



Division of Early Education Services Early Education Programs Head Start/Early Head Start Programs



Parent Handbook

Revised July 2025

Riverside County Office of Education's Pledge

Every student in Riverside County will graduate from high school academically and socially prepared for college, the workforce, and civic responsibility.

Table of Contents

Welcome	1
Vision and Mission Statement	2
Philosophy.....	2
School Readiness Goals.....	2
Options	2
Family Engagement	2-3
Transition	3
Enrollment Process	3
Disabilities Services	4
Fraud Policy	4
Confidentiality of Information	4
Electronic Sign In/out Process	4-5
Attendance	5-6
Positive Child Guidance	6
Parent Exclusion from the Program.....	6
Clothing.....	7
End of Year Activity.....	7
Health Care	7-8
45-day Screening/Treatment	8
Nutrition.....	8
Social Emotional Wellness.....	8
Mandated Reporter.....	9
Safety	9
Telephone Numbers	9
Title IX.....	10-11
Uniform Complaints Procedures.....	12-18

Welcome to the Head Start/Early Head Start Programs. This booklet will provide you with helpful information and important reminders to maximize the opportunities the program provides to you and your family. It is important to keep this handbook with the copies of your enrollment documents so that you can refer back to them throughout the year.

We believe that communication is the key to a successful relationship between the family and the Head Start/Early Head Start Programs. Whenever you have any questions or concerns, please bring them to your child's teacher. Parents may also speak with the site manager of your child's school, if needed. When questions or concerns cannot be addressed at the school site, the coordinators are available to help you. They can be reached by calling (800) 600-1800. Remember, we are your partners in helping your child succeed.

Our Head Start/Early Head Start Programs understand that you, the parent, are your child's first and most important teacher. We welcome and need your participation, including fathers, in the classroom and during family engagement events. Your engagement strengthens the success of the program, but most importantly will prepare your child for success. We are certain that your family and child will find that engaging in school activities are fun, rewarding, and memorable.

We look forward to building a trustworthy and engaging partnership.



Vision and Mission Statement

Pledge - Every student in Riverside County will graduate from high school academically and socially prepared for college, the workforce, and civic responsibility.

Mission - The mission of the Riverside County Office of Education is to ensure the success of all students through extraordinary service, support, and partnerships.

Vision - The vision of the Riverside County Office of Education is to be a collaborative organization characterized by the highest quality employees providing leadership, programs, and services to school districts, schools, and students countywide.

Core Values -

- Building Relationships That Promote Trust
- Engaging in Open and Honest Communication
- Focusing on the Needs of Students and Children

Philosophy

Head Start/Early Head Start provides programs in the family's home and/or center-based classroom that help children grow physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally.

Our staff provides a variety of classroom and outdoor learning experiences that help children express themselves creatively.

Children are encouraged to discover and solve problems through interactions with adults, peers, and their environment.

Early Head Start and Head Start share similar goals but bring different strengths to a collaborative program from pre-birth to five year-old. Early Head Start emphasizes the parent-child relationship as the strongest foundation for healthy development. Head Start promotes family engagement and school readiness.

School Readiness Goals

Our school readiness goals are created by looking at overall data from children's developmental assessments. These goals help guide learning experiences in both Head Start and Early Head Start to focus on areas where children may need extra support. To help families support learning at home, we provide fun and easy activities you can do with your child to build on what they're learning in the classroom.

Parents play an important role in helping their children reach these goals by staying involved in classroom activities, talking with teachers about their child's progress, and using the suggested home activities to support learning every day.

Options

Head Start and Early Head Start are fully licensed programs that provide full-day, or home-based services. Sites are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

- ❖ The Home Based option is available to families in Early Head Start (prenatal - 3 years old). This option capitalizes on the home as the child's primary learning environment and the parent as their first teacher. Home-Based visitors meet with the families in their home each week (*1.5 hours*) and two group socialization experiences are offered each month.
- ❖ Head Start Full Day (*6.5 hours per day*) and Early Head Start Full Day (*7 hours per day*) Monday through Friday. Parents of full-day students are required to show they are working, in training, or going to school full-time in order to be prioritized for full-day enrollment.
- ❖ Early Head Start Prenatal provides comprehensive prenatal and postpartum healthcare education to low-income pregnant women.

Family Engagement

Parent engagement and participation is the key element that makes Head Start/Early Head Start unique from other early childhood programs. Parent and family engagement is about building relationships and supporting family well-being. Below are some opportunities for parents/guardians, including fathers, to be involved in your child's learning either in-person or virtually.

Site Parent Committee Meeting/Policy Council:

Parents/guardians are offered the opportunity to be involved in a policy and decision-making structure, or shared governance process known as Policy Council. A site meeting will take place early in the program year to elect the site representative and alternate member to attend the monthly Policy Council General Meetings. Additional Site Parent Meetings may be necessary to conduct Policy Council business.

Classroom Parent Meetings: This is a monthly opportunity for parents/guardians to engage with the teaching staff. Information regarding curriculum planning, classroom instructions, site events, and other pertinent information will be shared to foster ongoing collaboration and communication between staff and parents.

Family Goal/Family Partnership Agreement (FPA): Parents/Guardians will be offered opportunities to become involved in developing individualized family partnership agreements that include setting family goals, connecting with resources, and establishing timelines and strategies for attaining such goals. Families are encouraged to engage in this collaborative partnership process with staff to identify the family's goals or needs, determine the necessary services, as well as participate in follow up actions to define the goals outcome.

Parent Trainings: Training and educational activities will be offered to parents throughout the year to respond to families' expressed needs. These are opportunities for parents to enhance their parenting skills, knowledge, and understanding of their children's educational and developmental needs. Additional community resources will also be available through the site staff.

Home Visits & Parent Conferences: This provides an opportunity to discuss your child's growth, development, and progress, as well as develop your child's learning goals with the teacher. Center-based classes receive two scheduled home visits and two site conferences throughout the program year. Home-Based programs conduct four parent conferences throughout the program year.

Volunteering: A variety of opportunities are available for parents to become involved. Parents can volunteer in the classroom, work with their children at home, attend the Classroom Parent Meetings, and/or be elected to the Parent Policy Council. Fathers are encouraged to volunteer and participate, as they are an important influence in the lives of their children. Children are always the primary focus in the classroom; therefore, **cell phones are not permitted in the classroom at any time.**

Classroom volunteers must be in good health physically and mentally, and capable of performing assigned tasks. All volunteers must attend a volunteer orientation and submit a "good physical health" statement which includes evidence of a negative tuberculosis (TB) test per SB792: Immunization Requirements. In addition, volunteers must adhere to any local health requirements set forth by the program and community care licensing.

In-Kind Contributions: Classroom volunteer time, school to home activities, community service, and donations are considered an in-kind contribution if they are a service or donation which would normally be

purchased by the program. Without parent participation and volunteer efforts, the program may not meet its in-kind goals, and future **funding for the program may be jeopardized.**

Parent Volunteer Dress Code: Parents who volunteer to participate in Head Start/Early Head Start Programs are required to wear clothing and accessories that support health and safety practices, honor cultural/religious traditions, and are appropriate in an early childhood setting.

Transition

Transition practices refer to the events, activities, and processes associated with key changes between environments during the early childhood years. This may include going from home to an early education program or from preschool, TK, or kindergarten. Early childhood educators build a foundation of social, emotional, and learning experiences that prepare children to transition into new learning environments. Parents are an important element in this process as they learn how to support their child's learning and become familiar with the educational setting as their child transitions. They are not only their child's first teacher; they are their best advocate for school success.

If children are transitioning from Early Head Start to Head Start, the family must apply for the Head Start Program at least 3 months prior to their child turning 3 years old. Every child will have to re-certify to attend Head Start. Your child will be placed on a waitlist if a Head Start slot is not available. Transitional activities take place from home to the Head Start/Early Head Start programs. Head Start children and families transition into kindergarten through a variety of activities which may include classroom visits or visits from local education agencies.

Enrollment Process

To determine Riverside County Office of Education's (RCOE) eligibility, all applicants must meet age and income requirements set forth by federal regulations. Eligible applicants are placed on a prioritized waitlist at the site of their choosing and ranked per the program's established selection criteria. Applicants selected for enrollment must have current and complete physical exams, must be up-to-date on scheduled immunizations and have received tuberculosis (TB) clearance prior to official enrollment.

Recruitment and placement of eligible families on the program's waitlist is ongoing throughout the program year. In this regard, the waitlist order is subject to change as eligible families are added to the waitlist on an ongoing basis.

Disabilities Services

Children with Special Services: Head Start/Early Head Start Programs welcome children with special needs into our programs as we believe in providing an enriched preschool environment for all children.

Referrals and related comprehensive screenings can be requested for children that are suspected of having a disability, in addition to children with previously identified disabilities. The goal of services is to support each child's individuality, development, learning, and above all, educational achievement.

Head Start staff work with the parent and appropriate personnel to ensure that the child is promptly referred to the appropriate local education agency, in order to access Early Intervention/Special Education services.

The program collaborates with parents and the appropriate local education agencies to both monitor and support the growth and development of children identified with disabilities or who are found eligible to receive specialized services.

Through partnerships with RCOE, preschool children with disabilities, including children with severe disabilities, have the opportunities to learn and play alongside typical peers enrolled in the Head Start/Early Head Start Programs.

Individualized Education Program/Individual Family Service Plan (IEP/IFSP) records, if in place, are required to determine the best placement and support services for any qualifying child.

Fraud Policy

Intentionally providing false or inaccurate information in order to access services is considered fraud. Fraud is grounds for termination from the program and legal actions will result. Some examples of fraud include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Failure to report the actual number of family members living in the household
- ❖ Failure to report the actual gross income for the family
- ❖ Submitting falsified income documentation
- ❖ Submitting falsified employment documentation

Head Start/Early Head Start reserves the right to verify the accuracy of any information/documentation submitted by the parent/guardian for the purposes of accessing the Head Start/Early Head Start Programs. If it is found that the parent/guardian provided inaccurate

or false information during enrollment, the family will be terminated from the program and will be responsible for repayment. The authorities will be contacted for investigative services and to assist Head Start and/ or Early Head Start in collecting the repayment of unauthorized services by the parent/guardian.

Confidentiality of Information

RCOE takes great care to safeguard the privacy and protection of Head Start/Early Head Start participants and their families, including child records and data containing Personal Identifiable Information (PII). All Disclosures (release) of PII from Child Records are on a need to know basis or otherwise "deemed necessary" for the purpose of Disclosure. In other words, at RCOE, we do not disclose PII from Child Records for any reason. We have a specific process that must be followed and it depends on the type of PII that has been requested and by whom.

As a normal business practice of operating the Head Start/Early Head Start programs, certain documents that may contain PII are subject to review by authorized staff and representatives of RCOE as well as program auditors, representatives of Community Care Licensing (CCL), and the Office of Head Start (OHS) and other agencies with legal authority to request such information. In addition, the program could at any time have unannounced site visits from CCL and OHS who may request to speak with staff, parents, and children, as well as examine files and records. No other use of this information shall be made without prior written consent from parent(s), guardian(s) or caregiver(s).

Electronic Sign In/out Process

For your child's protection and in compliance with state law, you **•must sign-in** your child when he/she arrives at the school site **and sign-out** your child when picked up at departure. Your full signature is required. **(Community Care Licensing does not allow initials.)**
*Only under special circumstances instructional staff may sign-in/out on behalf of the parent/guardian.

- ❖ All students must be signed in. The program utilizes an electronic sign in/sign out process with the use of a dedicated tablet in each classroom to be used by those authorized to drop off or pick up enrolled students. This is applicable to center-based classrooms.
- ❖ For the home-based program the teacher will also ask the parent/guardian to sign-in and sign-out their student on the teacher tablet.

At arrival, communication with parents must be brief. At departure, communication must be brief and

any extended communication with parents must be conducted after all children have been picked up and/or signed out. During arrival and pick up, please hold your child's hand while in line and while walking through the parking lot and street; to ensure proper supervision of your child.

Center-Based: Only people 18 years or older, authorized by you, will be allowed to pick up your child. If someone comes for your child and they are not listed on the emergency card, your child will not be released to that person. Phone calls or notes from you will not be accepted under any circumstances. You may add or delete people, as needed, from the emergency card any time you wish. Staff will ask all unfamiliar persons for picture identification when they pick a child up.

Early Pick-Up: If circumstances arise that require picking up your child before the end of the regular school day, please let the teacher know as soon as possible. This will help prepare the child in advance for leaving early. Parents must contact the office for communication.

Late Drop-Off / Late Pick-Up Policy: If your child will be arriving late to school, please call the office staff by 8:00 a.m. If you do not call, the office staff will call the parent/guardian an hour after school starts.

Effects of Arriving Late:

- ❖ Your child may have a difficult time feeling comfortable joining the group that is already involved in their daily routines
- ❖ The meal count may be affected resulting in less food being sent to the classrooms
- ❖ The child may miss learning activities

When a child is dropped off late and/or picked up early or picked up after the end of class, a Late Drop-Off/Early or Late Pick-Up notice will be issued. For the first and second notice, the teacher will remind the parents of the importance of following the policy. No further action is required at this time.

After three (3) Late Drop-Off/Early or Late Pick-Up notices have been given, a conference will be scheduled with the teacher. The conference will include the reviewing of the Late Drop-Off/Early or Late Pick-Up policy, an update on the emergency card and discussion of concerns and issue regarding the late notices.

On the fourth late notice, a Case Management will be conducted with the teacher and site manager to develop a plan. The parent will receive a copy of the plan. If the problem continues, the plan will be reviewed.

In the event that a child is not picked up within 30 minutes after the end of their class, and all attempts to contact the parent/guardian or other emergency card designee have been unsuccessful, this will constitute as an "emergency situation". The Site Manager will take steps to ensure the safety of the child which may include contact with Child Protective Services and/or the local police. The incident will be documented and the Site Manager will meet with the parent.

Attendance

Each enrollment opportunity is valuable and daily attendance is a requirement of the program for all students to achieve maximum benefit from carefully planned daily activities. Absenteeism is a lost opportunity to learn and can influence whether or not a child can read proficiently by the end of third grade. In addition, Head Start regulations require the program closely monitor student attendance for compliance in all of the following areas:

- ❖ Each student is expected to attend at least 91 percent of the time
- ❖ Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must call the school office to report an absence no later than one hour after the designated start time
- ❖ The program must contact a family anytime a student has an unexplained absence.

Absences that are considered excused (verification may be requested/required):

- ❖ Student or parent illness
- ❖ Family emergency
- ❖ Death in immediate family
- ❖ Court hearing or court ordered visitation
- ❖ Medical/dental appointments for child
- ❖ Public Assistance appointments (e.g. CalWORKS, WIC, Social Security, Medical)
- ❖ Extended absences due to medical or family emergencies for child or parent (must be requested in writing, in advance with proper documentation and approved by program administration)

All other absences are considered unexcused.

Chronic Absenteeism/Attendance Follow-up

Chronic absenteeism refers to a student missing 10% or more of school days, regardless of whether the absences are excused or unexcused.

The program monitors student attendance and may issue an attendance notice if your student is chronically absent and/or has two or more unexcused/unexplained absences. This process requires home visits, meetings with the Site Manager, and/or Case Management in its effort to assist families for improved student attendance. Our Goal is to partner with you to improve your student's attendance, so we can keep them engaged and learning.

Failure to improve student attendance despite the program's best efforts to assist the family may result in a program transfer or may otherwise jeopardize continued enrollment in the program.

Positive Child Guidance

Head Start/Early Head Start staff foster positive behaviors by engaging children in a variety of enriching, constructive activities throughout the day. Staff guide children through modeling, encouragement, and supportive teaching moments that help them learn and practice appropriate behaviors.

Children thrive in environments that offer consistency, structure, and nurturing relationships. When these elements are in place, children are better able to express themselves in positive ways. If a child experiences challenges, staff see this as an opportunity to understand their needs and provide guidance that supports their growth and success.

Through positive guidance and role-modeling children learn to:

- ❖ Express their feelings in healthy ways
- ❖ Show empathy and kindness
- ❖ Follow directions and routines
- ❖ Engage in cooperative play
- ❖ Build positive self-esteem
- ❖ Practice self-regulation

The Head Start/Early Head Start program is committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where every child can thrive. In the instance that a child's behavior significantly impacts the learning environment, we will work collaboratively to provide the necessary support. The Site Manager, in partnership with the Coordinator, will invite the child's parent or guardian to a case management meeting to create a proactive and individualized support plan.

Our shared goal is to ensure every child experiences success, safety, and a strong sense of belonging within our program.

Parent Exclusion From the Program

One of the founding principles of the Head Start/Early Head Start Programs is parental and caregiver involvement with their children at home and in the classroom.

In an effort to ensure the safety and well-being of children, parents, and staff members, while in compliance with all the federal, state, and local regulations regarding safety. RCOE has the right to exclude parents who willingly interfere with the discipline, good order, lawful conduct, or administration of any classroom or activity of its child development programs.

If a child's parent/guardian or other family member threatens another parent and/or staff member in any way, including intimidation, bullying, belittling, yelling, and/or disregards the agency's policies and procedures, this is a cause for immediate exclusion from the program. (RCOE BP 5131.4, 5137, 5142, 5144.1)

When the parent/guardian or a family member is excluded from the program, child's participation will not be affected and will continue to attend the program to avoid disruption of the child's education. The parent will be provided the reason for the exclusion. A meeting will then be established with the Site Manager and Program Coordinator to address the issues related to the exclusion.

If the parent/guardian still feels that the exclusion is unwarranted, he/she may appeal to the Program Director by calling the Grantee office and request an appointment. Parent/guardians that are excluded also have a right to appeal that exclusion through the RCOE Uniform Complaint procedure which can be requested from the program's Coordinator. (Legal Citations: RCOE BP 1250)

Clothing

School is a place to learn, play, and explore. Dress your child in clothes that support active engagement.

Bring clothing for emergencies or accidents if needed. If there is no extra clothes, the parent/guardian will be notified. Clothing that remains at the site must be labeled with the child's first and last name. RCOE is not responsible for lost or stolen clothing.

For Early Head Start, we recommend parents bring the following items when leaving their children at the site:

- ❖ Change of clothes, labeled with your child's first and last name
- ❖ A soft toy or security blanket to help your child feel more secure when resting
- ❖ Breast milk (if applicable)

Children who are one year-old or above must wear closed-toed shoes at all times while at the site. Sturdy shoes help a child's sense of balance.

Toileting: Toileting is an important stage. Your child may also be learning to use the toilet independently. We will assist and support you as your child gains this skill. For times like this, easy on and off clothing would be best.

Footwear: For the health and safety of your child, it is important to consider the type of shoes your child wears to school. Open sandals, open-toe, flip-flops, Shoes with slippery soles (dress boots or party shoes) can also be a safety risk and are not permitted.

Jewelry: Parents should evaluate allowing their child to wear jewelry to school. These items pose health risks as children go about their normal classroom activities and use the playground. Parents of infants and toddlers should be especially conscious of choking hazards with jewelry or having earrings get caught in blankets and tearing earlobes.

Acrylic Nails: For the health and safety of your child, do not allow your child to wear acrylic nails while playing as it may cause injury to another child.

Chapstick/Sunscreen: Chapstick and sunscreen are not allowed in the classroom. Parents are allowed to put these items on their own child at drop-off.

End of the Year Activities

All Grantee Operated sites follow a consistent procedure that is developmentally appropriate, and in alignment with Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Year-end activities provide an opportunity to celebrate each child's growth and to reinforce the value of family engagement. These events serve to highlight the collective progress of the class, and honor the contributions of parents as primary educators of their children.

All children should be recognized equally during end-of-year activities. Special awards or competitive

recognitions (e.g., "best reader," "most improved," "top student") are not permitted. Preschool children are still developing their social-emotional understanding and self-concept. Activities that emphasize individual achievement or competition may result in exclusion or negative self-perception

Health Care

Health Checks: The health and well-being of all enrolled children is our top priority; therefore, we conduct daily health checks. These health checks include visual evaluation of your child's eyes, ears, nose, skin, and hair/scalp upon their arrival to school. You are required to stay with your child until the health check is completed, and then you can sign your child into his/her classroom. Daily health checks are required by licensing for both Head Start and Early Head Start.

Oral Health: In order to promote dental hygiene, dental education will be provided through out the year. A dental screening will be conducted within 45 days upon enrollment.

Medication: If medication is needed during school hours, a physician will need to document on a Care Plan in which the following information is required.

- ❖ All prescription/non-prescription medication must be labeled with the child's name, the doctor's name, the name of the medicine. A note from the doctor stating the amount to be given, any side effects to watch for, and what to do if they are observed, the time schedule for the child to have the medication, and the date the medicine expires must be provided.
- ❖ Medication must come to school in the original container.
- ❖ Sample medication shall not be accepted at any site.
- ❖ The child cannot start school until the medication paperwork is complete, and medication is on site. The staff will inform the parent when the child can start school.
- ❖ Parents will be notified of any medication that will be expiring and will be responsible for replacing it with current medication. Child cannot attend school until this is complete.
- ❖ As part of Community Care Licensing (CCL) We have an incidental medical service plan that outlines medication provided on site.

If your child is ill and can't participate in the day's activities, please keep them home.

Illnesses: If your child becomes ill while at the site, they will not be able to stay. If your child has been exposed to a contagious disease or illness, please inform the site staff (a doctor's note clearing the child to return to school may be requested). A child should be fever-free for 24-hours before returning to the site.

Below are some signs of illness:

- ❖ Temperature of 100.4° or higher
- ❖ Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea
- ❖ Unusual tiredness or quietness
- ❖ Fever or chills
- ❖ Persistent crying
- ❖ Eye drainage
- ❖ Skin infections (open, runny, and oozy sores, blisters, patch-like scaling, eruptions. Scaly crusty lesions, itching, or skin rash)
- ❖ Scabies and lice

If your child is ill and unable to attend school, please call the school office staff by 8:00 a.m. as this affects the meal count for the day.

Emergency Cards: An emergency card must be completed for each child and include three contact names and phone numbers. Only adults over 18 years of age can pick up a child. If applicable, please be sure to include any medical or dental documentation regarding matters such as food allergies, chronic medications, medical conditions, etc. If you need to change or update your Emergency card, please work with office staff at the site.

45-Day Screening/Treatment

Health Screenings: The program provides screenings in vision, hearing, dental, height/weight, and developmental areas for all enrolled children within the first 45 days of enrollment. You will receive a copy of your child's screening results. If your child fails their hearing, vision, or dental screening, please make an appointment with your health care provider for treatment this can have an impact on your child's learning. Please inform the Community Assistant of the date and time of your appointment and return written documentation after the visit. If you do not have a dentist or doctor, you may ask the Community Assistant for a list of providers in your area. All enrolled children must have an established medical/dental home within the first 30 days of enrollment.

Heights and weight measurements are completed on site. If your child is not within a healthy weight range, we have a registered dietitian who provides nutrition education for all families. The Community Assistant will inform you of your child's results and date of the class.

Nutrition

Nutritious meals are served from a licensed food service facility. The teacher engages all children in conversation during family-style meal service. All food is eaten in the classroom and cannot be taken home by staff, parents, children, or volunteers. Food from home or the outside is not permitted in classrooms which includes parents bringing in food for staff or children.

Food Allergies: If your child has a food allergy, a medical statement from your physician will be required prior to your child starting school.

Social Emotional Wellness

Social Emotional Wellness is an important part of young children's developmental milestones and support Mental Health. Social Emotional Wellness refers to the healthy social, emotional, and behavioral well-being of young children. Young children's Social Emotional Wellness can look different depending on the individual child, their family and their community or culture.

Young children are learning how to experience, express and regulate their own emotions and understanding, so there is some trial and error. They need to be able to experiment and learn while in a safe relationship with caring adults, who can give them guidance.

The number one attribute of early childhood Social Emotional Wellness is for a child to know that a person really cares and is available. This is evident in classroom behavior when a child is playing or having a one-on-one conversation with a teacher.

Children display numerous behaviors and usually those behaviors are part of normal development. However, if behaviors seem too extreme and are present in different environments over a period of time, the Head Start program can support the family in this area.

Social Emotional Wellness services and/or support are available for all children and their families enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start. These services are provided by qualified Social Emotional Wellness clinicians with experience and knowledge in child, marriage and family support. Clinicians' expertise include, but are not limited to, early childhood development, postpartum depression, stress, anxiety,

community resources, case management, challenging behaviors, and many other areas that may arise within the family dynamics, and support the social emotional needs of children and families.

Contact information for Social Emotional Wellness services is posted at the site or you may contact the Site Manager for further resources. The Head Start/Early Head Start Programs follow strict guidelines to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all enrolled children and families.

Mandated Reporter

All staff members are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. As mandated by the California Child Abuse Reporting Law Penal Code Sections 11165-11174.3, each staff member must report any incident of known or suspected child abuse. As required by law, a report will be made to the appropriate authorities. Reports are confidential and will only be disclosed to the appropriate agencies. Staff is not legally required to inform the parent/guardian when a report is made.

Categories of Child Abuse include the following:

Physical Abuse: Any act resulting in non-accidental injury, including burning, biting, cutting, poking, or twisting limbs. Accommodations must be medically based.

Physical Neglect: Withholding basic necessities of life, including adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care.

Emotional Abuse: Includes verbal assault (i.e., belittling, screaming, threats, blaming, and sarcasm), continual negative moods, and constant family discord.

Sexual Abuse: Rape, incest, sodomy, oral copulation, penetration of genital/anal opening by a foreign object, and child molestation.

Kaitlyn's Law: Never leave children in your car unattended or unsupervised.

Safety

Emergency Preparedness: For the safety of all children, our sites plan and prepare for emergencies and disasters. (**Emergency Card is required for each child**).

- ❖ In the event of a natural disaster, site staff will remain with the children until parents, guardians, or an authorized adult comes to pick up their child.

- ❖ Children are taught the procedure for fire and earthquake drills (monthly).
- ❖ Emergency packets, which include the following items, must be updated as needed:
 - ♦ Family photograph
 - ♦ Up-to-date emergency contact person

Transportation: Please observe safety practices when parking your vehicle and walking to and from school. Never leave your children in a car unattended and unsupervised. Pedestrian safety tips will be shared with parents and children to help them be more aware of good practices when walking and/or crossing streets.

Pest Management: RCOE is committed to providing a safe environment for children, staff, parents, and visitors. The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system monitors all sites for insects, rodents, and other pests that can create safety issues at the site.

From time to time, it may be necessary to use chemicals to control the problem. When this occurs, notices will be posted seventy-two (72) hours prior to an application and two (2) days afterwards. No pesticide applications will take place while children are present.

If parents have any concerns about these IPM actions, they may contact the Site Manager who can help them get answers to their questions.

Due to the safety of the children, backpacks are not allowed in the Head Start/Early Head Start Program.

Telephone Numbers

Banning	(951) 826-4580
Beaumont Ave	(951) 826-4500
Beaumont 8th HS/EHS	(951) 826-4530
Casa Blanca HS/EHS	(951) 826-7275
Garretson	(951) 826-4230
Home Gardens	(951) 826-4224
Jefferson	(951) 826-4234
La Granada	(951) 826-4205
Murrieta	(951) 600-5680
Perris HS/EHS	(951) 826-7200
Stokoe HS/EHS	(951) 826-4390
RCOE Main Office	(800) 600-1800

Title IX: Prohibiting Sex-Based Discrimination

Pupil and Public Rights Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) is a federal law prohibiting sex-based discrimination in all educational programs and activities, including athletic programs. No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity operated by RCOE.

Title IX protects all participants in RCOE’s educational programs and activities, including students, parents, employees, and job applicants. RCOE does not discriminate on the basis of sex. Discrimination on the basis of sex can include sexual harassment and sexual violence.

In addition to Title IX, the California Education Code prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in schools (California Education Code §§ 220-221.1). Other state and federal laws also prohibit discrimination and ensure equality in education. Please refer to an overview of all RCOE’s nondiscrimination policies and the following specific policies and procedures regarding sexual harassment:

- ❖ Non-Discrimination in Employment – Board Policy 4030
- ❖ Non-Discrimination in Programs and Activities – Board Policy 0410.3
- ❖ Sexual Harassment (Employees) – Administrative Regulation 4119 11 01/4129 01/4319 01
- ❖ Non-Discrimination/Harassment (Students) – Board Policy 5145.3
- ❖ Sexual Harassment (Students) – Board Policy 5145.7
- ❖ Sexual Harassment (Students) – Administrative Regulation 5145.7
- ❖ Uniform Complaint Procedures – Board Policy 1312.3
 - ♦ Uniform Complaint Procedures – Administrative Regulation 1312.3

Information provided here applies to every RCOE school site and all RCOE programs and activities.

Pupil and Public Rights Under Title IX

- ❖ You have the right to fair and equitable treatment, and you shall not be discriminated against based on your sex, pregnancy, or related condition.
- ❖ You have the right to be provided with an equitable opportunity to participate in all academic and extracurricular activities, including athletics.
- ❖ You have the right to have access to a sex/gender equity coordinator, referred to as the Title IX Coordinator, to answer questions regarding sex/gender equity laws.
- ❖ You have the right to contact the State Department of Education and the California Interscholastic Federation to access information on sex/gender equity laws.
- ❖ You have the right to file a confidential discrimination complaint with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights or the California Department of Education if you believe you have been discriminated against or if you believe you have received unequal treatment on the basis of your sex.
- ❖ You have the right to pursue civil remedies if you have been discriminated against.
- ❖ If you file a discrimination complaint, you have the right to be protected against retaliation (California Education Code § 221.8).

Filing a Complaint

A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination or retaliation must be filed no later than six months from the date the discrimination or retaliation occurred or six months from when the complainant first learned of the unlawful discrimination. The Superintendent or designee may extend this timeline by up to 90 days for good cause upon written request by the complainant setting forth the reasons for the extension.

A student, parent, guardian, employee, individual, or organization may file an oral or written complaint alleging discrimination, harassment, intimidation, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or bullying on the basis of a protected characteristic under RCOE’s Uniform Complaint Procedure by sending a complaint to RCOE’s Title IX Coordinator.

Title IX Coordinator

RCOE’s Title IX coordinator oversees compliance with Title IX requirements and promotes sex equity in RCOE programs. For any incidents or concerns related to Title IX, please immediately notify:

Early Education Services, Early Care and Education Title IX Coordinator

Name: Ana Palacios, Coordinator
Email: apalacios@rcoe.us
Phone: (951) 826-4752

Personnel Services Title IX Coordinator

Name: Dion Clark, Executive Director Personnel Services
Email: dlclark@rcoe.us
Phone: (951) 826-6653

For additional resources and information regarding Title IX, please visit the RCOE website at the following URL: <https://www.rcoe.us/departments/personnel-services/title-ix>. On the website, you will find Title IX training materials and all related policies.

How RCOE Investigates Complaints

Complaints filed under RCOE's Uniform Complaint Procedure will be investigated, and a decision will be made within sixty calendar days of the RCOE's receipt unless the complainant agrees to an extension. RCOE's compliance officer or designee may conduct the investigation or choose an investigator to interview alleged victims, alleged offenders, and relevant witnesses. The compliance officer and/or investigator may choose to review available records, statements, or notes related to the complaint, including evidence or information received from the parties during the investigation. The compliance officer and/or investigator may visit reasonably accessible locations where discrimination is alleged to have occurred. As appropriate, RCOE's compliance officer periodically will inform the parties of the status of the investigation. The complainant will be notified when a decision is made. Complaints that are not filed under RCOE's Uniform Complaint Procedure will be investigated and decided pursuant to the applicable procedure.

What Happens After the Investigation

The compliance officer will prepare and send a final written decision to the complainant and respondent, if any, within sixty (60) working days of RCOE's receipt of the complaint (unless this deadline is extended by mutual agreement).

The complainant or respondent may appeal RCOE's decision to the California Department of Education within fifteen calendar days. The appeal must specify the reason for the appeal and whether RCOE's facts are incorrect and/or the law is misapplied. It must also include a copy of the original complaint to RCOE and a copy of RCOE's decision.

For complaints alleging unlawful discrimination based on state law, the complainant may pursue available civil law remedies, including seeking assistance from

mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys, sixty calendar days after filing an appeal with the California Department of Education. (California Education Code § 262.3.) Note that this sixty-day moratorium does not apply to complaints seeking injunctive relief in state courts or discrimination complaints based on federal law. (California Education Code § 262.3.) Complaints may also be filed with the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.

If the compliance officer finds that a complaint has merit, RCOE will take appropriate corrective action. For more information regarding Title IX and sex equity in education or RCOE employment, please contact RCOE's Title IX coordinator.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

SUBJECT: Uniform Complaint Procedures

The County Superintendent of Schools or designee (County Superintendent) and the County Board of Education (County Board) recognize that the County Office of Education (County Office) has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing its educational programs. The County Office encourages the early resolution of complaints whenever possible. To resolve complaints that may require a more formal process, the County Office adopts the uniform system of complaint processes specified in (5 CCR 4600- 4670 and the accompanying administrative regulation (AR)).

Complaints Subject to UCP

The County Office's uniform complaint procedures (UCP) policy applies to all acts related to school activity or school attendance occurring within a school under the jurisdiction of the County Office, and all acts of the County Board and the County Superintendent in enacting policies and procedures that govern the County Office. The UCP shall be used to investigate and resolve complaints regarding the following programs and activities:

1. Accommodations for pregnant and parenting students (Education Code 46015)
2. Adult education programs (Education Code 8500-8538, 52334.7, 52500-52617)
3. After School Education and Safety programs (Education Code 8482-8484.65)
4. Agricultural career technical education (Education Code 52460-52462)
5. Career technical and technical education and career technical and technical training programs (Education Code 52300-52462)
6. Child care and development programs (Education Code 8200-8488)
7. Compensatory education (Education Code 54400)
8. Consolidated categorical aid programs (Education Code 33315; 34 CFR 299.10-299.12)
9. Course periods without educational content (Education Code 51228.1-51228.3)
10. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying in County Office programs and activities, including in those programs or activities funded directly by or that receive or benefit from any state financial assistance, based on a person's actual or perceived characteristics of race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, immigration status, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, physical or mental disability, medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, or any other characteristic identified in Education Code 200 or 220, Government Code 11135, or Penal Code 422.55, or based on

***Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 1312.3 Uniform Complaint Procedures***

the person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics (5 CCR 4610)

11. Discrimination could include if the County Board were to refuse to approve the use or prohibit the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or other resource in a school library, on the basis that it includes a study of the role and contributions of any individual or group consistent with the requirements of Education Code 51204.5 and 60040, unless such study would violate Education Code 51501 or 60044. A complaint alleging such unlawful discrimination may, in addition to or in lieu of being filed with the County Office, be directly filed with the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). (Education Code 243)
12. Educational and graduation requirements for students who are migratory, students participating in a newcomer program, students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness, students from military families, and students formerly in a juvenile court school (Education Code 48645.7, 48853, 48853.5, 49069.5, 51225.1, 51225.2)
13. Every Student Succeeds Act (Education Code 52059.5; 20 USC 6301 et seq.)
14. Local control and accountability plan (Education Code 52075)
15. Migrant education (Education Code 54440-54445)
16. Physical education instructional minutes (Education Code 51210, 51222, 51223)
17. Student fees (Education Code 49010-49013)
18. Reasonable accommodations to a lactating student (Education Code 222)
19. Regional occupational centers and programs (Education Code 52300-52334.7)
20. School plans for student achievement as required for the consolidated application for specified federal and/or state categorical funding (Education Code 64001)
21. School safety plans (Education Code 32280-32289)
22. School site councils as required for the consolidated application for specified federal and/or state categorical funding (Education Code 65000)
23. State preschool programs (Education Code 8207-8225)
24. State preschool health and safety issues in license-exempt programs (Education Code 8212)
25. Any complaint alleging retaliation against a complainant or other participant in the complaint process or anyone who has acted to uncover or report a violation subject to this policy

Adopted September 16, 1992
Revised December 6, 2023

***Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 1312.3 Uniform Complaint Procedures***

26. Any other state or federal educational program the SPI or designee deems appropriate

The County Board shall protect all complainants from retaliation. In investigating complaints, the parties' confidentiality shall be protected as required by law. For any complaint alleging retaliation or unlawful discrimination (such as discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying), the County Superintendent shall keep the identity of the complainant, and/or the subjects of the complaint, if different from the complainant, confidential when appropriate and as long as the integrity of the complaint process is maintained.

(cf. 4119.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 9011 - Disclosure of Confidential/Privileged Information)

The County Board and County Superintendent prohibit retaliation in any form for participating in complaint procedures, including but not limited to the filing of a complaint or the reporting of instances of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, unlawful pupil fees, and bullying. Such participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades or work assignments of the complainant.

The County Board and County Superintendent recognize that a neutral mediator can often suggest a compromise that is agreeable to all parties in a dispute. An Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) process such as mediation may be offered to resolve complaints that involve more than one student and no adult. However, mediation shall not be offered or used to resolve any complaint involving sexual assault or where there is a reasonable risk that a party to the mediation would feel compelled to participate. The County Superintendent shall ensure that mediation results are consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.

When an allegation that is not subject to the UCP is included in a UCP complaint, the County Office shall refer the non-UCP allegation to the appropriate staff or agency and shall investigate and, if appropriate, resolve the UCP-related allegation(s) through the County Office's UCP.

The County Superintendent shall provide training to County Office staff to ensure awareness and knowledge of current law and related requirements, including the steps and timelines specified in this policy and the accompanying administrative regulation.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

The County Superintendent shall maintain records of all UCP complaints, subsequent related actions, including steps taken during the investigation and all information required for compliance with 5 CCR 4631.

(cf. 3580 – County Office of Education Records)

Non-Uniform Complaint Procedure Complaints

The following complaints shall not be subject to the County Office's UCP but shall be referred to the specified agency or through an alternative process: (5 CCR 4611)

1. Any complaint alleging child abuse or neglect shall be referred to the County Department of Social Services Protective Services Division and the appropriate law enforcement agency.

***Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 1312.3 Uniform Complaint Procedures***

(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

2. Any complaint alleging health and safety violations by a child development program shall, for licensed facilities, be referred to the Department of Social Services (5 CCR 4611)
3. Any complaint alleging that a student, while in an education program or activity in which the County Office exercises substantial control over the context and respondent, was subjected to sexual harassment as defined in 34 CFR 106.30 shall be addressed through the federal Title IX complaint procedures adopted pursuant to 34 CFR 106.44-106.45, as specified in AR 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures.
4. Any complaint alleging employment discrimination or harassment shall be investigated and resolved by the County Office in accordance with the procedures specified in AR 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment, including the right to file the complaint with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing.
5. Any complaint alleging a violation of a state or federal law or regulation related to special education, a settlement agreement related to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE), a due process hearing order, or a physical safety concern that interferes with the County Office's provision of FAPE shall be submitted to the California Department of Education (CDE) in accordance with AR 6159.1 - Procedural Safeguards and Complaints for Special Education. (5 CCR 3200-3205)

(cf. 6159.1 - Procedural Safeguards and Complaints for Special Education)

6. Any complaint alleging noncompliance of the County Office's food service program with laws regarding meal counting and claiming, reimbursable meals, eligibility of children or adults, or use of cafeteria funds and allowable expenses shall be filed with or referred to CDE in accordance with Board Policy (BP) 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance. (5 CCR 15580-15584)

(cf. 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance)

7. Any allegation of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in the County Office's food service program shall be filed with or referred to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in accordance with BP 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance. (5 CCR 15582)

(cf. 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance)

8. Complaints related to sufficiency of textbooks or instructional materials, emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health or safety of students or staff, teacher vacancies and misassignments, shall be investigated and resolved pursuant to the Board Policy 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedure and applicable ARs. (Education Code 35186)

(cf. 1312.4 Williams Uniform Complaint Procedure)

Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 1312.3 Uniform Complaint Procedures

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 Prohibition of discrimination

8200-8498 Child care and development programs 8500-8538 Adult basic education

18100-18203 School libraries

32280-32289 School safety plan, uniform complaint procedures

35186 Williams Uniform Complaint

46015 Parental leave for students

48853-48853.5 Foster youth

48985 Notices in language other than English

49010-49014 Student Fees

49060-49079 Student records

49069.5 Records of foster youth

49490-49590 Child nutrition programs

49701 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

51210 Courses of study grades 1-6

51222 Physical education

51223 Physical education, elementary schools

51225.1-51225.2 Foster youth, homeless children, former juvenile court school students, military-connected students, migrant students, and newly arrived immigrant students; course credits; graduation requirements

51226-51226.1 Career technical education

51228.1-51228.3 Course periods without educational content

52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan, especially:

52075 Complaint for lack of compliance with local control and accountability plan requirements

52300- 52462 Career technical education

52500-52616.24 Adult schools

54400-54425 Compensatory education programs

54440-54445 Migrant education

54460-54529 Compensatory education programs

64000-64001 Consolidated application process; school plan for student achievement

65000-65001 School site councils

GOVERNMENT CODE

11135 Nondiscrimination in programs or activities funded by state

12900-12996 Fair Employment and Housing Act

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

1596.792 California Child Day Care Act; general provisions and definitions

1596.7925 California Child Day Care Act; health and safety regulations

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2

11023 Harassment and discrimination prevention and correction

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

3200-3205 Special education compliance complaints

4600-46701 Uniform complaint procedures

4680-4687 Williams uniform complaint procedures

4690-4694 Complaints regarding health and safety issues in license-exempt preschool programs

4900-4965 Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary education programs

Adopted September 16, 1992

Revised December 6, 2023

***Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 1312.3 Uniform Complaint Procedures***

15580-15584 Child nutrition programs complaint procedures

PENAL CODE

422.6 Interference with constitutional right or privilege

422.55 Chapter 1. definitions: Hate Crime UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

20 USC 1221 Application of laws

20 USC 1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

20 USC 1681-1688 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

20 USC 6301-6576-Title I Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

20 USC 6801- 7014 Title III, Language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

29 USC 794 Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

42 USC 2000d-2000e-17 Title VI and Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended

42 USC 2000h-2-2000h-6 Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

42 USC 6101-6107 Age Discrimination Act of 1975

42 USC 11431-11435 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

42 USC 12101-12213 Title II equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.107 Nondiscrimination on basis of disability; complaints

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.1-99.67 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

100.3 Prohibition of discrimination on basis of race, color or national origin

104.7 Designation of responsible employee for Section 504

106.1-106.82 Nondiscrimination on the basis of sex in education programs, especially:

106.8 Designation of responsible employee for Title IX

106.9 Dissemination of Policy

110.25 Prohibition of discrimination based on age

Management Resources:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Uniform Complaint Procedure 2020-21 Program Instrument

Sample UCP Board Policies and Procedures

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR>

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Uniform Complaint Procedure 2020-21 Program Instrument

Sample UCP Board Policies and Procedures

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS PUBLICATIONS

Dear Colleague Letter, September 22, 2017

Dear Colleague Letter: Title IX Coordinators, April 2015

Dear Colleague Letter: Responding to Bullying of Students with Disabilities, October 2014

Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, October 2010

Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, January 2001

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE PUBLICATIONS

Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons, 2002

***Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 1312.3 Uniform Complaint Procedures***

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

Student Privacy Policy Office: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/opepd/sppo>

U.S. Department of Justice: <http://www.justice.gov>

Adopted September 16, 1992
Revised December 6, 2023

Notes



JUST THE FACTS

Infants whose dads
play with them
**have good
mental and
social
outcomes.**

**National
Fatherhood
Initiative®**

www.fatherhood.org

SOURCE: Amodia-Bidakowska, Laverty, C., & Ramchandani, P.G. (2020). Father-child play: A systematic review of its frequency, characteristics and potential impact on children's development. *Developmental Review*, 57, 100924.