



OF NEW JERSEY

**Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence**

**ECLC OF NEW JERSEY**

**(Education, Careers and Lifelong Community for People with Special Needs)**

**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2019-2020**

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ECLC IS A MEMBER OF:

THE ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND AGENCIES FOR THE HANDICAPPED (ASAH)

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (NAPSEC)

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## **PHILOSOPHY**

ECLC of New Jersey believes that each student is entitled to self-esteem, emotional and educational growth through individual and small group instruction. A variety of teaching techniques and strategies, materials and support services are used to achieve this goal.

**ECLC, its Board of Trustees, its administration and staff subscribe to and uphold the statement on Ethical Standards developed by NAPSEC (the National Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children) and ASAH (the Association for Schools and Agencies for the Handicapped). This statement may be reviewed by parents upon request to the Principal.**

## **ECLC OF NJ MISSION STATEMENT**

To prepare our students academically, emotionally and socially to become contributing members of their community.

## **ECLC OF NJ VISION STATEMENT**

To empower and enable the individuals we serve to achieve their maximum potential and enhance their quality of life.

## **A MESSAGE TO PARENTS**

Welcome to the start of another great school year at ECLC of New Jersey! On behalf of our Board of Trustees, administration and staff, we want you to know that we are all here to provide support and encouragement so that our students learn, grow and achieve.

This handbook is to help you and your child understand school policies, procedures and rules. If you have any questions, we will be happy to discuss them with you. A full set of school policies cited in this handbook is available for reference in the Principal's office.

As per the Individuals with Disability Education Act and N.J.A.C. 6A:14, each child with a disability is guaranteed a free and appropriate education. It also guarantees every child and his/her parent or legal guardian the right of due process. The law protects and guarantees the civil rights of individuals with disabilities and holds educators accountable. ECLC of New Jersey meets both the spirit and the letter of the law in guaranteeing these rights. We invite parents to share their concerns with us so that we can work together to ensure success for your child. Your involvement is a very important part of our school.

We wish all our students good luck and much success this year at ECLC.

Yours sincerely,

Vicki Lindorff  
Principal

## **ECLC OF NEW JERSEY EDUCATIONAL GOALS**

1. To develop individual student achievement in the basic skills of communication, reading, writing and math as determined by observed classroom performance, functional assessment and periodic objective measures.
2. To provide the support services stipulated in each student's IEP (individual education plan).
3. To provide modification of instruction for individual differences and learning characteristics.
4. To provide orientation to the world of work through career exploration, vocational assessment, guidance, transition services, development of job skills, work experience, job placement and instruction for independent living skills. Our goal is for graduating students to be placed in employment in their local communities prior to graduation or in a day program such as ECLC's P.R.I.D.E. program.
5. To promote good physical and mental health and leisure time interests and activities through an effective physical education/family life and health program and optional after-school activities.
6. To provide a common core of information in history, social studies, science and the use of computers necessary to understand and respect the environment, public health and safety issues, citizenship, other cultures and the importance of participation and service to the community.
7. To provide opportunities to develop positive self-esteem, social skills, self-control, character development, moral and ethical principles and respect for self and others.
8. To provide an appreciation of music, the classics, drama and art through instruction and opportunities to participate in creative events.
9. To provide professional growth opportunities and the development of innovative instructional practices for the staff.
10. To provide leadership and service in helping individuals understand and/or accept their disabilities and achieve their potential.
11. To develop policies and procedures and to provide services free of any form of racial, cultural or sexual bias to students.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

ECLC of New Jersey was founded in 1970. Our mission is to help the whole child develop academically, socially, emotionally and physically. ECLC's program provides services to students between the ages of 5 and 21. In addition, the P.R.I.D.E. Day Program (Promoting Responsibility, Independence, Decision-making and Employability)

Our school provides services for post 21-year-old clients. Each classroom is instructed by a certified special education Teacher or content area Teacher, as required, and supported by a minimum of one Instructional Paraprofessional. In addition, where required, all of our classroom teachers are highly qualified elementary generalists as required by the No Child Left Behind Act. Related services available include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and counseling as prescribed in the student's IEP. Our self-contained classes are designed to serve students who have similar educational needs in accordance with their IEP's. Instruction is offered in the NJ Common Core Curriculum Standards as identified in the student's IEP. Our school-wide academic instructional program does not exceed an eighth-grade level. Students who are chronologically above the eighth-grade level are assessed through

the DLM System. ECLC provides activities of daily living instruction and social skills development on a daily basis. An extended school year program is available, if included in the student's IEP. Beginning at the age of fourteen, students receive transition services, including an ongoing orientation to the world of work, as well as real job experiences inside of school and outside of school, with job coaching available.

ECLC of NJ operates its own supported employment agency that is approved by the NJDDD (New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities) and NJDVRS (New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services), which begins developing jobs for our graduating students in their communities and follows them along after graduation from ECLC.

### **THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

ECLC is approved by the New Jersey State Department of Education for programs for learning and/or language disabilities (severe) and multiple disabilities. Class size complies with the standards established by the Department of Education.

At ECLC there are two levels--Lower and Upper School. Upper School is further divided into Core and Work Experience Clusters. Each class is taught by a certified, highly qualified Teacher of the Handicapped, or ToSD. Instructional Paraprofessionals are assigned to each classroom.

#### **LEVELS:**

There are many opportunities for social and emotional growth and development.

Lower School - serves students approximate ages 5-14. All instruction is tailored to the needs of the individual student and the requirements of his/her IEP. There are expanded socialization opportunities.

Upper School - serves students between the ages of 14-21. Upper School is divided into Core, Work Experience and Graduating classes. Students in Upper School are offered hands-on experiences in a variety of independent living skills such as Life School Curriculum and community-based instruction and may be taught in apartment-like classrooms as part of their transition program.

### **CAREER AWARENESS CONTINUUM**

Education in Career Awareness begins in Lower School with CBI (Community Based Instruction) trips to community service centers, the post office and the retail shops in the local community.

Parents are sometimes invited to present their own careers to the students as guest speakers.

Upper School students participate in weekly community-based instruction, focusing on travel training, comparative shopping, consumer economics and community resources.

SKIL (Seeking Knowledge for Independent Living) is a well-equipped center that offers structured learning experiences and career awareness, which can include volunteer and paid work.

Lower School classes (ages 10-14) spend one period each week in the SKIL Center, which is our Work Readiness Program.

In the Core Cluster of Upper School, the students report to SKIL three periods each week. They refine their skills and begin to form opinions about what their likes and dislikes are. In addition, these students do light custodial work and bake cookies for visitors to the school. Some Core Cluster students are placed in jobs in the community on a monthly schedule.

When a student reaches the Work Experience Cluster, at 17-18 years of age, the student meets weekly with the SKIL Teacher in charge of job placement to work on job readiness and job retention skills. Students interview for positions in the school and the community and, when necessary, with an Instructional Paraprofessional who job coaches, are transported to and from the workplace by ECLC. During this time students have the opportunity to sample a variety of kinds of employment.

In the last year of school, the students begin to be assessed by CPS (Community Personnel Services, Inc.), our adult supported employment agency, which is approved by the NJDVRS and the NJDDD. CPS helps to build the bridge from the school's community into the student's community.

Registration with the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and assistance with registration with other agencies are offered as part of transition planning.

### **STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

The school day is from 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., except on early dismissal days (12:45 p.m.) as noted on the school calendar. Instructional Paraprofessionals ensure students safely disembark from buses in the morning and see that there is a safe, orderly return to buses at the close of the school day. Students are expected to report directly to their homeroom after getting off the bus.

Students arriving after 9:00 a.m. must be escorted by the bus driver or parent to the receptionist in the front lobby so that they can be officially and safely signed in.

Students who leave school prior to dismissal for personal business, doctor's appointments, etc. must bring in a note from home. Parents are to report to the main office to sign their child out. In order to ensure the safety of our students, no student may leave the building without permission from the parent and the Principal. No student will be allowed to leave with an unknown person unless she/he is identified by a parent in writing.

At dismissal, students wait in their homeroom or designated area until their buses are called. Students are expected to go directly to their bus for the ride home.

Any changes in transportation to and from school will require prior approval from the sending district and your Case Manager. You will be guided regarding with whom to discuss your concerns.

An in-service program for bus drivers is held annually and emergency bus evacuation drills are conducted biannually.

Behavioral issues are referred by bus drivers through our Bus Coordinator to the proper administrator. Part of ECLC's Behavior Management System refers to bus behavior. (See Behavior Management)

The following guidelines describe our expectations for our students' conduct on their buses:

- Students will be seated immediately upon entering the bus in the seats assigned by the driver. Seat belts must be worn at all times. The students will remain seated until the bus engine is turned off.
- Students will talk softly and will be polite and respectful. Students will respect the personal space of others.
- Students will leave doors/windows closed unless they have permission from the bus driver to open them.
- Students are not to smoke on any school vehicle.
- Students may use recreational electronic devices quietly.
- Students will turn head phones off upon entering building.
- Students will remove hats/hoods upon entering the building.

According to N.J.S.A. 18A:25-2, the Principal may exclude a pupil from the bus for disciplinary reasons and his/her parents may provide transportation to and from school during the period of such exclusion. Parents will be notified of discipline problems occurring on the bus. Students are helped to develop strategies to keep them more regulated on the bus. In extreme cases of misbehavior, loss of privileges, detention, and bus suspension may occur. Each incident is discussed with the individual student prior to disciplinary action being taken. For serious infractions, parents and Child Study Teams may receive copies of bus incident reports.

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

All students are expected to fulfill these expectations:

- Attend school and be appropriately dressed
- Come to school prepared to learn
- Demonstrate respect for people and property
- Take responsibility for their own behavior
- Use time and resources responsibly
- Participate actively in our positive behavior management system
- Follow school bus safety procedures

### **SOCIAL SKILLS AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

ECLC believes that students should be supported in their efforts to grow socially and emotionally. Various approaches are used to help students manage their behaviors, emotions and communication style. These interventions may include classroom point system with positive reinforcement sensory-motor experiences and strategies for self-management.

Consistent with our philosophy that we look to the child's needs to facilitate his/her participation in the outside world on social, emotional and cognitive levels, we have incorporated a dynamic and creative framework to continue to guide our understanding of our students. SCERTS (Social Communication,



Emotional Regulation, Transactional Support) has enhanced our approach to providing a nurturing and supportive atmosphere. Great emphasis is placed on working with families. ECLC of NJ at the Ho-Ho-Kus Campus is the first school in New Jersey to formally train its staff and integrate SCERTS into the daily life of the school. In addition, all of our staff have been trained in non-violent crisis intervention through the Crisis Intervention Institute.

Social skill topics are developed by the Social Workers and shared with staff, parents and students. These topics become the basis for daily social skill lessons, which are taught by each classroom Teacher.

Our Speech Therapists monitor our SCERTS program with classroom staff and help design picture supports using Boardmaker and iPads, which many of our students use.

Our Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapist work closely with staff on students' sensory needs and sensory diets, which are closely adhered to.

### **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

The ECLC Board of Trustees adopts this student behavior and discipline policy to establish standards, policies and procedures for positive student development and behavioral expectations on school grounds and, as appropriate, for conduct away from school grounds. Every student enrolled at ECLC of New Jersey shall observe promulgated rules and regulations and the discipline imposed for infraction of those rules. The ECLC Board of Trustees will review this and all ECLC policies annually.

The Executive Director of ECLC of New Jersey will report to the Board of Trustees annually on the number of students suspended or terminated and the reason for the suspension/termination. Additionally, the Executive director of ECLC of New Jersey will report all suspension or vandalism/violence to the NJ DOE via its EVVR system.

The Parent/Student Handbook, including this policy, is on the ECLC website. Parents may request a hard copy. Staff will be reminded annually of this policy at the opening day staff development sessions.

ECLC of New Jersey will equitably enforce this code of discipline. Student discipline will be applied without regard to race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; nationality; sex; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; mental, physical or sensory disability or by any other distinguishing characteristics. The students IEP shall be implemented in accordance with the components of the applicable plans. A student's disability and the role it plays in student misbehavior must always be taken into consideration prior to disciplining a student.

The ECLC of New Jersey board of Trustees approves the use of comprehensive behavioral supports that promote positive student development and the students' abilities to fulfill the behavioral expectations established by the Board. These behavioral supports include, but are not limited to, positive reinforcement for good conduct and academic success.

ECLC's basic approach to students' behavior is to foster good attitudes towards learning and socialization by giving praise and positive reinforcement, according to students' age, development and understanding. Under the leadership of the clinical social workers and sometimes the school behaviorist, our staff is trained in using the techniques of behavior management and other types of classroom management systems. Also, the structure, routine, consistency and overall organization of the classroom support improvement in behavior. The students participate in the establishment of class rules and the

consequences are clearly defined. Discipline is administered in a manner that is free of physical and verbal abuse, humiliation and unsupervised confinement. Short periods of “calm down” are utilized when appropriate and are always supervised by a staff member.

ECLC believes that students should be supported in their efforts to grow socially and emotionally. Various approaches are used to help students manage their behaviors, emotions and communication style. These interventions may include classroom point system with positive reinforcers (STEP – Students Earning Privileges), sensory-motor experiences and strategies for self-management.

The ECLC of New Jersey Board of Trustees supports the use of various primary and secondary reinforcers specific to the students’ needs, preference and goals. These reinforcers may include but are not limited to the following: verbal praise, gestures, time spent with special objects or toys, food or beverage items, certain privileges in school, etc.

Social skill topics are developed by the school Social Workers and shared with staff, parents and students. These topics become the basis for daily social skill lessons, which are taught by each classroom Teacher (PASS – Promoting Appropriate Social Skills).

The Social Workers and/or Behaviorist are available to consult with Teachers regarding weekly social emotional goals and to develop strategies to move students toward achievement of these goals. The Social Workers and/or Behaviorist are able to meet with students on an as-needed basis.

All staff understand that the laws of the state of New Jersey mandate that no person shall inflict corporal punishment upon a pupil. Our philosophy is in full agreement and compliance. ECLC will not permit or condone physical or verbal abuse of its pupils by any member of the staff.

When physical restraints must be used, the parents and Child Study Team Case Managers shall be notified by telephone and in writing. ECLC complies with all statutes and laws that guarantee due process in these disciplinary matters. The administration and Case Managers will review this with the parent/guardian(s), if necessary.

When the suspension of a student is indicated due to inappropriate behavior or to protect the pupil or others, ECLC shall call and notify, in writing, parent/guardian(s) and the Case Manager immediately, giving the reasons for suspension. A conference in which the parent/guardian(s) and Child Study Team Case Manager will be involved shall be convened within 5 days (or as soon as possible before 5 days) to develop a plan to address the student’s presenting behavior. If behavioral problems persist, ECLC will request direction from the local district.

When staff recommends termination of a student’s placement at ECLC because ECLC can no longer meet the student’s needs, or a student demonstrates little or no improvement, academically or behaviorally, or the continued placement at ECLC is deemed unduly disruptive to the educational programs of other students or unsafe to other ECLC students or staff, ECLC will comply with all due process procedures and statutes. These will be reviewed with case manager, parents/guardian(s) and students if the need arises.

ECLC has established policies and procedures addressing Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying from one student to another.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT SYSTEM**

ECLC utilizes a school-wide level plan entitled Students Earning Privileges (STEP). A level plan is a specific type of token economy where participants move through various levels contingent upon demonstration of expected target behaviors. As they move up through the levels they gain access to a wider range of privileges and are expected to demonstrate more independence. The schedules of reinforcement are also thinned out to resemble those in natural school settings (Cooper, Heron & Heward, 2007). In addition to earning points for demonstrating school-wide expected target behaviors including work completion, positive pro-social interactions with peers and self regulation, teachers work with students to develop individualized weekly goals. As students acquire more skills in self regulation, social communication and school independence; point cards, social praise and other reinforcers are decreased while the criteria for earning privileges is simultaneously increased. Privileges earned through the STEP program include school socials (dances, movies, ice cream socials, bagel breakfasts...) and preferred leisure activities during designated reward times.

ECLC also recognizes the need for an individualized Positive Behavior Support model in which the behavior-analytic principles of positive reinforcement are applied to help students with behavioral challenges. Positive reinforcement procedures are used to address maladaptive student behaviors by working to teach functionally equivalent replacement behaviors and skills that are more socially appropriate for the student. Behavioral literature indicates that, “reinforcers of higher quality (for the student) are often necessary for behaviors that require more effort or endurance” (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). In following student motivation and preferences, it is often advantageous to use extrinsic reinforcers initially (toys, edibles, tokens). These reinforcers should gradually shift over time to more natural occurring reinforcers so that ultimately praise, social approval, and learning itself become conditioned reinforcement (Sidman, M., 2000). Research based on the work of Goetz and Baer, (1973) also shows that in transitioning to more natural reinforcers for appropriate behaviors, it is also important to include contingent attention and descriptive praise (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). Punishment procedures and aversive stimuli are not used as a means of behavior intervention as they can lead to undesirable side effects such as undesirable emotional responses, aggression, and escape/avoidance (Linscheid and Meinhold, 1990). The student’s independence and personal preferences are always considered when adopting plans to address maladaptive behaviors.

Trained staff work to evaluate and discern the environmental variables that influence student behavior while also assessing the functions that maintain maladaptive behaviors. Once functional relations are systematically defined, staff and teachers then work to teach more socially appropriate replacement behaviors/skills. These behaviors are taught using evidence-based teaching strategies that are rooted in the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis: adult/peer modeling, role-playing, errorless teaching, video modeling, and use of prompt hierarchies. Another component of reinforcing displays of target skills and other socially appropriate behaviors is through the use of a token economy.

### Token Economy Guidelines:

- Tokens are systematically delivered immediately following the display of socially appropriate replacement behaviors.
- Task-specific language/praise is paired with the delivery of all tokens to increase student understanding of expected behaviors and ease the transition away from tokens in the future.

- Tokens should initially be given for each display of replacement skills then gradually thinned so the student moves toward more natural contingencies while increasing his or her ability to delay gratification.

- The accumulation of the designated number of tokens should result in the student earning a highly motivating, self-selected reinforcer. All reinforcers should be easily deliverable, limited in terms of engagement time, and not a potential danger to the student.

Items used as reinforcers **cannot** be basic privileges or basic human needs, this includes water, shelter, meals, clothing, along with any subjects, therapies, or other needs as stated in the student's IEP.

Small edible reinforcers may be used as part of a reinforcement system, given parent consent. These edibles reinforcers should not be a part of the student's lunch or breakfast (as these are a part of a student's basic needs).

All token reinforcement systems at ECLC will be overseen, monitored for effectiveness, and modified as needed by the Behaviorist.

### **STUDENT ENRICHMENT**

Community Based Instruction (CBI) trips are planned by the classroom teachers to supplement the student's educational experiences. Permission to participate is obtained on the emergency card. Parents must notify school of any medical conditions that would preclude participation in any type of trip. Classes are transported in a leased school bus driven by a licensed bus driver. A variety of assemblies and guest speakers are frequently incorporated into the curriculum.

### **DRESS CODE IN SCHOOL AND GYM**

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is neat, clean and in good taste. Students are expected to remove their coats indoors. These rules are reviewed each fall with students.

Students may not wear items of clothing that may disrupt the school day, for example, shirts displaying inappropriate or suggestive language and alcohol or pro-drug messages. Additionally, please, no midriff showing, no exposed undergarments, no hats, no short shorts or skirts and no low-cut tops or camisoles and no rubber flip-flops. Parents will be notified regarding school's concerns. Students should not bring valuables and/or cash to school.

Students must wear sneakers to gym class for safety. The sneakers may be kept in school. Upper school students are expected to change at least their shirts for gym class. Lockers are provided for gym clothes. All jewelry, including body piercing, must be removed during gym class for the student's safety.

**All students should have a change of clothing in their locker for emergencies. Please have all clothing and other personal items labeled** with your child's name to enable us to return it to you in the event the clothing/personal item finds its way to our lost and found box.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY EDUCATION**

Instructional activities involving religious holidays emphasize the historic, cultural and seasonal aspects

of the holiday. Presentations are appropriate for the various ages and attainments of the students and are balanced, unbiased and sensitive to religious diversity.

A detailed review of procedure, types of decorations and instructional strategies is held in department meetings during the year.

At parents' request, students are not required to participate in holiday activities. Similarly, with prior notice, students will be excused from any event/activity that is considered by parents to be counter to their religious teaching. Information about a student's anticipated absence for religious observance may be directed to the Principal.

### **PARENTAL CONNECTIONS / TRANSACTIONAL SUPPORT**

Parents have an important role in their student's success in school. ECLC has parent/teacher service organizations, i.e., the PTO, whose contributions enhance and enrich the experiences of the children. We encourage frequent contact with parents through attendance at Back-to-School Night, conferences and a weekly exchange of comments in classroom and speech notebooks. We welcome e-mail, phone calls and notes from parents. There is a monthly parent support group as well.

You will receive information concerning activities and about becoming involved. Your participation is welcome and needed. When in doubt about how to obtain information and participate, please call the school at (201) 670-7880 and ask for the Principal or the Social Worker Cynthia Chaanine.

Parents are their children's first teacher and they play a most influential role in helping educate their children. Here are some ways we suggest to be involved in your child's school experience:

- Accentuate the positive! Ask how many points or “stars” were earned today, instead of how many points or “stars” were lost
- Take time to talk with your child each day about things that have happened
- Plan to spend time reading to or with your child regularly
- Monitor the time your child spends on electronic devices, i.e., iPads, Kindles, etc.
- Participate in the PTO
- Try to attend school meetings and events
- Establish a morning routine that includes a healthy breakfast and allows time to get the day started calmly and be ready for bus pick up
- Make sure your child gets enough rest and sleep
- Provide a quiet place and regular time where your child can do homework and check to see that homework is completed
- Monitor social networking sites your child may visit (i.e., Facebook). Monitor for appropriate language and content. Additionally, monitor cell phone texts.

### **PARENT EDUCATION**

ECLC believes that parent education is a fundamental aspect of helping our students grow and develop. ECLC offers a variety of programs designed to support and educate parents throughout the school year.

In order to accommodate the needs of our busy families, we offer flexible day and evening activities.

### **RELATED SERVICES**

All students receive the services stipulated in their IEP: Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy. All students receive daily classroom social skills. Counseling is available as needed.

Student Crisis Intervention – Sometimes a student may, under certain circumstances, evidence physical or mental stress and/or crisis. ECLC has implemented a program called Non-violent Crisis Intervention. Our certified trainers have taken a course given by CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute). CPI is an international training organization committed to best practices and safe behavior management methods that focus on prevention. Through a variety of specialized offerings and innovative resources, CPI educates and empowers professionals to create safe and respectful work environments. This enables professionals to enrich not only their own lives, but also the lives of the individuals they serve.

### **ANNUAL REVIEWS AND TRANSITION PLANNING**

The Annual Review of each child's progress is held with the local Child Study Teams, parents, ECLC staff and, if appropriate, the student. Transition planning begins at age 14 to delineate the instructional activities to be taught in preparation for graduation and employment and is an integral part of the continuum at ECLC. All of our resources are utilized to facilitate the move from school to adult life. ECLC's Community Personnel Service, an adult supported employment agency, assists eligible graduating students to find and settle into hometown work situations or an adult day program such as ECLC's P.R.I.D.E. program located in nearby Paramus.

### **LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Many opportunities for leadership exist at ECLC. Leadership qualities are identified early and, in Lower School, students practice leadership by taking turns as line leader and messenger. As they get older, students assist more to get classroom jobs done.

In Upper School both the Student Government and the Key Club offer opportunities for leadership. Student Council officers are elected following a week of campaigning. The SGA works all year as a voice for the student body. They plan school-wide events and work at fundraising. The Key Club participates with the local Kiwanis Club on service projects throughout the year.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Good attendance is important to success in school.

Under New Jersey School Law, the only legal reasons for school absence are as follows:

1. Personal illness
2. Quarantine
3. Death in the family
4. Religious holiday (previously arranged)

Any absence of five or more consecutive days or habitual tardiness must be reported to your sending

school district as per Department of Education regulations.

### **ABSENCE**

1. If your child is going to be absent from school, please notify the health office by 9:00 a.m. with the explanation and expected date of return. Our automated system is available 24 hours a day for your convenience.
2. On the day your child returns to school from an illness, or for any other reason, please send a note to the School Nurse explaining the illness and treatment received or to the Teacher explaining the non-medical reason for the absence
3. Following a serious illness, accident, hospitalization or surgical procedure, medical clearance to return to school is required
4. If your child is absent from school, he/she may not attend after-school trips/respite on the day of absence.

### **STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

ECLC carries student accident insurance, which is secondary (second to pay) in the event of an accident, which occurs in school. School Nurses coordinate the filing of a claim with families upon initial response and a copy of the form may be taken to any subsequent providers of care. Family insurance is primary (first to pay) and, as usual, there are some policy limitations. ECLC's Business Manager (973-601-5131) will assist with claims management, when needed, for this service.

### **STUDENT HEALTH**

It is school policy that the ECLC School Nurse share appropriate health information with the school staff and professionals who are designated as having "legitimate health interest" within the school, as well as other individuals who provide direct school health and education services to students.

Administration of Medication in School - If it is necessary for a student to take medication during school hours, only the certified School Nurse or RN will administer the medication in compliance with the following rules:

1. All prescription and nonprescription medication must be in a sealed envelope and given to the Nurse by the parent or given to the Bus Driver to forward to the Nurse. Students may not have medication with them in school or be responsible for transporting it to school. Empty medication bottles will be sent home with the student in his/her school bag in a sealed envelope. If your bus driver will not accept the medication, please call the Health Office to discuss alternate plans.
2. The School Nurse will require the following information:
  - a) A written statement from the prescribing physician stating the student's name, medication name, dosage, time and the purpose of the medication.
  - b) The drug must be labeled and be in the original bottle from the pharmacy.
  - c) A written statement from the parent or guardian, giving permission for the Nurse to administer the medicine (prescription or nonprescription) to your child.
3. All medicines are stored in a locked cabinet and are administered by the certified School Nurse or RN.

Immunization and Medical Information - We ask your prompt cooperation in returning medical forms to the School Nurse. The State of New Jersey requires that proof of immunizations be on record in the school. We encourage students to have regular physical exams and ask that parents have physicians complete ECLC Health Appraisal Form and return to health office. We respect your privacy and all information is considered confidential. It is important for you to return the Emergency Card, Student Survey and Medical Update forms. There are many after-school activities that enrich your child's life. An Emergency Card must be completed in full and on file in order for your child to participate in any day, after-school or evening activity. A current Health Appraisal on file in the Health Office helps to ensure the health and safety of your child during these activities. If any of your contact information changes, please notify the health office so we can update your emergency card.

Information about any change in your child's health or change in medication should be shared with the School Nurse so that your child's health care needs can be fully met.

If your child is to be excused from our Adaptive Gym Program, adhere to the following:

- A parental note is required if duration is no more than two sessions, which should be given to the Health Office immediately. Health Office will notify gym staff.
- A doctor's note is required for duration exceeding two sessions, which should be given to the Health Office immediately. Health Office will notify gym staff.
- Students participating in recreational field days must have a current physical form on file in the Health Office

Emergency Medical Treatment - When emergency medical treatment is necessary, a sick or injured student will be transported to a hospital by the parents (if available) or else by school vehicle, local ambulance squad or police emergency unit. When emergency medical treatment for a student is required at a local hospital, a staff member will act in place of the parent until the parent is contacted and/or arrives.

Do not send your child to school if your child:

- Complains of a severe headache
- Has a fever of 100.5 degrees or higher
- Vomits during the evening or night and still doesn't feel well in the morning
- Has yellow or green nasal discharge
- Has red or inflamed eyes
- Has any skin rash unless it has been diagnosed by a physician as non-infectious

Any student with a temperature of 100.5 degrees or more may not attend school. If a student is sent home from school with a fever, he/she may not return to school until they are fever free, without the use of fever reducing medication, for twenty-four hours.

State law requires that students be excluded from school if they are suspected of having a communicable disease.

Screenings - During each school year, with parental permission, the certified School Nurse conducts State-



mandated screenings for height, weight, blood pressure, vision and scoliosis. Audiology screenings are conducted annually by the Speech Therapists. Parents are notified, in writing, of screening results and required follow-up for findings that deviate from the recommended standard.

### **EMERGENCY ADMINISTRATION OF EPINEPHRINE FOR FIRST-TIME ALLERGIC REACTIONS AT SCHOOL**

The certified school nurse or trained designee shall be permitted to administer epinephrine via a pre-filled auto-injector mechanism to any student without a known history of anaphylaxis. This includes students whose parent(s)/guardian(s) have not submitted prior written permission or obtained prescribed medication as indicated in the rules indicated under Emergency Administration of Epinephrine. Epinephrine may be administered to any student without a known history of anaphylaxis when the certified school nurse or trained designee, in good faith, believes that the student is having an anaphylactic reaction.

ECLC shall maintain a supply of epinephrine auto-injectors that is prescribed under a standing protocol from a licensed physician or an advanced practice nurse in a secure but unlocked and easily accessible location. The supply of epinephrine auto-injectors shall be accessible to the certified school nurse and trained designees for administration to a student having an anaphylactic reaction.

We ask that you check your child for any early signs of illness. Please keep your child home from school if he/she has the signs of an infection or illness.

### **RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT**

There are many opportunities for recognition of progress and achievement. Student recognition assemblies are held each year. Students who have been identified by teachers and therapists as having made progress, achieved a goal, served the school community and performed well in SKIL receive certificates. Students who have received varsity letters in their own communities are awarded them during our Spring Assembly.

An Employers' Breakfast honors student workers and the local business people who have developed work sites for our students. Dress for Success days and Hero Recognition assemblies also occur throughout the year.

Graduation is held each June for students who have met graduation requirements. Each student receives a diploma from his/her own school district. Our graduation ceremony is followed by a reception for guests and parents.

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL GROWTH**

There are many opportunities for social growth at ECLC.

Turn taking, being a friend and learning game rules are part of many topics covered by Teachers, Therapists and the school Social Workers in our school-wide Social Skills of the Week Program. Social exchange and interaction are encouraged by staff during each day. Daily social skills development instruction occurs in the classroom by the Teacher under the direction of our Psychologist. There are school-wide assembly programs when all students have opportunities to participate, i.e., talent shows, concerts and field day. Other special interest groups are planned as needed during the year by the school Social Workers.

Each week “Paws Four Autism”, our pet therapy program, provides students with a 30-minute dog therapy session. In addition, students from the lower cluster classes are bused regularly to a therapeutic riding stable for a session on horseback riding and horse grooming.

An extensive after-school and Respite program is offered to students. Parents are asked to offset costs and to pick up their child upon return to school. The ECLC Foundation supports some of the costs and scholarships are available. Information and schedules are sent to parents each fall.

There are sports teams, such as soccer and basketball. Our students participate in recreational sports as well. The Key Club and other groups participate in service projects during the year.

There are many other opportunities for social growth during the school year, such as a semi-formal for students ages 16 and older and monthly alumni activities for our graduating students and ECLC graduates. Students may participate in Student Council and girls 12 and older in Girl Scouts.

### **PHONE MESSAGES**

To avoid interruptions to instruction, staff members will be given your message and will return your phone call when they are free. Urgent messages should be directed to the Principal.

### **VISITORS**

All visitors must sign in and out at the Receptionist's desk located in the front lobby and wear a name or identification tag. Students are expected to be courteous to guests of the school. For security, students should not open exit doors to admit anyone.

### **LUNCH**

Students must bring a lunch to school. We recommend that you select nutritious foods such as whole grain bread, fruits, raw vegetables and cheese and a very limited amount of sweets. Also, lunches should be prepared at home and not require refrigeration. If there are specialized dietary concerns, please discuss them with the School Nurse and your child's Teacher. Three days per week students may buy their lunch e.g., pizza (sponsored by the PTO) one day per week, and Subway sandwiches (offered by SKIL) 2 days per week. Parents are notified of these days.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Please be sure that **all personal property is labeled for identification**. ECLC cannot be responsible for lost items such as iPads, cell phones and CD players. If your child brings such items to school, they should be given to the classroom teacher for safekeeping.

### **SUBSTANCE USE/ABUSE**

Recognizing that the misuse of substances by students seriously impedes their education, ECLC provides a drug-free environment and has adopted policies and procedures to protect the welfare of all students. ECLC prohibits the use, possession and/or distribution of drugs, alcohol, tobacco or controlled substances at school on school property or school events.

When a student is thought to be “impaired” she/he is referred to the nurse. The parent and Child Study Team are so informed and ECLC refers to the student's local school district policies.

The student must comply with those policies in order to remain at ECLC.

Each year the Ho-Ho-Kus Police Department sponsors safety workshops for our students and their parents, especially during School Violence Awareness Week in October.

The ECLC staff is always available to students and their families where substance involvement is interfering with education and quality of life. Referral to local community resources may be facilitated through our Social Worker's office.

**Smoking** - ECLC of New Jersey enforces New Jersey's no-smoking code at school, on school premises, on school trips, and at activities. Students may not have any smoking paraphernalia in their possession at school, on school trips and after-school activities. Such paraphernalia will be confiscated and returned only to parents.

### **WEAPONS**

Any object deemed by ECLC staff to be a weapon will be immediately confiscated by the administration. Parents, Child Study Teams and, possibly the police, will be notified, with disciplinary action taken.

ECLC fosters a safe school environment and will conduct investigations of any physical or verbal threats made to staff or students.

### **ECLC OF NEW JERSEY**

#### **Policy: Cooperation With Law Enforcement Operations For Substances, Weapons and Safety**

It is the policy of ECLC of NJ to ensure the complete cooperation between school staff and law enforcement authorities in all matters relating to:

- Controlled dangerous substances, as defined in N.J.S.A.24:2.1-2, including anabolic steroids, drug paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages, firearms and other deadly weapons.
- The planning and conducting of law enforcement activities and operations occurring on school property, including arrest procedures and undercover school operations.

ECLC will comply with all requirements of N.J.A.C.6A:16-6.

This policy will be made available annually to all school staff, students and parents.

The building Principal will act as the liaison with law enforcement agencies. The Principal will notify the Executive Director immediately of any contact made with law enforcement authorities and keep the Executive Director continually informed of any law enforcement agency involvement at ECLC of NJ.

### **LOCKER SEARCHES**

ECLC will conduct random searches at our discretion. When findings result in disciplinary action as per

ECLC's policies, parents will be notified immediately. In addition, periodic cleanup of lockers and desks will be announced and held.

### **CELL PHONES/OTHER MOBILE DEVICES**

Cell phones and other mobile devices should not be seen, heard or viewed during school hours. If a mobile device in any way disrupts or distracts a class, it will be taken away and held for a parent to pick up. Parents should monitor all telephone calls from their child to other ECLC students.

### **REPORTING MISSING AND ABUSED CHILDREN**

It is the policy of ECLC to report children missing from school without explanation promptly to parents, Child Study Teams, the police and the State Department of Education. Absences of more than five days and habitual tardiness are reported to your Child Study Team. If a child is missing while in school, the Teacher shall immediately notify the administration, which will in turn notify the local police, the parents and your Child Study Team.

The State of New Jersey requires that school personnel report to the local police and DCPP (the Division of Child Protection and Permanency), suspicions of child abuse and/or neglect. ECLC policy complies with this responsibility to report suspicions. Any staff member may notify DCPP and DCPP will investigate the reported problem. The Child Study Team will also be notified so that coordinated intervention on behalf of helping the child can begin promptly if found necessary. ECLC provides staff with in-service training on the identification of signs of child abuse or neglect, reporting procedures and their responsibilities with regard to reporting.

## **ECLC OF NEW JERSEY**

### **Policy: Prohibiting Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying** **(Summary)**

ECLC of New Jersey prohibits acts of harassment intimidation or bullying of a student as per N.J.S.A.18A:37-15(3)(b)(1).

ECLC of New Jersey is a highly unique educational setting with specialized programming to meet the needs of students with special needs. Our school is composed of students with severe learning disabilities and intellectual disabilities. There may be cases in which a behavior/action by a student appears to be an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying, however, the root core of the behavior is the student's documented disability.

Before invoking the processes delineated in this policy, ECLC shall make a determination as to whether they believe that the student's reported behavior/actions are directly the result of their disability.

When a written harassment, intimidation or bullying complaint is lodged and received by the Executive Director of ECLC of New Jersey, he/she will convene a meeting with the Anti-Bullying Coordinator (Board Certified Behavioral Analyst), school-based Anti-Bullying Specialist (school Social Worker), the building-based School Safety Team, the Principal and the person making the complaint, to determine whether the student's disability is the cause of reported action/behavior. If the outcome of this meeting is that the student's disability caused the action/behavior, the building-based Child Study Team will develop a behavior plan to address the behavior to correct the behavior. If the team deems that the behavior/action is not a result of the student's handicapping condition, this policy will be adhered to and all appropriate

steps will be followed. If the team determines this is not a case of harassment, intimidation or bullying, the parents will be notified of this determination.

Note: This policy, in its entirety, is posted on the ECLC website.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL AND EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

When we must close school or delay the opening time due to inclement weather or an emergency condition, you and your bus company will receive a phone call from an automated voice system as early as possible.

Sometimes weather conditions change suddenly and we must close early. The automated voice system will be activated to notify you that your child will be placed on the bus and will arrive home early. Please have cell phones turned on for easier access. **It is critical to keep all telephone numbers current with the school office.** A contingency plan should be in place if you are not at home and see weather conditions change.

### **GUARDIANSHIP**

Families should inform ECLC administration regarding the guardianship status of their young adult. If under guardianship, documentation should be provided.

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