



# FAMILY HANDBOOK

## 2023-2024

**Piper Center for Family Studies and Child Development**  
Department of Human Sciences and Design • Child and Family Studies Program



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## Mission

The mission of The Piper Center for Family Studies and Child Development at Baylor University (Piper) is to be a laboratory school that provides model programs for infants, toddlers, and preschool children as well as leadership to students consistent with the teaching, research/creative endeavors, and service missions of the Department of Human Sciences and Design and Baylor University.

Within this mission, Piper provides:

1. Quality programs for young children and their families based on developmental theory, research, and best practices;
2. Holistic education in a child-directed, inquiry-based, play-centered learning environment that emphasizes safety, connection, and opportunity for problem-solving;
3. An exemplary learning environment for Baylor students to observe and interact with young children, apply and analyze concepts learned through coursework, and engage in mentorship with practitioners of many disciplines;
4. A context for researchers interested in furthering the collective understanding of children, families, education, and numerous other related subjects.

5. A collaborative and respectful environment that supports teachers as they educate young children, partner with families, mentor undergraduate students, support research, and continue their lifelong pursuits of learning.

By continually striving for excellence in all aspects of our mission, our laboratory school exemplifies evidence-based pedagogical techniques that can be utilized by professionals in various disciplines to meet the changing needs of our society.

## **Program Goals and Outcomes**

We use our developmental goals as a systematic framework for focusing our program and assessment design. Our teachers are well versed in a wide variety of educational approaches, and we choose teaching strategies, daily routines, classroom arrangements, and curriculum structure that will encourage each child's development in all domains. Teacher observations and documentation of individual development are used to adjust the program to better promote individual growth, as well as to conference with parents about ways we can work as a team to support each child.

Piper administration meets regularly with support from teachers, Robbins College leadership, and parents to determine center-wide goals that support our Mission and the Mission of Baylor University.

## **Educational Philosophy**

At the Piper Center, we trust in the power of play; believing that it is both a foundational right for all children and that it provides immense opportunities for learning. The best way to capture the benefits of play and ensure that children receive the support they need to grow is by utilizing emergent curriculum. Emergent curriculum empowers our teachers to match children's unique needs with developmentally appropriate practices. When preparing lesson plans, our teachers consider children's individual needs and developmental goals, as well as the interests of the group. Our curriculum areas are integrated and overlapping, which creates robust and meaningful experiences that have the capacity to benefit each child in a different way. Each classroom emphasizes creative expression and problem-solving, while maintaining a balance of teacher-led activities with those that children can guide themselves through independently.

### **Reggio Emilia Inspiration**

The Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education, which comes from a small municipality in northern Italy, has greatly inspired much of the work that has been done at the Piper Center over the last decade. This approach stems from a deep respect for

children and invites educators to reflect on ways they can use natural, open-ended materials, art, and music to help children answer questions they have about the world. Visitors to the Piper Center will see this philosophy most clearly through the strong connection between classroom and nature as well as the thoughtful ways teachers document children's learning for them to revisit.

## **Conscious Discipline**

Another important pillar within the school culture of the Piper Center is Conscious Discipline, our philosophy for guidance and social-emotional development. With the tools of Conscious Discipline, adults use Powers like intention, acceptance, and unity, to help children grow the Skills of empathy, assertiveness, composure, and more. The belief that discipline is something we can teach children to have, rather than something that must be done to them, is fundamental to our implementation of this program.

## **Technology**

At the Piper Center, we stand secure in our belief that although technology is a necessary tool in our fast-paced society, young children gain very little from time spent in front of screens. Instead, we prioritize whole-body experiences like digging in the dirt, navigating an obstacle course, finger-painting, and cooking during our school day. Additionally, adults within the center are asked to be mindful about the technology brought into the building in order to promote presence and focus on the children.

## **NAEYC Accreditation**

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has created 10 standards that measure the quality of early childhood programs. The standards were created by a blue-ribbon panel of early childhood experts and are based on the latest early childhood research.

As a NAEYC-accredited program, The Piper Center meets a high-quality standard by:

1. Promoting **positive relationships** between all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth and belonging as a part of a community and to foster each child's ability to contribute as a responsible community member.
2. Implementing a **curriculum** that is consistent with our goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: cognitive, emotional, language, physical, and social.

3. Using a variety of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective **teaching approaches** that enhance each child's learning and development in the context of the program's curriculum goals.
4. Providing ongoing formal and informal **assessment approaches** to provide information on each child's learning and development. These assessments occur in the context of reciprocal communications between teachers and families, and with sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which children and development. Assessment results inform decisions, improve teaching practices, and guide program improvement.
5. Promoting the **nutrition and health** of children and protecting children and staff from injury and/or illness.
6. Employing and **supporting teaching and administrative staff** who have the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
7. Establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with each **child's family** that are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture.
8. Establishing relationships with and using the resources of the **community** to support the achievement of program goals.
9. Providing a safe and healthy **physical environment** with appropriate and well-maintained indoor and outdoor physical environments including facilities, equipment, and materials to facilitate child and staff learning and development.
10. Implementing effective policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program **management** so that all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

Our current NAEYC accreditation is valid until December 1, 2027.

## Texas Regulations

The Piper Center is licensed under the regulatory jurisdiction of the Texas Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Division. We follow all Minimum Standards as set forth by HHS.



Every Piper staff member is responsible for engaging fully in all professional practices relating to maintaining The Piper Center's status as a high quality NAEYC accredited program as well as the Texas Rising Star Provider Certification.

## Laboratory School

The Piper Center for Family Studies and Child Development is a laboratory for Baylor University to train future early childhood teachers and child development specialists as well as a research site for Baylor faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students. The research component to Piper is integral for our continued success and visibility for the University. Enrollment at Piper includes the expectation of participation in the ongoing research studies and student projects. Parents/guardians will always be notified of upcoming research projects at Piper and permission slips will be disseminated to be signed if a research project is outside the typical scope of Piper activities.

Baylor students participate at the center in many capacities. Students observe children from the observation booths as well as in the classroom. They are learning about the children's stages of development and the teachers' methods of working with the children. Students in Child and Family Studies courses may spend several hours each week in the classroom interacting with the children. These students are required to plan activities that are approved by our teachers and then implemented with the children under the supervision of our teachers. A few students do their student teaching with us. These students come daily for six weeks and conduct the lesson planning for two weeks. Many of the students are required to conduct a developmental screening of a child. The children enjoy these one-on-one games with a student.

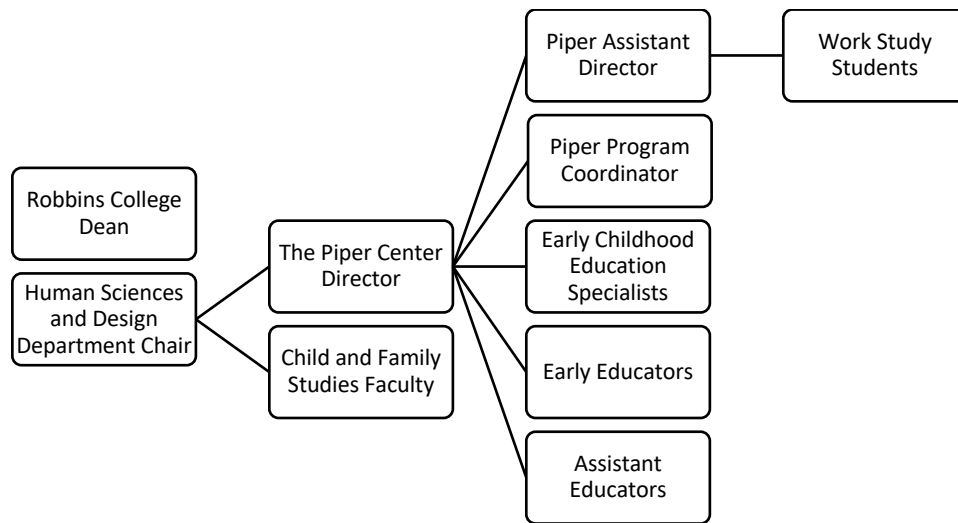
Families may be requested to participate in studies by completing questionnaires or brief interviews. Graduate student research projects conducted at Piper will culminate in a sharing of the results with the Piper community. Child and Family Studies students, as well as content area experts from within and outside Baylor, will offer parent education opportunities.

Student work is always closely supervised by our teachers. Baylor students bring enthusiasm, interest, and new ideas to our program. Being a laboratory school requires consistent evaluation of our work with children as well as timely response to current research in child development and family studies. Our teachers dedicate time to supporting our Baylor students in addition to their role in the classrooms with children. Our administration team meets regularly with faculty in the Department of Human Sciences and Design and supports faculty research and projects in areas such as Interior Design, Nutrition, Psychology, and Speech/Language programs.

To support the professional development of both pre-service and practicing educators, Piper's school staff share the educational approaches that we develop. We offer workshops, consultations, and seminars in a wide range of local and national venues.

When we have on-site training and professional development at Piper, we invite our Waco Early Education community to participate as well as interested Baylor faculty and staff.

## Organization of Piper



### Staff Teams

Piper is staffed by teams of educators: an administrative team, an infant/toddler team, and a preschool team, plus supporting educators who can substitute on any team. All teachers and administrators have many years of experience working with young children as well as academic degrees in fields such as social work, child development, child and family studies, and education. Some Piper staff also have advanced degrees in early childhood

education (see staff biographies on our website or outside your child's classroom). Undergraduate practicum students and student assistants complement each team.

Piper employees are hired and managed according to the Human Resource policies of Baylor University. They are thoroughly oriented, earn a competitive salary, and, if working full time, receive full benefits. Piper teachers have paid planning time individually and in teams. Piper has an extensive professional development program of 80 hours per year as well as support for individual annual goals for growth via additional seminars and professional experiences. Piper educators are encouraged to support research, seek out opportunities in the field, and engage in activities which support professional goals and the Missions of The Piper Center and Baylor University.

### **Community Relationships**

Our experienced educators participate actively in the local and national early childhood professional communities by serving in leadership capacities, giving regular presentations, providing consulting to other programs, and partnering with high-quality programs to develop new avenues early childhood professional development. All of our partner organizations seek ways to support each other and create synergies between their professional development initiatives. These efforts enhance the quality of reflective training opportunities and serve as a resource for early childhood educators across the broad continuum of professional development.

### **Parents as Partners**

Piper acknowledges parents as the child's first and most significant teacher. Parents provide important information at enrollment and throughout the year which enables us to truly partner together in an educational, individualized, and loving environment.

Piper offers adult family members and other caregivers a variety of ways to become involved in the child's school community, to participate in family activities, and to confer with staff to build a strong bond between home and school. During the year, each teacher meets with parents to share information about the child's school and home life. Regular communication is encouraged among families, caregivers, and school staff, so that multiple perspectives on the child's development and interests and be used to enhance the child's school experience. In addition to the detailed family handbook and informative website, we schedule routine parent meetings and conferences, distribute regular whole school and classroom newsletters, and enjoy frequent spontaneous interaction. A family bulletin board in the entry hallway provides duplicate information, extra copies of forms, menus, interesting articles, flyers about local family events and resources, and other parent resources. Each teaching team provides a daily classroom update via Learning Genie to promote family communication at home about the school day. The administrative team provides reminders and other details for families via Learning Genie as our main form of communication.

Adult family members can use the observations booths with headsets to observe their child in the program. Booth reservations may be scheduled in advance by calling the office at (254) 710-4373; walk-ins are welcome when there are booths available. If you want to talk to a teacher, please schedule a time with them in advance. Families are welcome to observe their children in the outdoor classroom as well.

Popular family events, including Fall Festival, Baylor Homecoming Parade, Christmas parties, Valentine's parties, the Week of the Young Child activities, Diadeloso, and the annual teacher appreciation week offer the families a chance to participate in their child's school. In addition, many adult family members extend their involvement by volunteering in school-wide and/or classroom activities. We have a Piper Family Council, which supports our family events during the school year and offers a link between our school and our families. These volunteers coordinate the annual teacher appreciation week activities as well as meet with administration as representatives of their individual classrooms. All parents are encouraged to attend the annual meeting in September.

If you have questions or have experienced a problem at home or at school, please approach the child's primary teacher or one of the administrators directly. Recent potty-training efforts, changes in caregiving arrangements, the death of a pet, an extended absence of a parent, etc. can all cause changes in a child's demeanor and behavior at school, so timely communication helps the staff respond the most effectively to the child. We make every effort to communicate with children and families in a positive manner to plan strategies, resolve issues, and provide assistance proactively. Please feel free to suggest ways that we can strengthen our partnership with you as, together, we seek to provide a high-quality learning environment for everyone in our school community.

### **Open Door Policy**

All Piper administrators have an open-door-policy and are happy to meet with parents. The Piper Director and Assistant Director may also join conversations with teachers and parents, particularly if there is a concern or challenging situation. Parents and/or teachers may request that the Director and/or Assistant Director observe a child.

### **Program Evaluation**

All families are invited to participate in Piper's annual program evaluation survey. They are also encouraged to contribute to our continuous quality improvement via committee work and Family Council meetings. Opportunities for evaluation and results of previous evaluation are highlighted in the parent meeting held at the beginning of the school year, and they are updated as necessary on Piper's website.

## **Commitment to Ethical Conduct**

Regardless of position, each staff member's job description includes the following priorities for activity and interaction:

*Speak and behave in a professional manner with staff, children, parents, university partners, visitors, service people, etc. at all times. Strive to be a team player, taking initiative to help with tasks, share space and materials, offer support and constructive critique, etc. for the benefit of the whole staff. Keep the "big picture" of our school's entire mission in mind to effectively balance competing demands. Follow the school and university policies and procedures carefully and with attention to timeliness. Be prepared to flexibly adapt to the diverse situations that arise in early childhood education, particularly in a university lab school. Use the core values and standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to guide all aspects of program implementation and enhancement. Abide by the ethical standards of NAEYC with particular attention to confidentiality.*

Piper staff members follow the ethical principles of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

We share the following core values as guides for interactions with other staff members, parents, children, students, researchers, university employees, etc.

1. We use direct eye contact, smiles, warm tones of voice, positive touch, social conversations, and joint laughter to support the development of effective working relationships.
2. Our partnership in learning is supported by regular reciprocal communication; affirming recognition of effort and accomplishment; predictable, developmentally appropriate responsiveness to initiative, emotion and concerns; and proactive conflict resolution.
3. We strive to respect each individual and work to create a positive emotional climate for all learners, with sensitivity to differences in age, ability, background, language, culture, religion, and family structure.
4. We aim to eliminate gender bias by using gender-neutral terminology, such as "friends" instead of "boys and girls" or "firefighter" instead of "fireman". This encourages learners of all genders to explore all the activities we offer, and focuses our affirmation on approach, effort, and accomplishment rather than gender identity.
5. We are committed to reaching out to people of different races, genders, ethnicities, and abilities; we strive to create an environment of inclusion that celebrates our differences and highlights our commonalities. Our program accepts children with

special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child consistent with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Because our mission is multifaceted, we aim to build positive relationships with all learning partners by appropriately balancing equity of care for the group with services tailored for individual needs. Our goal is to develop the school's caring community for learning through broad participation and involvement in program improvement for all of our staff, families, and university partners.

### **Statement of Commitment to Confidentiality**

***All information regarding any center family and/or children is to be treated as confidential.***

All staff members, students, researchers, observers, practicum students, student employees, and volunteers must sign a Statement of Commitment to Confidentiality (see below) before entering our classrooms. According to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct:

*"We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage, personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness working with their children."*

Because the staff at Piper works as a team, with every adult interacting at times with every child, all admissions, observations, and other assessment data may be shared with all staff members. Information about family situations, special needs, and other sensitive topics are shared on an as-needed basis. Student workers, volunteers, and other adults working within the school are informed of such sensitive issues when they are a part of keeping the child safe, supporting the child's inclusion, or when the information might impact their coursework.

All children's records are locked in the director's office, and only those with "need to know" are allowed to view the child's folder. Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g), records related to center children and their families, and information contained in those records, are to be shared with other staff or other university officials only if that person has a legitimate educational interest (i.e., on a "need to know" basis only). Requests from third parties, including outside agencies, must be evaluated by center administrative staff, in consultation with University Counsel in appropriate circumstances, before any disclosure is made. In most cases, information cannot be disclosed to any third party without the written consent of the child's legal guardian.

University students, Aramark staff, volunteers, etc. are not included in discussions of children and families, except to provide information that is required for them to complete their jobs. Sensitive information must not be shared with everyone, only those who are directly involved.

Employees are prohibited from discussing children and families with or in the presence of other children and families.

**Statement of Confidentiality:**

*I agree to discuss the families, children, and staff for educational and classroom purposes only. I will also choose carefully whether to discuss a child’s behavior within their hearing distance, doing so only when it is in the child’s best interest. When I encounter families, children, or staff outside the school, I will be courteous, but use discretion in any comments I might make. I will not post or share any information, picture, or comments about Piper children, families, students, or staff on any social media platform.*

*I know confidentiality is an ethical obligation and that it is required for my continued involvement at the Piper Center. By signing this statement, I agree to learn all aspects of the Piper Center’s confidentiality policy and practice them at all times.*

In addition, we require that the families respect the privacy, not only of their child(ren), but of all other children and families. We encourage open, honest, informal, and frequent communication among staff and parents. However convenient, hallways, classrooms, or the outdoor classroom are not appropriate places for conversations about sensitive matters. A child’s teacher or the director may suggest a phone call or meeting to discuss concerns raised initially in regular conversation that would be more appropriately addressed privately.

## **Negotiating Differences and Difficult Situations Between Families and Staff**

We recognize that occasionally circumstances arise in which families and staff may have conflict. Sometimes e-mails can be misinterpreted, and face-to-face meetings may be required. A cooling off period may be initiated by a member of the Piper management team. Faculty from Robbins College, Human Sciences and Design, and/or Child and Family Studies are available to assist with mediation if necessary.

## **Curriculum and Assessment**

### **Curriculum**

The first core principle at Piper relates to how children learn. It is only through active and meaningful engagement and experimentation with objects and people that children can begin to construct their knowledge, logical reasoning, and develop social relationships. This happens most easily through children’s play and socialization experiences.

Many of our curriculum activities grow from our objectives for individuals, groups of children, and our classroom environment. For example, the dramatic play area affords many opportunities for socialization and language development. Blocks are wonderful for exploration of relative size and shape (geometric relationships), as well as fine motor manipulation. Music and movement offer opportunities for socialization, bodily kinesthetics, pitch and rhythm awareness, and appreciation of cultures. Activities like painting and working with playdough develop interest, fine motor skills, socialization, sensitivity to color, media, form, shape, etc.

Our curriculum areas are integrated and overlapping. Each classroom emphasizes creative expression and problem-solving, while maintaining a balance of teacher-planned activities with those that emerge from the children's interests, abilities, goals, and objectives. As children move into early elementary education, there is increasingly greater focus on the acquisition of academic skills.

The second principle at Piper relates to the role of the teacher. At Piper, each teacher creates an intellectually vital, emotionally safe, and supportive setting in order to encourage every child's overall development. To do so, all teachers have a detailed knowledge of child development as a foundation for understanding and assessing children's growth and development. The developmental trajectory of students is reflected in Piper's curriculum, which includes simple to increasingly more complex activities in each domain.

The previous two principles guide our curriculum planning and the implementation of it. Additionally, they both have their roots in **inquiry-based curriculum**. Inquiry-based curriculum engages children through ongoing projects and activities, building on their specific questions and interests. Our teachers are skilled at planning activities that challenge children to learn while fostering a sense of success and accomplishment. These projects are documented in order to highlight children's learning. We develop our own plans to provide children with a variety of opportunities for learning and encourage broad exploration. In addition, we strive to support a variety of social experiences by organizing our time and space to balance individual, pair, small group, and large group activities. We make accommodations as necessary for children who are differently abled and provide all children with access to semiprivate areas to work or play alone. Staff members serve as coaches as children practice social skills involved in peer interactions, friendship formation, and conflict resolution. Throughout the day, we engage children in conversation, with extra support for peer conversation at lunch and snack times.

Inquiry-based curriculum is sensible but not predictable. It requires practitioners' trust in the power of play and trust in spontaneous choice making, among other possibilities. Good programs for young children encourage children to become competent players. Children's programs that are also good for teacher growth encourage teachers to become



competent players as well, choosing among possibilities, and thus, creating their own hands-on understanding of the teaching-learning process.

*“The power of inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning is its potential to increase intellectual engagement and foster deep understanding through the development of a hands-on, mind-on, and research-based disposition towards teaching and learning. Inquiry honors the complex, interconnected nature of knowledge construction striving to provide opportunities for both teachers and students to collaboratively build, test, and reflect on their learning” N. Stephenson, 2014.*

Inquiry-based curriculum describes the kind of curriculum that develops when exploring the child’s interests, seeking more understanding, intellectually engaging, and embracing what is personally meaningful to children. The core idea is that organic, whole learning evolves from the interaction of the classroom participants (i.e., both children and adults). “As caring adults, we make choices for children that reflect our values; at the same time, we need to keep our plans open-ended and responsive to children” (Jones and Nimmo, 1994, p.3). In inquiry-based curriculum, both adults and children have initiative and make decisions. This power to impact curriculum decisions and directions means that sometimes curriculum is also negotiated between what interests children and what adults know is necessary for children’s education and development. Ideas for curriculum emerge when responding to the interests, questions, and concerns generated within a particular environment by a particular group of people at a particular time (Cassady, 1993). Inquiry-based curriculum is never built on children’s interests alone. Teachers and parents also have interests worth bringing into the curriculum. The values and concerns of all adults involved help the classroom culture evolve.

### **Explorations Enhance Skills**

Through explorations, the children develop:

- A sense of themselves as competent learners
- Strategies for collaborating with peers and adults
- Approaches to communicating their ideas verbally and visually
- Means of discovering new ideas about physical properties
- Skills for smaller motor manipulation of tools and materials as well as large motor actions, together with an awareness of health and safety practices
- Means for expressing their creative ideas through drama, movement, music, and visual arts.

### **Zero Screen Time**

At Piper, we have a zero-screen time policy and do not utilize screens with our children.

### **Assessment Plan**

Children attending Piper shall be involved in an ongoing assessment process conducted by their classroom teacher with support from the child’s family. One part of this is using

the Ages and Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition (ASQ-3™), and Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional, Second Edition (ASQ:SE-2™). This developmental screening tool is for ages one month to sixty-six months. We administer the questionnaire regularly to have an accurate picture of where every child is developmentally. The first ASQ-3™ will be completed within 60 days of new school year enrollment in August each year and subsequent ASQ-3s™ will be completed every two months for infants and as part of the Janaury family conferences. The ASQ:SE-2™ is completed by the child's primary caregiver at home during enrollment and is a highly reliable tool with a deep, exclusive focus on the social and emotional development of the child. Parents usually complete this twice annually in advance of parent/teacher conferences. Both the ASQ-3 and the ASQ-SE may be completed additionally if concerns arise.

Because the ASQ-3™ is completed by teachers and parents who know the child best, they get the most accurate results, and they allow parents to become an integral part of the screening process. This tool is linked to developmental milestones which helps parents understand child development and their own child's skills. The questionnaires reveal a child's strengths as well as areas of concern. When areas of concern arise in the screening process, teachers discover and record necessary information to plan for each child's needs in the classroom. The ASQ-3™ scores will provide teachers and administration with an additional program evaluation tool to show areas of strength and opportunities for growth in our curriculum.

Occasionally, staff and/or parents identify the need for additional screening and referral for professional diagnostic assessment. In those cases, staff and parents typically include the director in dialogue for the purpose of more precisely identifying the focus for screening/diagnosis and to review the resources available to children and families in our community, which heavily depends on where the family lives in the Waco area and what type of health insurance the family has.

Teachers maintain a portfolio of developmental progress for every child at Piper using Learning Genie (portfolio assessment). The electronic portfolio will include anecdotal records: ASQ-3™ and ASQ:SE™, work samples, pictures, informal notes, and developmentally appropriate skill sets. Families and students will be asked to contribute to the assessment and portfolio contents. The contents of the portfolio shall always be made available to the children and their families. The electronic portfolios will follow the child throughout their time at Piper.

### **Uses of Assessment Results**

Results of Piper children's assessments are primarily used to shape the current year's program planning and to discuss individual children's developmental progress with parents, so that we can work together to best support each child's growth. In addition, the group results impact the school's quality improvement process via each teaching team's annual evaluation and the whole school's annual evaluation, both of which are conducted each May in preparation for enhancements implemented in the next school year.

## Parent Conferences

Teachers will arrange parent-teacher conferences in August and January. These are designed for parents and teachers to share their observations of the growth of the child in physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development. The conferences also provide conversation for the parent/parents' goals for their child that support curriculum planning. The parents will be notified in advance and will be provided a choice of times that are available for conferences, which are generally conducted via Zoom. Home visit conferences may also be arranged if desired by both the teacher and the family.

## School Calendar and Hours

At enrollment time each year, parents will receive a school calendar for the subsequent school year, including days and hours of operation. Piper follows the Baylor University calendar for closings. Additional closings for staff development are noted on the Piper calendar. As a true laboratory school, it is imperative that Piper staff have designated time to meet with students, participate in research, and offer/attend professional development. There is also time during closures for facility deep cleaning, organization, and maintenance.

**Piper reserves the right to make changes to the calendar and/or hours of operation during the year if required by Baylor, Texas Child Care Licensing, and/or national or local emergency situations. Bad weather days and other emergency early release or closure days will not be refunded.**

Diligent effort is made to provide a consistent and regular schedule in each of our classrooms. Consistent late arrival can be disruptive to the child and the classroom, making it difficult for the child to establish a routine. **We ask parents to notify the staff by 9:00 AM if their child will be attending or arriving late. Please provide an estimated time of arrival if arriving late.**

If a family arrives late without calling the center, we may not have a lunch available for that child/ren. In that case, the parents would need to provide a packed lunch from home that is disposable and does not require cooking. If those criteria are not met, the child may not remain at school. **Fast food is not acceptable.**

**We ask that families not drop off or pick up their children between the hours of 12:00 PM and 2:30 PM, as these are designated rest hours. Drop off and pickup during these times is disruptive to sleeping children.**

We value and respect your child's time with you and will make every effort to work within your family's unique scheduling needs. The administrative team may request a conference with a family should there be continued concern with the child's schedule at Piper. If the

conference does not positively impact the situation, the family may be asked to withdraw from care.

## Orientation for Children

The entry process is carefully planned to make the children's first days of school as reassuring as possible. The child's first school experience is often a visit with a parent or caregiver to become familiar with the space, the teacher, and other members of the school community. After that, the scheduled phasing-in days involve only half of the class at a time, with teachers focusing on helping the children get to know each other, become familiar with the space, and learn the classroom's routines. Parents should plan to be available during these days in case the child is not yet ready to separate. The regular school schedule begins during the second week of school. For most children, this means attending the regularly scheduled hours and following the regular greeting and dismissal process. Parents and teachers may collaborate on alternate plans for children whose separation requires a more individualized approach. For children who start school at other points during the year, we develop a unique phasing-in program.

Once the regular schedule begins, it is important for the children to arrive promptly so that they can participate fully in the day's activities. The start of the day often affects the child's whole experience. Being picked up on time is equally important. Young children need the security of knowing that they will be picked up at similar times to other children. For this and reasons relating to staffing, picking up your child on time is essential.

## Routines and Transitions

Each classroom has its own specific schedule according to the children's ages and developmental needs.

The infant classroom's schedule is based on each individual infant's needs and wants, their eating, napping, and playtime. Other classrooms provide a schedule at the beginning of each year that follows an outline *similar* to this:

- **7:30:** Greeting and activities ready to explore.
- **8:00:** Breakfast snack
- **8:30-9:45:** Outside play for Preschool Team/Indoor activities and group time for Infant/Toddler Team
- **9:45-10:45:** Classes transition indoors and/or outdoors for new environment (spaces such as library, gross motor studio, light and shadow room may be used)
- **10:45-11:00:** Classes transition indoors and prepare for lunch
- **11:15-11:45:** Lunch for all classes
- **11:45-12:30:** Transition to bathroom/diaper check/quiet activities/nap prep
- **12:30-2:30:** Nap Time

- **2:30-2:45:** Bathroom/nap items away
- **2:45:** Afternoon snack
- **3:15-4:00:** Indoor project work or outdoor classroom
- **4:00-5:00:** Outdoor classroom or indoor project work if weather prevents outdoors
- **5:00-5:30:** Pick-Up transitions and good-byes

## The Child's Belongings

Children should come to school dressed in comfortable and washable play clothes. Please avoid belts, overalls, suspenders, jumpsuits, tight fitting clothing, and clothing with complicated fasteners. For your child's safety, dress your child with sturdy, closed-toe, rubber-sole shoes (no flipflops or backless shoes). **Sneakers are the preferred footwear and are required for riding trikes and/or scooters on the playground.** You may wish to send your child to school in layers (i.e., a sweater over a shirt), so that the child can self-adjust to the temperature of the room. Send extra changes of clothing for your child to be kept at school in case a child's clothes become wet or soiled. Please include sneakers, socks, shirts, pants, and underwear and label all clothes with your child's name. Remember to update the extra sets as the weather changes. **If your child has an accident at school and we do not have additional clothing available, you will be called and expected to bring additional clothing.**

Provide adequate clothing for your child and label all items. We spend time outside every day, except in extreme cold/hot temperatures, with thunder and lightning, or during severe weather warnings. Our outdoor classroom has areas of sun and shade, so providing clothes to layer for comfort is essential. In the winter, send gloves, hats, and coats. Remember that play is a child's work and much of play is dirty. The children will paint, dig in dirt, roll down hills, play in mud, play with bugs, crawl on the floor, cook, mash playdough, and more. We have smocks for children, but paint often finds a way to get on clothes. The teachers have had success getting paint off of their own clothes with cold water, *Spray n' Wash*, and some elbow grease at the sink.

During our "water day", we request that children wear a swimsuit that covers their midriff (this typically means a one-piece swimsuit for girls and swim trunks with a swim shirt for boys). We also ask that children bring a labeled beach towel from home to use for the day. Water days are usually on Wednesdays in the summer months. We play in sprinklers, water tables, and sometimes with the hose.

**Piper does not allow any toys to be brought from home (with the exception of a child's lovey- see explanation of Loveys).** Bringing toys often leads to disagreements with classmates and upset feelings. There is also a chance the toy is not safe for the classroom, or the toy might get lost while at Piper. *Toys should not be brought to school and kept in a child's backpack, as this encourages a child to seek out their backpack during the school day.*

There are items that can be brought from home that are considered “found treasures”. The teachers are always eager for you to share these items with the class. Shells from the beach, wildflowers, snails, bugs, seeds, bird nests, magazine pictures, interesting bottles or containers, old jewelry, and many more things are valued by the children and the teachers. Children often like to share things from their house. The interest of bringing things to school can be redirected from toys to “found treasures”.

Security items are also acceptable to bring and usually called “Loveys”. They are important to children and often misunderstood or not respected as adults. Security items may include blankets, stuffed animals, and pacifiers. These transitional items, or self-comforting items, will be respected by our teachers. Please label them clearly. As your child adjusts to our program and begins to need their security item less, we will put the item in their cubby. We will not force your child to separate from this item, but we will help your child find new ways to be comforted and feel safe. Loveys should be safe to sleep with during nap time for children over age one.

## Food Allergies and Restrictions

Food allergies can be life threatening. If your child has a food allergy or restriction, please contact the main office. You will need to fill out a form that asks for an action plan. This will be the form that is used for emergency care regarding an allergic reaction, and it will also have appropriate food substitutions listed. This form must be updated yearly at a minimum and may need a physician statement, depending on the severity of the allergy. It is our practice to alert all staff about any child that has a food allergy, not just the classroom teachers. This ensures that, even if a teacher is not here, other caregivers are aware.

Depending on the allergy and/or restriction, we may request that you look at each month’s menu and let us know in advance if there items your child cannot eat. We have a Nutrition Binder in the office with all ingredients and nutrition information available, which parents are welcome to look at any time.

## Meals

A menu is posted in the hallway by the front door and outside your child’s classroom. All meals and snacks are prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the US Department of Agriculture: Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. Updated menus are sent monthly through Learning Genie to each family. Our menus are evaluated twice a year by a registered dietician on faculty at Baylor. Piper will serve a breakfast snack, lunch, and afternoon snack daily. Piper classrooms are **peanut-free environments**. We do not serve peanut butter or any type of nut. We ask that you only send nut-free foods with your child if you are providing meals, snacks, or treats.

Breakfast snack will be served from 8:00-8:30 AM. If you arrive at Piper after this time, we ask that your child eat breakfast at home. **If your child has not arrived by 9:00 AM, we request that you call to let us know if your child will be coming to school late and the estimated arrival time.** This will help to let the kitchen know to include your child in the lunch count. If your child is not here, and we do not receive a call or a pre-arranged late arrival time, our chef may not have enough lunches prepared. Lunch is served from 11:15 AM-11:45 AM, and afternoon snack is served at 2:45 PM each day.

If your child will be arriving near the end of snack or a meal, please plan to stay and sit with your child while they eat. It is difficult for a teacher to serve a late child while managing the rest of the class's transition to diaper changes, toilet time, and rest activities.

Bottles (breast milk or formula) and food for infants who are not eating table foods yet, must be provided by their family. Label all cups, cup lids, bottles, bottle lids, and caps with the infant's first name and last initial. Label breast milk with the date expressed, and all formula with the date opened as well as the child's first name and last initial.

We have a room for nursing mothers with a comfortable chair and electrical access. You may nurse your child or pump. We can also store your milk in the fridge for you to take home later.

After the infant classroom, children may not bring food from home unless they have food that is part of a special diet plan. All foods must be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date it was prepared. The special diet plan must be approved by the child's physician or a dietician. The foods brought from home must meet the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. Piper must have this plan in writing. Foods brought from home must be taken to the kitchen, so they can be stored properly. While we do our best to accommodate dietary restrictions, our chef cannot cook individual meals.

## Holidays and Birthdays

At Piper, holidays are viewed as educational opportunities that give us the chance to learn about our diverse school community. As a part of our emphasis on family identity and respect for diversity, we encourage children to talk about their family traditions, and we share stories and songs related to the meaning of holidays. We plan age-appropriate activities to involve children in preparing for simple school celebrations and to contribute to family events (i.e., basic cooking, making gifts, and so forth). We limit our school celebrations to very brief spans of time (typically one afternoon) to attempt to maintain our regular school routine.

Piper will have different events at Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and other days selected by teachers. Some events occur in individual classrooms (such as Valentine's Day parties) and some are center-wide (such as our Costume Parade). If your family does not celebrate these holidays, please let the teachers know. We will discuss



with you how we can include your families' celebrations and how we can support your child during the holidays at Piper. We enjoy adding each family's special holiday traditions to our celebrations to encourage you to share with us. Our goal is to offer an inclusive facility within our Christian university environment.

**We ask that you bring healthy food for our celebrations.** The teachers will specify what is appropriate to bring to parties. Part of our curriculum is teaching children about good foods. Learning that we can have fun at parties and still eat healthy foods will help our children learn to make healthy food choices.

A child's birthday is a very special event. We recognize each child on their special day with a unique classroom experience, like making a birthday crown or choosing the group time book. We will not sponsor a birthday party at the center. Parents are welcome to bring invitations to birthday parties for elsewhere and we will distribute them to all the children in the room. Please mail invitations from home to individual children if the whole class is not invited.

## Field Trips

Field trips will be planned to enhance the learning experience of your child. Field trip information will be posted at the entrance to your child's room at least one week before the trip. Some of the places the four-year-old class has gone include the fire station, The Discovery Center, Homestead Heritage, HEB, the library, and Baylor. The younger children may take walking trips near-by. Parents are required to sign a permission slip for each trip individually and may be asked to pay a small fee for admission. We maintain appropriate ratios at all times on field trips and rely on family volunteers for these special events to be successful.

Transportation may be provided by Baylor-supplies vehicles. Only qualified drivers will be used. In this case, parents will provide car seats or boosters for their children to use. If conditions cause a field trip to be postponed, parents will be notified. Sometimes children may go on walks and/or buggy rides to experience our neighborhood. Cell phones and first aid/emergency backpacks will be carried on all field trips.

## Health and Safety Guidelines

Health and Safety are top priorities at Piper. Each individual's vigilance regarding health and safety issues contributes significantly to our effectiveness. Always assume that you are the only one who notices a problem or potential problem and bring it to the attention of a staff person.

Staff members are responsible for maintaining a healthy environment. We begin with our own health by providing a Tuberculosis clearance upon hire, a yearly TB check-in



questionnaire, and following strict illness exclusions as required for children. All staff members submit to criminal record and child abuse history checks as part of the employment process. All teachers and administrators are CPR and First Aid certified. We annually participate in child abuse and neglect trainings as well as review our personal safety procedures. Each classroom has a well-stocked first aid kit, so do the office and outdoor sheds. Each teacher has a small backpack with basic first aid and emergency information that is used for all field trips, with additional supplies for emergency situations. We practice a variety of evacuation and lock-down drills with the children, as specified in our Emergency Action Plan, in a serious but non-dramatic fashion. Members of the administrative team conduct monthly safety checks of the entire facility, and we work with staff and university personnel to rectify any hazards identified. Staff members are responsible for daily checks of their classrooms and shared spaces for hazards such as missing safety covers on outlets, elevated water temperature in sinks, discarded cigarettes, or trash in the outdoor classroom, etc.

Piper is a smoke-free environment, has a safe water supply from the Waco Water and Sewer Authority, and heating, cooling, and ventilations systems maintained in accordance with national standards. Baylor's Environmental Health and Safety Department has abated all asbestos, and lead from Piper, and does periodic checks for other environmental hazards. They also diligently monitor the status of our safety equipment and use an integrated pest management program.

With the help of university cleaning staff, we follow NAEYC's frequency table for cleaning and sanitation throughout the school, including toys and water play areas. All staff members follow standard precautions to minimize the spread of infectious disease and store hazardous materials in locked cabinets. We follow parent and/or health professional recommendations regarding children who have allergies, and we limit classroom pets to fish, worms, insects, and mammals. The mammals participate in semi-annual vet checks.

We use the Child Care Weather Watch chart to determine safe temperatures for outdoor play, and we subscribe to an air quality alert system that provides notices of hazards in the area. Our outdoor classroom always has shade available under the trees and play structures. During warmer months when children are outside for a longer time and/or wearing bathing suits, we will apply sunblock with a minimum UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 if it is authorized in writing and provided by the family. Families must apply the initial application before or during drop-off; teachers will re-apply after rest.

At this time, our area is not designated by health authorities as high-risk for insect-borne disease, however, we offer daily application of insect repellent when parents provide written authorization and appropriate repellent.

Please send lotion forms of insect repellants and sunscreen: ***no aerosol sprays.***

Because hand-washing is the #1 preventative measure to avoid the spread of disease, we explicitly teach, scaffold, and monitor hand-washing procedures. Our procedure uses liquid soap and running water, with vigorous and thorough rubbing for at least 10 seconds, followed by paper towel drying. Adults as well as children wash our hands upon entry, before snacks and meals, before and after food preparation, after toileting and diapering, after contact with bodily fluids, after handling garbage or cleaning, after play in the water table, and after any messy activities or contact with pets. Visiting family members and lab students are asked to wash their hands upon entry to the school. In addition, we provide hand sanitizer throughout the center *for adult use* when sinks are not immediately accessible.

Piper uses outside agencies (Baylor Communications and Sciences Facility and the Altrusa Society) to provide annual vision, hearing, and speech/language screening. Participation in this service is free of charge and parents receive a copy of the screenings.

Piper Center for Family Studies and Child Development is a Gang-Free zone, per Texas Penal Code 71.028.

### **Staffing and Supervision**

We maintain the following ratios, which are in accordance with NAEYC and better than state ratios.

Infants 1:4  
Toddlers 1:5  
Twos: 1:6  
Preschool: 1:10

As a lab school, we must keep lower ratios to provide mentorship to the Baylor students in our center. We also need to observe students during their classroom activities and scaffold their learning.

The benefits of lower ratios and smaller group size for children include: stronger social relationships with peers, an increase in verbal interactions between adults and children, and higher cognitive development in children. Low child to teacher ratios allow for a healthier and safer environment for everyone. These ratios are applicable both indoors and outdoors. Field trip ratios are 1:1 for children ages 0-23 months, 1:2 for 2-year-olds, 1:6 for 3-year-olds, and 1:8 for 4-year-olds. Parent volunteers are sometimes necessary on field trips for safety purposes.

When children are present in the classroom, there are at least two adults present when the ratios require two adults. In the infant, toddler, and two-year-old classrooms the teachers supervise children by both sight and sound at all times. Preschool children ages 30 months – 5 years are also monitored by sight and sound, but, for short intervals, may be monitored by sound only with frequent check-ins (i.e., children who are using the toilet

independently). Classroom space is designed so that there are no areas of the room where children can hide.

Laboratory students and observation students do not count in our ratios.

## **Illness and Injury**

Piper cannot admit an ill child for care if one or more of the following is exhibited:

1. An illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in care (i.e., a child is inconsolable, sleeping all day, laying down for extended periods of time both indoors and outdoors, cannot control toileting when toilet trained, etc.).
2. An illness results in greater need than the caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of other children in the classroom (i.e., vomiting, uncontrollable/frequent toileting, etc.)
3. The child has one of the following:
  - a. A tympanic (ear) temperature of 100° F or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of illness.
  - b. An oral temperature of 101° F or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of illness.
  - c. An armpit temperature of 99° or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of illness.
4. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, diarrhea, vomiting, rash with fever, mouth sores, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill.
5. A care professional has diagnosed a child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate the child is no longer contagious.
6. An infectious disease (chicken pox, measles, strep throat, etc.; readmission is based on Texas Department of Health Guidelines).
  - a. Croup (until symptoms subside)
  - b. Lice (may return after treatment and removal of ALL nits and eggs)
  - c. Any unexplained rash
  - d. Hand, Foot, and Mouth (may return when all blisters are gone)
7. Any skin infection, boils, ringworm, impetigo, or open sores.
  - a. Pink eye or any other eye infections (may return 24 hours after treatment if symptoms are gone)
8. Other signs or symptoms of illness not listed above (readmission guidelines offered by the American Academy of Pediatrics will be followed).

Please notify the teacher immediately if your child has been exposed to any contagious disease, such as chicken pox, Covid-19, influenza, etc. All contagious illnesses will be posted for the parent's notification, with respect to confidentiality. The Piper Center follows CDC guidelines, Texas Health and Human Services regulations, and Baylor policies when determining response to Covid-19. At the time of this publication, children or adults who are exposed to or test positive for Covid-19 must inform the director, who will confirm whether there is a required quarantine period, and if so, the duration, with the Baylor Medical Director.

Staff members greet children at the beginning of the day with a health check. **Parents must stay until the health check is complete, and the staff member has cleared the child for participation at the center that day.** Children should report to the center in good health and ready to participate in school. **If a child has needed acetaminophen or ibuprofen (Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, or any other fever reducer) in the past 24 hours, he or she is not well enough to be at school and should remain home.**

Young children may experience illness during school hours that interferes with their ability to participate in group activities. In the event of an illness, the child will be excluded from group and cared for until a parent, legal guardian, or caregiver arrives to transport the child home or to a medical professional. **The expectation is that the parent will arrive within 30 minutes to pick-up the ill child.** Piper is not licensed as an ill-child facility and cannot provide lengthy 1:1 supervision of excluded children.

Young children will also experience or sustain "bumps" during the course of the day, especially in the outdoor classroom. Usually, these situations are handled with simple comfort, a drink of water, a sympathetic band-aid, or an ice pack. When a child sustains a cut, bruise, or other injury, a staff member will provide first aid care that is appropriate to the injury or illness specified in our pediatric first aid training. A parent, guardian or caregiver will be notified following first aid care. Most notifications will come through Learning Genie. An incident report will be completed by staff within one business day. Copies of the incident report are kept in a file in the central office, the child's file, and given to the family.

In the event of a serious accident or illness, staff members will provide first aid care appropriate to the injury or illness according to procedures specified in center pediatric first aid training, which may include the additional action of contacting Baylor Police and EMS. Parents or legal guardians will be notified should this occur. If necessary, a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital preferred by the family or recommended by EMS, either in a campus security vehicle or ambulance. In these cases, center incident reports are substituted by EMS reports.

Readmission of a child recovering from a communicable disease or disabling illness shall be based on the recommendations of the Texas Department of Health or the American

Academy of Pediatrics. Each teacher has a copy of the center's full health policies. These include a stipulation that children must be free of fever, without the use of fever-reducing medication, diarrhea, and vomiting for at least 24 hours before returning to the center. **The Piper Center reserves the right to refuse care for a child even with a doctor's note.**

Piper is required by Child Care Licensing to have each four-year-old child's vision and hearing tested annually. This policy may be found at the Health Department's website ([www.hshs.state.tx.us/vhs](http://www.hshs.state.tx.us/vhs)). The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Baylor University provides hearing tests and the vision screening is provided by the Alturas Society here in Waco.

## **Medication**

Piper staff will only administer medications that are life sustaining with properly signed medical orders. Medication and special procedures will be administered to a child in the center only on the written, dated, and signed request from a licensed physician and parent(s)/guardian(s). Exceptions may include sunscreen, bug repellent, and/or diaper cream. Inhalers or other emergency medications must be listed as part of an asthma action plan or other emergency action plan. Parents may come to administer medication to their own child during the day. We ask that the child be removed from the classroom and medication given in the nursing room or front office.

Medications prescribed for a specific child must be kept in the original container bearing the pharmacy label which shows the prescription number, date filled, physician's name, directions for use, and the child's name.

## **Dental Hygiene**

Your child may brush their teeth after meals and snacks if you request that they do. You will provide the toothbrush and toothpaste (if you choose for your child to use toothpaste). Gum cleaning of infants will be provided if you request the staff to do this for your child. You will provide the tools for this procedure.

## **Allergy Prevention and Special Health Care Needs**

Families of children with allergies or special health care needs must complete a "Care Plan for Children with Allergies, Medical Conditions, or Dietary Restrictions" document giving guidelines appropriate to the child's needs, with detail regarding provision and storage of special foods (labeled with the child's name and date), necessary adaptations of activities or environment, responses staff should take in the event of an allergic reaction, and any necessary staff training. With parental permission, a list of the children's allergies will be posted in the classrooms and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves with the list and consult it to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies. Parents of children with

other special needs should contact an administrator for guidance regarding necessary documentation and advance planning with the staff.

## Car Seats

Injuries suffered while riding in cars are the number one preventable cause of death in young children. Here are Academy of Pediatrics guidelines to follow to keep your child safe in the car:

- Infants and toddlers should ride facing the rear of the vehicle until at least 2 years of age. States may choose to adopt age 1 requirements immediately, and phase in a requirement to ride rear-facing until age 2 within 2 to 4 years, with provision for educating parents in the interim about the benefits of riding rear-facing as long as possible.
- Young children should ride in car safety seats with a harness until at least age 4, with guidance educating parents and caregivers about the benefits of riding in a seat with a 5-point harness up to the highest weight or height allowed by the manufacturer.
- School-aged children should ride in belt positioning booster seats until at least age 8 or until the seat belt fits correctly, as described by the AAP and NHTSA.
- Children should ride in the rear-seat until age 13.
- Seat belt laws apply to all vehicle occupants and should be subject to primary enforcement. Piper Center staff have the right to refuse to release a child if there is no appropriate child seat available for transportation.

## Emergency Procedures

Procedures for protecting and/or evacuating the children during emergencies such as fires, tornados, chemical spills, gas leaks, or other events are listed below.

### Fire Emergency

Fire drills are practiced monthly. The drill is coordinated through Baylor's Department of Public Safety; the Fire Safety Representative attends the monthly drills onsite at Piper. Orange cones are placed at the parking lot entrance to ensure the children's safety. **If you arrive and the cones are set up, we ask that you do not enter the parking lot in your vehicle.** Once the fire drill is complete, with all the children either inside the building or in the playground with the gate secure, a staff member will remove the orange cones and the parking lot will be open to vehicle traffic.

During the drill, teachers gather the children, count to make certain all children are present, take the sign-in and emergency binder, evacuate the building to the parking lot, and then recount the children. Classes evacuate the building through the nearest fire exit. The teachers will not take time to put on coats or shoes. The basket of shoes will be carried outside by one of the teachers. If the children are on the playground during a fire drill, they exit through the gate on the field to the parking lot. Administrative staff verify that all children are accounted for.

#### Tornado/Weather Emergency

Tornado drills are practiced quarterly. The drill is coordinated through Baylor's Department of Public Safety. The Fire Safety representative comes to Piper quarterly to conduct our tornado drills.

During severe weather, administrative staff monitors the weather through an emergency radio, as well as emergency updates through the Emergency system at Baylor.

In the event of high winds or tornado the children will be moved from their classrooms to a center room in the building such as the adult bathrooms and/or the staff breakroom.

The women's restroom, the preschool restroom, and the teacher breakroom are supplied with first aid kits, bottled water, snacks, flashlights, blankets, radios and batteries, a collection of things to entertain the children, diapers, wipes, and Kleenex. The children will be taken to these areas and remain there during a tornado warning or if the tornado siren gives the alert. Parents are discouraged from leaving the center with their children during these dangerous weather conditions.

#### Active Shooter/Lockdown

Active shooter drills are practiced quarterly. The drill is coordinated through the Baylor Department of Public Safety. The Baylor Police Department representative comes to Piper quarterly to conduct our Active Shooter drills. During an active shooter event, our faculty and staff are trained to act accordingly, based on the nature and location of the threat. Teachers are trained in accordance with the principals "Avoid, Deny, Defend." Our quarterly training encompasses different scenarios to provide faculty and staff opportunities to reflect on different situations that could occur.

#### Chemical Spill

The likely scenario will be a chemical spill after a traffic accident by our building and notification by the police to protect ourselves or evacuate the area. At this notification, all thermostats will be turned off to heating or air conditioning. Children will be brought inside the building. If necessary, doors will be sealed and directions from Risk Management, Baylor Police and Waco Police and Fire Department will be followed.

All Piper staff receive annual training with Baylor Department of Public Safety representatives for further practice and to answer any questions. The Piper Program Coordinator attends Baylor's building safety trainings.

If children are to be relocated, the Baylor Police will assist in moving the children to the Courtyard by Marriot at 101 Washington Ave. Parents will be notified of the location to pick up their child via Piper's Emergency Notification System either by email or text message.

**Parent Contact information-** Notice of changes in parents' phone numbers, addresses, places of business, or cell numbers should be given to the office immediately. Parents need to make certain that they or their designated emergency person can be reached at all times.

We recommend that all parents sign up for the Baylor alert system. Parents who are not also Baylor employees, grandparents, and other regular visitors can text **Baylor76798 to 226787** to sign up. Baylor employees and students can find directions [here](#).

## **Building Security**

Our security system has two goals:

1. To keep all children safely inside the school and
2. To allow entry only for people who have Piper Center school business.

Cameras mounted above the front doors allow visual confirmation of visitors requesting entry, as well as anyone leaving the school.

Swipe card entry at all entry doors ensures that only allowed persons may enter the building. Parents, staff, and visitors, including Baylor personnel, are requested to enter through the front doors except in an emergency. Students enter through the student entrance and sign-in or wait for a Piper staff member to assist them. **Please do not prop doors open or let unknown persons into the building.**

## **Greeting, Dismissal and Parking**

Upon arrival, each child must be accompanied to their room by an adult and the child's **hands must be washed**. Make certain that you have completed the daily commitment with your child, waited during the health check, and said good-bye to your child before you leave for the day.

In order to provide a safe environment for the younger children (two months to two-years-old), we ask that you drop off your older child first then take your younger child to their classroom. At pick-up time please pick up your younger child first and then your older child. During peak times, it is very easy for younger children to get stepped on or for fingers to be mashed in the doors. For this reason, among others, Texas Child Care licensing regulations do not allow older children, even siblings, in the infant rooms.



Please do not allow your car to idle in our parking lot. *Idling for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel and creates more CO2 than turning off and restarting your engine.* (see [https://afdc.energy.gov/files/u/publication/idling\\_personal\\_vehicles.pdf](https://afdc.energy.gov/files/u/publication/idling_personal_vehicles.pdf) for more information).

## Child Release and Observation

A child's parent(s) and/or guardian(s) must provide a list of adults to whom the child can be released. If your child is being picked up by someone other than the parent or guardian, please add them to your emergency form in the office. Any of these adults may observe the child at school at any time during the program's regular hours of operation. We request that these adults follow the procedures listed below when observing at the Piper Center.

- When a person on your emergency list is picking up your child, please have them come to the front desk with their photo ID. Office staff will check the family's emergency contacts to make sure this person may pick up, then the individual will be taken to the classroom to pick up the child.
- For observation, come to front desk, sign in upon arrival to get headphones to use in the observation booths and sign out prior to departing.
- Observe from the observation room or observation window whenever possible. Children's behavior is often significantly affected by a parent's or loved one's presence. In addition, repeated reunions and separations can be difficult for young children, especially at the beginning of the year.
- When in the classrooms, remain as unobtrusive as possible, making every effort not to disrupt the activity in progress.
- **Please turn off your cell phone when entering the classrooms, including the observation booth. We ask that you refrain from using your cell phone during your time in our classrooms.**
- If you want an opportunity to talk individually with a teacher, please make an appointment to do so during a time that the teacher can meet with you privately. Drop-off and pick-up are challenging times for lengthy and/or personal conversations.

## Family-Provided Paperwork

As part of the enrollment process, parents must complete an Emergency Information Form and give permission for staff members to administer basic first aid to their child and to

contact EMS for more advanced care. Review of this emergency information is required every semester, typically during routine child conferences. **Parents/guardians should contact the school any time there is a change in the emergency contact information.** Additional required Piper forms include but are not limited to Tuition Agreement, Baylor Forms D/E, Handbook Receipt, Health Forms, Website/External Media Permission or Declination, Water Activities Participation, University Educational and Research Activities, Parent Directory, and Sunscreen Application. Parents of children speaking English as a second language are asked to complete a form detailing the children's level of proficiency in English and then invited to dialogue with teachers regarding strategies to assist the child's transition as necessary.

Families must consent to University Educational and Research Activities to enroll in the Piper Center.

Families are required to provide at least one local emergency contact, in addition to the parent. Parents can only be excluded from the emergency form when a court of competent jurisdiction has limited the parent right of access to the child. A copy of such order must be on file at the facility and with Baylor Police.

Each spring, families are asked to indicate their desire to continue their child's enrollment into the next school year which begins in August. In the spring, updated policies are distributed to parents, along with the new school calendar, and any changes in the curriculum or the program. A re-enrollment fee is charged annually at this time. **Families who do not respond in the affirmative and pay their re-enrollment fee by the deadline will be dropped from care and the child(ren)'s spots will be filled.** Parents are also asked to update their child's medical and emergency contact information as changes occur.

## **Health Assessments**

Prior to the child's first day of school, parents are required to submit a current health assessment of the child, including either proof of the recommended immunizations or a signed and notarized affidavit indicating that the family has objections to immunizations, including which immunizations and why. Thereafter, parents must submit an updated form or new affidavit annually.

## **Immunizations**

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics ([www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)) and state of Texas Department of Health. The program coordinator uses the Imm Trac ([www.dshs.state.tx.us](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us)) program for immunizations. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed (currently, this means an annual notarized exemption form). Unimmunized or under-immunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness

as directed by the state health department.

### **Texas Department of Health Requirements for Childhood Immunizations**

Required immunizations (each age level assumes the immunizations for the preceding age levels have been obtained):

- By 3 months of age .....Hep B #1, DTaP #1, IPV #1, Hib #1, PCV #1
- By 5 months of age .....DTaP #2, IPV #2, Hib #2, Hepatitis B #2, PCV #2
- By 7 months of age ..... DTaP #3, PCV #3
- By 16 months of age .... Hib #3, PCV #4, MMR #1, Varicella #1
- By 19 months of age.....DTaP #4, IPV #3, Hep B #3
- By 25 months of age .....Hep A #1
- By 43 months of age .....Hep A # 2

## **Basic Behavior Expectations at Piper**

At The Piper Center, our rules and expectations are designed to help children learn to manage their behavior for effective **interaction and cooperation**. All staff members guide and support children by clearly communicating in a positive manner and tone. For example, "Keep the sand in the sand table so that we have a lot to pour". Typically, the children are eager to act appropriately and are recognized for doing so. We design activities that are age appropriate in both task and duration to maximize positive interactions. Our teachers also carefully monitor the children's activities to anticipate and diffuse problems before they begin. A child who is losing interest in one activity or disrupting the play of other children may be redirected to another area that can spark renewed engagement and positive behavior.

Guidance is based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of a child and is directed toward teaching the child responsible behavior. Teachers seek to re-channel aggressive or problem behavior and teach the child to respect the rights of others. Our goal is to promote the child's self-esteem through practicing positive non-evaluative guidance, providing experience that matches their developmental level and meeting their needs responsively. All Piper staff will support children's play; to do so, they:

- Give guidance as needed but try not to interfere in a child's activity.
- Action is necessary if such activity is endangering the child or some other child.
- Be positive in word and attitude when you must maintain limits. Be kind, matter of fact and composed at all times.
- Offer choices when possible.
- Refrain from negatively discussing a child in his or her presence.

- Refrain from visiting with other adults while in the classroom.
- Avoid labeling (positive and negative).

No physical punishment, psychological abuse or coercion will be used at The Piper Center. For example, Piper staff will not spank, hit, shame, physically force a child to eat, name call, or withhold affection as a means of discipline. Boundaries for children are established in each classroom according to their age.

To enforce the boundaries at Piper, the adults use the following techniques with the children:

- Clear statement of the limit. ("You may not throw the blocks.")
- Stating expectations positively. ("The blocks are for building.")
- Redirection. ("Let's go see what Eric is cooking in the kitchen.")
- Supporting problem-solving and negotiation between the children. ("How could you use your words to tell John that you would like to have a turn with that truck?")
- Logical consequences or choices. ("You are having difficulty playing in the block area without throwing blocks. Choose another place to play.")
- Modeling effective ways to express feelings and emotions. ("It hurts my hands when you grab the book I am holding. Please tell me that you would like to hold it.")

Communication between home and school is essential for the child's sense of consistency and stability. Disruptions at home or at school can be unsettling to a child and result in misbehavior. In order for Piper adults to be supportive of your child, it would be helpful to know about changes that are happening at home and at school. An ill grandparent may be worrying a parent, or a parent may be working a lot of overtime. A teacher on vacation for a couple of weeks, or a new child in the classroom may also disrupt a child's routine and sense of security. These types of events cause stress for children and may result in misbehavior. Adults who share this information with one another are better prepared to support a child.

Children are learning how to behave in a group and will make mistakes. We will not report all misbehaviors to you because we work through many successfully while at school. We report those that persist or are puzzling to us. We share this information with you so that we can work together to help your child overcome this challenge and gain better social skills.

The Piper staff has been trained in and implements *Conscious Discipline* (CD) by Dr. Becky Bailey in each classroom. *Conscious Discipline* is “a comprehensive social and emotional intelligence classroom management program that empowers *both* teachers and children. The goal of CD is to provide systematic changes in classrooms by fostering the emotional intelligence of teachers first and children second.” (Bailey, 2000, p.11). *Conscious Discipline* is very strong on building community in the classroom, relationships between teacher and child, and relationships between children. The “school family” is the center of the program. Rituals are very important to promote brain development and build the bonds needed for success. Your child will learn rituals beginning in our infant class and carry them throughout their time at Piper. Along with *Conscious Discipline* we also do conflict resolution in each of the classrooms.

Severe behavior problems will sometimes occur in a classroom. These may include biting, hitting, and using profanity. Very young children (under two-and-a-half) frequently do these things to get a reaction from the adults. Toddlers are easily reinforced by our attention. It may be appropriate to redirect the aggressor and protect the other children without giving the aggressor much attention. Prevention is the best tool for a teacher in this situation. However, if the children are older, these behaviors are much more serious. Preschoolers should be learning how to control their tempers and may need consequences to remind them. If you witness aggressive behavior in your child’s classroom, know that the teachers and the directors are working together, very likely with other professionals, to find a solution. If your child exhibits some unusually aggressive behavior, know that we will want to help you find resources to solve your child’s problems before they become behavior patterns that are more difficult to resolve.

All of the children in the room need adult support to learn to get along with others. Some children are intimidated by aggressive children. We will help these children learn strategies for taking care of themselves.

**Any disciplinary action that warrants calling the parent(s) will be documented and kept in the respective child’s file.**

### **Steps for Addressing Problem Behaviors**

1. The behaviors of children shall be addressed by classroom staff as outlined by the discipline policy of Piper. This could include positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, redirection, reminders of classroom rules, modifying the classroom environment and/or daily schedule, and providing a supervised quiet time for the child to gain control. Classroom staff shall observe all children and document these observations to help ascertain any patterns or precipitating

factors of the problem behavior. At no time shall staff use shaming, the withholding of food, or physical punishment of any kind.

2. When a child exhibits a problem behavior on a continual basis that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, the classroom staff will meet with the center director to document the problem behavior and ask for further guidance.
3. If the behavior problem is still not resolved, the center staff shall request a meeting with the child's parent(s) to discuss the problem behavior. The center staff and parent(s) will collaborate on the development of strategies to resolve the problem behavior. During this process, the classroom staff will keep the center director and child's parent(s) informed of progress in resolving the behavior problem. Classroom staff will provide information to the parent(s) in written form with copies kept in the child's file. If a child's behavior results in an injury to another child or staff member, the families of both children will be notified as soon as possible and written documentation of the incident will be provided to the parent(s) and placed in the child's file. If the parents refuse to meet or participate in a plan, the child's enrollment will be reconsidered.
4. If the center staff feels that they need further assistance in resolving the behavior problem, the program may, with parental permission, request the assistance of an outside party. If the center staff feels that the problem may be a result of a special need, the program may request that the parent seek outside evaluation. If parental permission is refused and the problem behavior continues, the continued enrollment of the child will be reconsidered in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6 below.
5. If the results of an outside evaluation suggest the need for accommodations for special needs, the program will provide these or other appropriate accommodations as long as they are not an undue hardship on the program as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
6. If all of the above steps fail to resolve the behavior problem, **the program may ask the parent(s) to obtain care for their child at another center.** The program will provide the parent(s) with a 2-week notice, except where such notice is not reasonable because of safety concerns.
7. Written documentation of all of the above steps will be provided to the parent(s) and placed in the child's file.

## Biting

Biting is a natural, developmental behavior in which many young children engage, especially during their second and third year of life. We recognize that biting is a distressing activity for parents, staff, and the child who has been bitten. Because biting is so distressing, everyone involved would like to eliminate it quickly. Unfortunately, a “quick fix” is not usually available. However, biting does require immediate action by staff to comfort the child who has been bitten, express disapproval to the biter, and to find the cause of the biting. Every child in the infant and toddler classrooms is a potential biter or will potentially be bitten. It is important to understand that because a child bites, it does not mean that the child is “mean” or “bad”, that the parents of the child who bites are “bad” parents, or they are not doing their job as parents to make this stop happening. Biting is purely a sign of the developmental age of the child. It is a developmental phenomenon. It often happens at predictable times for predictable reasons tied to children’s ages and stages.

## Why do they bite?

Every child is different. Some bite more than others; or some may not bite at all. The group care setting is where the biting derives its significance. If a child has not really been around other children very much, they probably would not bite because neither the cause for biting or opportunities have presented themselves. There is always the possibility that any child can be either a biter or be bitten. Group care presents challenges and opportunities that are unique from home. The children are surrounded by many others for hours at a time. They are learning how to live in a community setting and that is sometimes not easy. For example, even though there are plenty of toys and materials available for all the children, two or three children may want one particular toy. Biting is not something to blame on the child, parents, or caregivers. Confidentiality is also practiced with biting; **Piper staff cannot tell a parent who bit their child.** There are many possible reasons as to why an infant or toddler may bite:

- Teething.
- Impulsiveness and lack of control. Babies sometimes bite just because there is something there to bite. It is not intentional to hurt, but rather exploring their world.
- Making an impact. Sometimes children will bite to see what reactions happen.
- Excitement and overstimulation. Simply being very excited, even happily so, can be a reason a child may bite. Very young children don’t have the same control over their emotions and behaviors as some preschoolers do.
- Frustration. Frustrations can be over a variety of reasons: wanting a toy someone else has, not having the skills needed to do something, or wanting the attention of a caregiver. Infants and toddlers are simply lacking the language and social skills necessary to express all their needs, desires, and problems. Biting is often the quickest and easiest way of communicating.

## What do teachers do in response to children who bite?

It is the job of staff at Piper to provide a safe setting in which no child needs to hurt another to achieve their ends and in which the normal range of behavior is managed (and biting is normal in group care). Again, the name of the child who bites will not be released because it serves no useful purpose and can make a difficult situation even more difficult. Punishment does not work to change a child who bites: neither delayed punishment at home, which a child will not understand, nor punishment at Piper, which will not be used and would make the situation worse.

There are several things the teachers do to assess the biting situation and what can be done to prevent it from happening again. Teachers can try to minimize the behavior by:

- Letting the biting child know in words and manner that biting is unacceptable.
- Avoiding any immediate response that reinforces the biting, including dramatic negative attention. The teachers will tell the child that biting hurts and the focus of caring attention is on the bitten child. The biter is talked to on a level that they can understand. The teacher will help the child who is biting work on resolving conflict or frustration in a more appropriate manner, including using language if the child is able.
- Examining the context in which the biting occurred and looking for patterns. Was it crowded? Too many toys? Was the biting child getting hungry/tired/frustrated?
- Not casually attributing willfulness or maliciousness to the child. Infants explore anything that interests them with their mouths, and that includes others' bodies and limbs!
  - o When biting changes from a relatively unusual occurrence (a couple times a week) to a frequent and expected occurrence, it will be addressed with added precautions.
- The teachers will keep track of every occurrence, including attempted bites, and note location, time, participants, and circumstances.
- "Shadow" children who indicate a tendency to bite. This technique involves having a teacher with a child who bites. This teacher would be able to then anticipate biting situations and to teach non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior in potential biting situations.
- The teachers may consider changes to the room environment that may minimize congestion, commotion, competition for toys and materials, or child frustration. The following procedure shall be followed regarding bites. If a child has been bitten:



1. Wash the wound with soap and water.
2. Apply ice.
3. If the bite breaks the skin, notify the Director/Assistant Director and the parent will be notified.
4. Write accident report.

\*\*\*For toddlers: Give attention to the bitten child. Remind the biter that biting hurts and we do not bite our friends. Give the toddler something to bite on like a teether or a rubber ring.

\*\*\*For preschoolers: Give attention to the bitten child. Have the child who did the biting help to care for the injured child (e.g., hold ice, comfort). Remind the child that we do not bite our friends and that we use our words.

The following techniques will be used to respond to the biting child:

1. Look for the causes of the behavior and try to take a preventive approach.
2. Shadow the biter in situations where a child might bite.
3. Be consistent in our interventions, realizing it is a temporary part of normal development.
4. Communicate to parents about the incident. However, information about the "biter" is confidential.

## Infant and Toddler Care

The infant and young toddler classrooms are divided into two small groups, each with an assigned primary caregiver. Your child will have one primary caregiver doing the majority of their care. Consistency is important to an infant's healthy emotional development. The primary caregiver is not a substitute mother. She develops a relationship with your child that is unique, one that is more similar to a favorite aunt. She is the person at the center who will know the most about your baby's day.

Infants' daily schedules are individualized according to their own needs for eating and sleeping. Initially, very young babies may sleep a lot until they adjust to the stimulating new environment. Other babies may be over-stimulated at first and sleep only for short periods of time. The more details you can share about your baby, the more quickly the caregivers will learn to read your baby's signals and respond in a way that satisfies them. All infants will be placed on their backs to go to sleep. If they turn over on their own, they may sleep in another position. This

protocol reflects professional advice regarding the prevention of **sudden infant death syndrome** (SIDS). A written documentation from a health-care professional stating a different sleeping position is allowed and will not harm the infant may be provided by the parent.

All baby bottles must be made of plastic or other unbreakable material. Bottles and pacifiers must be permanently labeled with the child's name prominently displayed.

Parents must provide all food, formula, and diapers. **Please label all items and date homemade food items with the date prepared.** If able, we encourage mothers to breastfeed their babies and have arranged for a quiet space for that purpose. Mothers are also welcome to feed in the classroom if preferred. You may also bring expressed milk instead of formula. Let us know how we can help you.

Written and signed monthly instructions as to the baby's feeding and napping schedule will be given to teachers. These instructions are to include all of the foods the baby is eating. The parents, not the child care staff, are to introduce all new foods to the baby. If the baby has had no reaction to the new food after three days, add that food to the child's diet instructions at the center.

**Older siblings of infants are not allowed in the infant classroom according to Texas childcare licensing standards. Please drop off your older child first and then your infant. When picking up, pick up your infant first then your older child. This plan eliminates older children being in the infant classroom during drop off and pick up time.**

### **"Shoe-Free" Environment for Infant Room**

With infants commonly on the floor, we want to provide a clean, safe, and healthy environment in the Infant Room. We practice a "shoe-free" policy in this room. We ask that adults entering the infant classroom please remove their shoes or slip a pair of shoe covers over their shoes. We take this action to prevent outside contaminants from being brought into the room and spread onto the carpet, particularly during the cold weather. The infants spend much of their time exploring on the floor, so it is best that these areas be kept as clean as possible.

## **Diapers and Toilet Learning**

Approved cloth diapers may be used by families who choose cloth over disposable. Children using the approved cloth diaper must also have an outer cover/plastic to prevent leakage and an approved bag for soiled cloth diapers must be provided by parents. Piper teachers may not clean the dirty cloth diaper. Pull-ups may not be used at Piper because we have found that pull ups confuse children and frequently

delay toilet learning in addition to leaking during play (exceptions may be made during nap-time or for children with special needs). Before you begin preparing toilet education for your child, we ask that you meet with your child's teacher. We want to work with you and help make this a successful new step in your child's development. Expect your child to engage in toilet play before they are ready to toilet learn. Just like your child enjoys imitating other things you do; your child will engage in toilet play. **Toilet learning comes when your child is ready to take responsibility for eliminating in the toilet and handling their own clothing.** This is generally around two-and-a-half to three years of age.

## School Cancellations

If Piper must close due to bad weather, we will abide by the decision of Baylor University. If the University closes, then Piper will close. In some cases, Baylor University will choose to open late. Again, we will abide by those hours of operation. In the case of bad weather, you will be notified by the Baylor Emergency Notification system. Postings by the University will be made on the Baylor website, on the radio, and on local news stations if closings occur. Piper administration will make every effort to send additional information through Learning Genie. We recommend signing up for the Baylor emergency notification system.

## Tuition and Fees

Tuition rates are established each budget year in the late winter for the next school year. Information on the annual registration fee is provided at re-enrollment, along with a due date. Tuition rates are determined by the classroom assignment. Children are placed into classes based on their age as of September 1.

Tuition is due on the **first day of each month**. A written arrangement to pay tuition on a different date or in two payments each month may be made with the Program Coordinator. A grace period of five days from the due date for tuition will be granted. A \$25 late fee will be assessed for tuition that is not paid by the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Piper reserves the right to discontinue a child's enrollment if tuition payments fall more than 30 days behind.

A 30-day written notice that your child will be leaving the center is required in order for the final month's tuition to be prorated to reflect the final day of enrollment.

Increases in tuition or other fees will be announced at least 60 days in advance, generally during re-enrollment in the spring for implementation the following August. No refunds or credits for sickness, or other absences, will be given. Tuition

payments reserve a place for your child at the center and are not prorated for absences. Full tuition is charged regardless of attendance, whether due to illness, holidays, or any closure of the facility any part thereof, due to weather, emergency, medical reasons (including but not limited to a pandemic or disease outbreak), government recommendation or requirement or any other reason in Baylor's sole discretion. Child care fees are charged and payable in advance of services rendered.

Enrollment at Piper is open to everyone. Current Baylor students, faculty and staff, alumni, and community members are invited to apply. Waiting list applicants are encouraged to read the Family Handbook and Piper Calendar before enrollment and to ask questions if they do not understand the mission of The Piper Center for Family Studies and Child Development. Interested families are generally invited for a tour and meeting with the administrators before enrollment can occur. The director can be reached at [michelle\\_kiefer@baylor.edu](mailto:michelle_kiefer@baylor.edu).

## Late Pickup

Parents are expected to arrive at Piper in enough time to visit with the teacher about the child, gather the child's belongings, and exit the center no later than the closing time of 5:30 p.m. **In general, this means arriving to the classroom no later than 5:25.** Late Pick-Up Charges will begin at 5:31 PM and will be charged \$10.00 for any portion of the first fifteen-minute period, then \$1.00 per minute thereafter. Late charges will be added to your next monthly statement. Piper reserves the right to terminate child care services if there is a pattern of late departures; this may include 3 late pick-ups in 30 days or one per month after 3 months. A parent may request an exemption to the termination for good cause by providing written input to the director after notice of termination. Such input must be within 1 business day of notice of termination. Determination of good cause is in the sole discretion of the director.

## Piper Waiting List Policy

Upon receipt of the completed *Enrollment Request Form* online, Piper will place your family on a waiting list. In order to place a child on the list, the form must be fully completed. If you have multiple children, please complete a separate application for each child. Incomplete applications may not be placed on the waiting list if we are unable to complete the missing information. Piper is not responsible for errors in submission of forms; applicants are encouraged to call if the form appears incomplete or inaccurate or a submission e-mail is not received.

Your child will be placed according to their age group, the date the form is received, and the priority group. The aging up process will not affect your child's place on the waitlist.

Registrations for unborn children are accepted with a due date noted. If you are adopting a child, you may request a date based on the anticipated date care will be needed. It is recommended that adoptive families add their name to the waitlist after they receive their letter of confirmation from the embassy or agency.

When a space becomes available, the center will notify you using the information provided on the *Enrollment Request Form* (it is up to each family to notify the center of any pertinent information changes, i.e., address change, change of phone/e-mail addresses, early birth, etc.). You will have 48 hours to respond. After that, we will move to the next family on the list.

Because spaces may become available at any time, there is no guarantee that if/when a space becomes available for your child that it will be on the exact date you want care to begin. Therefore, the time frame for an offer of a space may not match your chosen date. It could be sometime prior or after your chosen date. If we notify you and offer the space(s), you will have the right of refusal and may retain your space on the waitlist. After two refusals, you will be removed from the waiting list and may re-apply if desired.

### **The Waitlist Priority**

A waitlist spot does not guarantee you a place in that classroom. The following priority for enrollment will be followed in order:

- Dependents of a Piper Center staff member
- Siblings of a child currently enrolled in the center
- Current Baylor students, faculty, and staff
- Baylor alumni
- Community

Not all circumstances can be foreseen. The administration reserves the right to make enrollment decisions based on developmentally appropriate practice to best meet the needs of the children and families.

Openings occur each August at the beginning of a new school year. Rarely do we have openings during the year, but it can happen. During enrollment or when an opening does occur, we will look at the existing class make-up and fill the opening(s) in a way that allows for a range of ages and a diverse balance. Because Piper's primary purpose is training and modeling appropriate practice for our university students, we use this

enrollment system to ensure that our students are exposed to a variety of families and children.

## Parent Questions, Concerns and Comments

Our hope is that the Center will flourish in an atmosphere of open communication and that all who are involved will bring a spirit of trust in our ability to be a strong and generous community.

Parents should always feel free to talk with their children's teachers if they have any questions or concerns about their child or the center. Sometimes the classroom will be very busy and teachers may ask parents to set up a time to meet or to talk on the phone. **Arrangements should be made to talk within Piper's hours of operation.** Parents are asked to speak with their child's teacher if a concern arises. If the concern cannot be or is not met by the teacher, the concern should be taken to the director. The director will set a conference with parent(s) and teachers to address the parents' concerns. Our goal is to meet the needs of our children and their parents on all levels of care. If the director cannot or does not address the concern to the satisfaction of the parents, then the issue will be referred to the Chair of the Department of Human Sciences and Design. In general, these issues are handled over the phone or in person, but you may e-mail if you choose. The phone number for the Department of Human Sciences and Design is 254-710-3626.

Questions about the Center Policies should be directed to the Director or Assistant Director. Both maintain an **Open Door Policy** for all Piper families as well as Baylor faculty, staff, and students.

Sarah Wade, Assistant Director [sarah\\_wade1@baylor.edu](mailto:sarah_wade1@baylor.edu) 254-710-4373  
Michelle Kiefer, Director, [michelle\\_kiefer@baylor.edu](mailto:michelle_kiefer@baylor.edu) 254-710-2600

Piper's current licensing inspections are always posted on the bulletin board by the office as well as posted on the Child Care Licensing website at [www.txchildcaresearch.org](http://www.txchildcaresearch.org). You may call the local licensing office at 254-750-9344 to report any complaints. The Minimum Standards Rules are available online and a copy is available in each classroom, as well as in the office.

### Parent Rights

Parents are entitled to see the following information. You may ask the center director to show you the most recent copy of the:

- Minimum standards for this licensed facility;
- Department of Protective and Regulatory inspection report;

- Fire marshal's inspection report;
- Health department's sanitation inspection report; and
- Gas pipe inspection report.

Children's records are kept confidential and only made available to staff members who are working with the child. Parents may request access to their children's school records. Parents may choose whether or not they want to be listed in the Parent Directory.

## **Reporting Abuse**

Texas state law requires the staff of this child care facility to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or a law enforcement agency. To report child abuse or neglect call 1-800-252-5400 or <https://www.txabusehotline.org/>.

## **Piper Emails**

Parents often want to have email exchanges with teachers or directors. For simple matter-of-fact exchanges of information this may well be fine; though we encourage the use of Learning Genie. For more complex matters it is best to speak on the phone, or better yet, meet in person, if only briefly.

## **Adult Behavior**

Parents, family members and guests are expected to follow the Code of Conduct provided in this handbook. Yelling, name-calling, or other behavior from any family member or guest of a family which negatively impacts the Piper environment is grounds for immediate termination of the family's enrollment at The Piper Center.

## **Notice of Nondiscrimination**

### ***Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy***

*Baylor University complies with all applicable federal and state nondiscrimination laws. Baylor University admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, religion, or veteran status to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Baylor does not engage in prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin, sex, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services. The University is controlled by an all-Baptist Board of Regents and is operated within the Christian-oriented*

*aims and ideals of Baptists. Baylor is also affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, a cooperative association of autonomous Texas Baptist churches. As a religiously controlled institution of higher education, Baylor University is exempted from compliance with some provisions of certain civil rights laws, including some provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. As such, the University prescribes standards of personal conduct that are consistent with its mission and values.*



## **Piper Family Council**

### **Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Piper Family Council (Parent Committee) at The Piper Center for Family Studies and Child Development (PCFSCD) is to support the mission of the PCFSCD and to serve as a liaison between Piper administration and the parents of children in the program. The Piper Family Council will fulfill its mission statement by:

- Providing feedback to faculty, parents, and administration on committee meetings/events;
- Contributing to the improvement of the PCFSCD building and grounds;
- Providing support in the areas of morale, health and safety, center funding, child advocacy, and other relevant issues.

### **Piper Family Council Guidelines:**

- All interested parents are encouraged to attend the Piper Family Council meetings. Parents serving as a classroom representative can continue to serve on the committee for up to one year after their child leaves the center.
- Each classroom will have a minimum two-member representation from separate families. These two classroom representatives will serve as liaisons between the committee chair, parents for that classroom, and the teachers in that classroom. Classroom teachers will seek these representatives for each new academic year by the end of August.
- All teachers are welcome and encouraged to attend as they can. Only teachers who are also parents may vote.
- The faculty liaison to the PCFSCD from the Department of Human Sciences and Design will serve as an ex-officio member.
- The PCFSCD Director serves as an ex-officio member.
- The Baylor faculty liaison will appoint a student to serve as an ex-officio member on a rotating basis.
- Meetings will be held according to the Center's calendar. The Chair and/or Director have discretion to call additional meetings when warranted.

- The Chair is elected for a two-year-term and may be re-elected by majority vote. Subcommittee chair positions are elected each fall and may be re-elected by majority vote.
- If the Chair position is vacated during a term, it will be filled prior to the end of that term. Anyone filling the vacant position can be re-elected for a full term. Elections for the Chair position will be held during a meeting at the end of September. Nominations for the Chair can be made by any parent at the center, including self-nominations. The Chair will be elected by a majority vote of all parents at the center who attend this meeting, or who vote by email sent to the current Chair by 5:00 pm the day before the meeting, if they cannot attend.
- Committee Business: All decisions of the committee will be made by a majority of the parents present at the committee meetings.

## **Piper Statements of Belief**

At Piper We Believe.....

***Children*** – We value all children as uniquely capable researchers who are seeking connections with their world.

***Teachers*** – We believe all teachers are researchers among researchers, safe keepers, and models of problem solving.

***Piper Team*** – Our team is a collaborative group of people who respect and support each other as we enhance our unique strengths and give grace in weakness, while still holding each other accountable to the task at hand to create a healthy environment for everyone.

# The Hundred Languages

## *The Hundred Languages of Childhood*

The child  
is made of one hundred.  
The child has  
A hundred languages  
A hundred hands  
A hundred thoughts  
A hundred ways of thinking  
Of playing, of speaking.  
A hundred always a hundred  
Ways of listening of marveling of loving  
A hundred joys  
For singing and understanding  
A hundred worlds  
To discover  
A hundred worlds  
To invent  
A hundred worlds  
To dream  
The child has  
A hundred languages  
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)  
But they steal ninety-nine.  
The school and the culture  
Separate the head from the body.  
They tell the child;  
To think without hands  
To do without head  
To listen and not to speak  
To understand without joy  
To love and to marvel  
Only at Easter and Christmas  
They tell the child:  
To discover the world already there  
And of the hundred  
They steal ninety-nine.  
They tell the child:  
That work and play  
Reality and fantasy  
Science and imagination  
Sky and earth  
Reason and dream  
Are things  
That do not belong together  
And thus, they tell the child  
That the hundred is not there  
The child says: NO WAY the hundred is there—

-Loris Malaguzzi  
*Founder of the Reggio Approach*

# Piper Code of Conduct

## **Parents/Grandparents are expected to:**

- Read and keep on file the current year's family handbook
- Ensure that personal visitors to Piper are updated on all conduct expectations/policies and procedures as relevant
- Stay up to date on emails/event postings in children's classrooms
- Be aware of their own child/ren's location and behavior when at Piper (including siblings)- especially when volunteering on field trips
- Maintain appropriate supplies (i.e., diapers, changes of clothes, etc.) for their child
- Ask questions about curriculum, policies/procedures, and anything else they may want to know!
- Engage teaching staff and/or administrators in conversations about areas of concern/growth
- Enjoy our classroom environments with us
- Add to the collective knowledge of our school family
- Help enrolled child engage in school activities
- Support Baylor student and faculty connections and research opportunities

## **Siblings are expected to:**

- Abide by any/all classroom rules just as their sibling who is enrolled in the class
- Heed safety reminders from any/all staff members and/or student assistants
- Enjoy our classroom environments with us
- Add to the collective knowledge of our school family
- Help enrolled siblings engage in school activities
- Clean up their materials when finished

## **Other Guests are expected to:**

- Bring a photo ID
- Ask for help if they cannot remember a procedure
- Help us relay important information to parent(s) and/or guardian(s) when necessary
- Enjoy our classroom environments with us
- Add to the collective knowledge of our school family
- Help enrolled child engage in school activities

## **ALL Members of our School Family are expected to:**

- Show respect to each other in words and in actions
- Seek to resolve conflicts in favor of the greater good
- Serve as Piper ambassadors to the Waco community
- Be good stewards of our building, outdoor environment, and materials
- Hold each other accountable to these expectations.

## Resource List

### **Baylor University**

[www.baylor.edu/piper](http://www.baylor.edu/piper)

[www.baylor.edu/hsd/](http://www.baylor.edu/hsd/)

### **Conscious Discipline**

Easy to Love, Difficult to Discipline by Becky Bailey

There's Got To Be A Better Way: Discipline That Works by Becky Bailey

<https://consciousdiscipline.com>

### **National Association for the Education of Young Children**

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

### **Outdoor Classrooms**

*Playing with Nature: Supporting Preschoolers' Creativity in Natural Outdoor Classrooms*

by Kiewra and Vaselack (<https://dimensionsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/IJECCE-41-Complete-Issue.pdf>)

Outdoor Classroom and Math Learning ([https://dimensionsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/math-paper\\_fnl\\_2015.pdf](https://dimensionsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/math-paper_fnl_2015.pdf))

Infants and Toddlers in the Outdoor Classroom ([https://dimensionsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/it-paper-cec\\_final.pdf](https://dimensionsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/it-paper-cec_final.pdf))

Last Child In The Woods by Richard Louv

### **Reggio Emilia Approach**

The Hundred Languages of Children by Lella Gandini, George E. Forman and Carolyn P. Edwards

<https://www.reggiochildren.it/en/reggio-emilia-approach/>

### **Texas Child Care Licensing**

<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care>

### **Texas Rising Star**

<https://texasrisingstar.org/>

### **Zero to Three**

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

### **Tuition Payments:**

<https://www.baylor.edu/piper/index.php?id=971325>

