from the classroom to meet parents and load busses. Please use the buzzer system for access when doors are locked. This helps us to monitor who is entering and exiting the school building.
If a new adult will be picking up your child, please be sure to let your child’s teacher know ahead of time. It is helpful to send a note with the person’s name and when he/she will pick up your child. Remind the person to bring his/her driver’s license when picking up your child for the first time so we can verify their identity.

We will need to make a copy of all parents’ drivers licenses to put in your child’s file for identification.

If your child rides the bus, please be sure to notify the bus company if they will not be riding on any given day.

4. **When your child is sick:**

When your child is sick please keep him/ her at home. This includes if your child has a fever, a bad cough, colored discharge from nose, or vomiting. Your child may come to school only when his/ her fever/ vomiting has been gone for at least 24 hours. (See information from the nurse in this packet for more detailed information.)

Remember, a current emergency number must be on file at school. Please remember to let us know when your numbers change.

5. **Absences:**

In order to get the most out of the preschool experience it is important that your child attends school regularly. If your child needs to be gone for any reason, please call or email to let your child’s teacher know. If your child rides the bus, you will also need to call the bus company to let the driver know.

6. **Family Involvement:** We love to have families involved in their child’s education. There will be multiple opportunities for you to participate in our classroom. These may include Speech Friday therapy sessions, parent and child visiting classroom, or parent education activities. Please let us know what we could offer that would be helpful to you.

7. **Field Trips:** We may have field trips, time permitting. We’ll let you know in advance and families are always welcome to join us.

8. **Extra Set of Clothes:** Please send an extra set of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, socks). We will keep the clothes at school and send them back at the end of the school year. If you want to swap clothes as seasons change, that would be great.
9. Clothing:
Please send your child to school in comfortable play clothes. Preschool is often messy as we experiment with cooking, paint, glue, markers, etc. While we do our best to protect clothing by using paint shirts / smocks, expect your child to get messy while exploring and learning at school. If your child has difficulty with snaps and zippers (like many preschoolers), you may want to send him/her in clothing he/she can manage independently in the bathroom. We encourage our students to be as independent as possible.

10. What to bring to school:
Your child should bring a backpack to school every day. Please label your child’s backpack (luggage tags work great). If your child wears diapers or pull ups, you may send in a whole package and we will let you know when we are getting low OR you may keep a few diapers in your child’s backpack each day—just let us know which system you prefer. If your child wears diapers / pull ups please send in a container of wipes. We will keep these at school.

11. Visiting the classroom:
If you would like to set up an official classroom visit, please contact Amy Wilson, ECSE coordinator to set up the visit a few days in advance. Her phone number is 573-214-3950 ext 3.

12. PBS:
We use PBS (Positive Behavior Supports) in our classroom. We have 3 class rules (Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Responsible). We will work hard to learn our rules and learn what each one means and looks like in our room. See the included letter to learn more about PBS.

13. Incident Report: (See attached).
If your child is displaying inappropriate behaviors in the classroom, you may receive an incident report letting you know about a particular incident.

14. Newsletters: You will receive newsletters each week notifying you of our current learning targets, as well as important upcoming dates & events. Please read through as you have time.
15 Parent Communication:
We will communicate with you regarding your child’s goals through progress notes that will be sent home at the end of each trimester and a home/school communication folder that will be sent home weekly. We will also send home speech/language home activities as appropriate.

16. Classroom Schedule: (attached)

17. Snack: A small snack is offered during class.
We ask families to donate snack periodically if they are able. If each family donates one snack per month, that usually works out well. Please see the attached snack list for some ideas.
PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOUR CHILD HAS ANY ALLERGIES!

18. Confidentiality Agreement: (attached) We value each family’s right to confidentiality. In order to help protect our students’ right to privacy, we ask that you fill out a confidentiality agreement before participating in school activities (field trips, class parties, volunteering, etc.).

19. School Calendar / Weather dismissals: (attached)
Our preschool is in session according to the elementary school calendar. On inclement weather days school will not be in session. Please listen to TV and radio announcements for cancellations.

AM class will not be in session during late start days.
PM class will not be in session during early release days.
20. **Birthdays / Celebrations** We love to celebrate our kids!! During the school year, you are welcome to send in special snacks for your child’s birthday or other special days. Parents are welcome to join us for snack when we’re celebrating your child. We strive to have a nutritious and healthy eating environment at preschool. Due to the high prevalence of food allergies it is our department policy that all snacks donated to the classroom must be store bought and include a nutritional label.

We talk about healthy eating choices during our snack times. When sending in snacks for birthdays / class parties, please be creative and select healthy snacks for our classroom. Some suggestions: Fruit with cream cheese dip, bagels cut up into small pieces with cream cheese, ice cream or frozen fruit bars, trail mix, cheese and crackers, graham crackers, frozen yogurt bars, fruit kabobs, etc.

21. **Please fill out the following and return to your child’s teacher:**
- Field Trip Permission form
- Health Update (for returning students)
- Photo Permission Form
- Confidentiality form
- LEAP Parent Survey
Language Enrichment and Articulation Preschool (LEAP)

The LEAP classroom is designed to meet the needs of preschool students who have significant delays within the area of communication and who require frequent therapy sessions to make meaningful gains as well as a classroom to promote carryover and generalization of speech and language skills. There are two components to the LEAP program—a Speech and Language focused classroom period and individualized speech and language therapy sessions.

The LEAP class will meet from 8:50-10:50 AM & from 12:50-2:50 PM Monday-Thursday. Students may receive speech therapy immediately before or after this class period upon the recommendation of the child’s IEP team. Students will enroll in either the AM class session or the PM class session.

Speech Therapy: Students who have significant speech needs (i.e., multiple speech sound errors, a motor speech disorder (i.e., dysarthria, Childhood Apraxia of Speech) or exhibit use of multiple phonological processes) may receive up to 4 25-minute therapy sessions per week (as determined by the child’s IEP team). These therapy sessions will be led by one of the speech-language-pathologists within the LEAP program (Amy Marrero, Nicole Hatchett, or Lisa Zartman).

Classroom Session: The two hour classroom session addresses communication skills through typical preschool activities. Class components include circle time / large group (i.e., book reading / literacy activities), small group (i.e., hands on activities such as art / sensory play related to targeted vocabulary or a focus book), snack time (to address pragmatic skills) and an unstructured work time (to allow students the opportunity to use the skills they learn in an unstructured setting with their peers. While our day may look very similar to many other preschool classrooms, each activity is specifically chosen to enhance the speech, language and literacy skills of our students. Classroom activities are chosen to address children’s language development, including phonology (speech patterns), semantics (word knowledge, word use, understanding and use of questions), morphology (word structure), syntax (sentence structure, sentence length), and pragmatics (social language skills including following directions, conversing with peers, communicating wants / needs / ideas effectively). Pre-literacy skills (such as phonological awareness, rhyming, letter-sound knowledge) are also systematically addressed within our classroom as many children with communication delays are at risk for later reading and spelling deficits if these skills are not in place during early school years. In addition, during our classroom session teachers work diligently to carry over specific speech and language skills that have been targeted within a child’s speech therapy sessions. The LEAP classroom is taught by Lisa Zartman, who is dually certified as a speech-language-pathologist and ECSE teacher with the assistance of an instructional aide, Linda Doss.

LEAP is a specialized classroom with an intense focus on speech and language skills. The class does not focus on a traditional preschool curriculum (i.e., play skills, motor skills, social-emotional-behavioral curriculum) although many of these areas will be addressed naturally within our school day.
School Attendance Related to Illness

During the school year, there are increased health concerns due to close proximity to others on a daily basis, weather changes, prevalence of communicable diseases, etc. With the increased possibility of exposure to colds, flu, strep throat, and respiratory infections during the school months, it is a good time to review good health practices and policies for school attendance with regard to illness.

The following are important steps you can take to reduce the risk of illness in your family:

- Thorough handwashing, especially before meals and after toileting.
- Eating well balanced meals.
- A regular schedule of rest (8-10 hours of sleep per night).
- Covering the mouth and nose with a tissue during coughing and washing your hands afterwards.
- Dressing appropriately for weather conditions.

To decrease the spread of communicable diseases, school policy prohibits students from attending school if they exhibit one or more of the following symptoms during the previous 24-hour period:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or greater.
- Vomiting with associated signs of illness.
- Diarrhea.
- An unusual or unexplained rash.
- Other ongoing symptoms of discomfort or immobility due to an injury.
- A concerning health condition that may require further medical evaluation.

Students may return to school when:

- Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea free for 24 hours.
- Other conditions (rash, injury or health concern) subside or with a providers note.
What is Positive Behavior Support (PBS)?

PBS is an approach to preventing problem behaviors by teaching expected behaviors and responding to discipline problems in an effective way.

Our goals are to create and maintain safe learning environments for the children in our program and to teach them the social skills they will need in school and in life.

Most elementary schools in our district use PBS as well, so it is nice to be able to transition children into kindergarten in schools with similar discipline programs.

Our program has a PBS Team that meets monthly to talk about planning and training for staff. Members of our team are available to share information about PBS with other organizations, upon request.

Classroom Management

Each teacher in the Early Childhood program uses PBS a little differently, although everyone has the same three behavior expectations:

Be Safe, Be Kind, and Be Responsible.

- We don't assume that children know how to behave in a 'school way' when they are in our classrooms. We teach those skills to everyone.

Social skills are just like pre-academic skills—they must be taught. Everyone teaches the children what appropriate behavior looks like throughout the day. For example, "We are safe in the hallway when we use our walking feet and keep our hands to ourselves."

Adults model the behavior for the children, give the children many opportunities to practice the behavior, and point out when the children are being safe, kind, or responsible.

When behavior is not acceptable, the adult points that out. For example, if a child leaves an area without cleaning up, the adult says: "Our rule is to be responsible and clean up our toys. Can you show me? Do we need to practice?"

Many of our teachers use three particular behavior management strategies:

PRECORRECTION—reminding children of the expected behaviors before an activity begins,

BODY CHECKS—teaching children what they should be doing in different areas of the building and then reminding them to check to make sure that they are where they need to be, and

TIME AWAY—At times, each of us need a little time away to regain self-control. Our students may be asked to leave an activity for a short period of time to calm down or demonstrate appropriate behavior. When a child's behavior is dangerous to self or others, he/she may be asked to move to a designated safe spot in the classroom.

Incident Reports

In our program we use a Behavior Incident Report to collect data. There are two main purposes:

To help improve our teaching plans for individual children, and

As a communication tool to let parents know there was an incident.

Buddy Up Zone BUZ Teams

When a child has received several incident reports, the teacher may ask for parental permission to talk with our Buddy Up Zone (BUZ) Team to get some ideas for helping the child be successful.

This student support team is made up of early childhood teachers and specialists who work in the program.

Teacher support is available for children with concerns in any area of development (social, behavior, motor skills, concept development, communication, and adaptive behavior).

The BUZ team is gathered to discuss strategies to try in the classroom.

At times, this may lead to a referral to Early Childhood Special Education for a possible evaluation in one of the above listed areas. This could only happen with the consent of parents and with their participation on the team.
Something to think about...

"For a child to learn something new you need to repeat it, on the average, eight times.

For a child to unlearn an old behavior and replace it with a new behavior, you need to repeat the new behavior, on the average, twenty-eight times.

Twenty of those times are used to eliminate the old behavior and eight of the times are used to learn the new behavior."


If you have any questions or would like more information regarding Positive Behavior Support in the Early Childhood Program, contact a behavior consultant at:

Phone: 573-214-3950
555 Vandiver
Columbia, MO 65202
Special Needs Transportation
Procedures for Parents

- Special Needs Transportation is an IEP team decision. Special Transportation should only be considered after all options with Regular Transportation have been exhausted.

- Special Needs Transportation is provided, home to school, school to home, or to a care provider located in either the child’s home attendance boundary or program school boundary.

- Once the IEP team has decided that Special Needs Transportation is required for your child, the case manager will turn in paperwork to the Special Services office. Please allow five to seven business days for the paperwork to be processed.

- When deciding your child’s pick up/drop off location please consider that it must be a consistent location. It is not possible to change the location on a day to day basis. If the location you picked doesn’t work on a certain day then it is your responsibility to transport your child—this includes daycares and programs that may be closed for a day. Also, please be sure to provide the most current phone number where you can be reached during the times your child is being transported.

- To make any changes to your child’s transportation you will need to contact their case manager/teacher at school. The case manager will have to notify the Special Services office in writing of the change, so once again please allow a five to seven business day window for rerouting. You will be notified when the changes will take effect.

- Once your child’s transportation has been processed and is ready to take effect, the transportation secretary at the Special Services office will call you with the bus number(s) and pick up/drop off times. Please know there is a 10 minute window on either side of the pickup/drop off times that you are given.

Please Note: If you have waited 10 minutes from your scheduled time and the bus has not shown up to pick up/drop off your student please call Student Transportation of America (STA) at 214-3860 x 24303.

- Early childhood students on Special Needs Transportation must be accompanied to and from the bus by a parent or designated caregiver. The driver cannot leave the bus. If someone other than the parent/designated caregiver gets the child off the bus, they must have a bus card. The driver will NOT leave a child with anyone who does not have the bus card.

- Parents or guardians must be at the designated drop off location if your student requires parental supervision according to the IEP! Other parents, students and drivers are affected greatly when we are unable to drop off a student as planned.
  - When no one is present at drop off and parental supervision is required:
    a. The driver will stop by the house twice. Be advised, drivers are instructed to NOT honk their horns as notification of arrival.
    b. Attempts will be made by STA, Special Services Secretaries and the school to contact you through whatever phone numbers you have made available.
      - Make sure the school district always has the most up to date contact information for you and your family.
    c. If you cannot be reached at any of the numbers you have given us, your child will be taken to the Columbia Police Department.

- Drivers are asked not to give out their personal phone numbers. Please contact your case manager/teacher at your school for any changes in transportation. For other concerns or questions regarding Special Transportation you may call Special Services at 214 3464.

- Please note: When your child will not be riding the bus for the day please notify STA at 214 3860, extension 24302 or 24303. Also, remember, call STA to report a bus that is late by 10 minutes or more.