



EARLY LEARNING CENTER

*Parent's
Handbook*

Updated July 2016



Dear Parents:

Welcome to the Albany State University Early Learning Center (ASU-ELC). Our Center exists for you and your child. The ASU-ELC staff strives to provide the loving care and guidance that your child needs as he/she grows and develops. Due to our Center being a Government-operated facility, we are exempt from licensure by the State of Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. However, the ASU-ELC holds accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The ASU-ELC meets the standards outlined in the Bright from the Start "Rules for Child Care Learning Centers" Chapter 591-1-1 and the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards, which are based on the latest research on the education and development of young children. The ASU-ELC is also a 2-star Quality Rated center with Bright from the Start. We also utilize the expertise of professors and students from the various disciplines on the campus of Albany State University. This provides the children with experiences beyond the standard curriculums that are used in the classrooms.

As parents, you play a vital role in our program. This handbook is designed to help you understand our program, its mission and the guidelines under which the ASU-ELC operates. You are always welcome to visit, observe in the ASU-ELC observation rooms and ask questions.

All of the ASU-ELC staff members are eager to work with you to provide the highest quality care and education for your child. This center is a critical part of Albany State University and as so it is a part of a learning environment that has a goal of enhancing the growth and learning of all of the children.

Thank you for allowing us the privilege of serving you and your child.

Sincerely,

ASU-ELC Staff

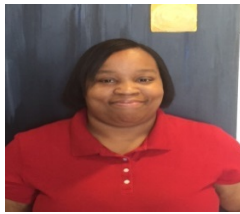
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Albany State University Early Learning Center's Staff



Mrs. Angelyn Lincey
Director



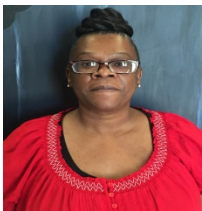
Mrs. Kimberly Barney
Office Manager



Mrs. Lynn Decuir
Receptionist



Ms. Selena Williams
Lead Teacher, Pre-K



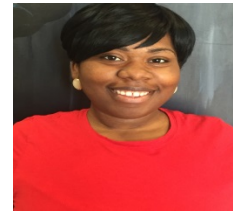
Ms. Katina Lowe
Lead Teacher, 3's



Ms. Charday Olan
Lead Teacher, 2's



Mrs. Delois Luke
Asst. Teacher, Pre-K



Ms. Kristen Brown
Asst. Teacher, 3's



Ms. Patricia Jackson
Asst. Teacher, 2's



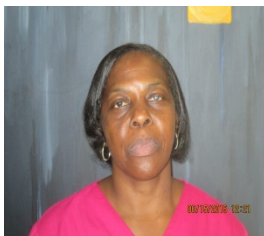
Mrs. Adrienne Clay-Williams
Floater



Mrs. Mary Hampton
Substitute Teacher



Mrs. Doris McDay
Extended Day Lead Teacher



Ms. Missouri Cowart
Server



Mrs. Catherine Brown
Custodian

Mission

The Albany State University Early Learning Center provides quality early childhood programming to children and families, and hands-on training for ASU students.

Center Staff

Your child will be taught by well-trained staff that meet or exceed the standards required by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and those established by the state licensing agency.

Hours of Operation

The Albany State University Early Learning Center follows the same calendar as the Dougherty County School System as well as the University. We are open Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted on the school calendar.

Who Can Attend

Currently, the ELC programs include a 2 year old class, a 3 year old class, a Georgia Pre-K class and an Afterschool Program for ages 4-12, no other program will offered without the authorization of the President and Provost of the University. The child must be 2 to be enrolled in the 2 year old class-child **must be** potty trained; 3 years old to be enrolled in the 3 year old class; and 4 on or before September 1st to be enrolled in the Pre-K class. All are welcome without regard to their race, religion, gender, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

The Pre-K Readiness Summer Program is for those students that will be enrolled in Pre-Kindergarten for the upcoming school year. The age requirement for this program, the child will have to be 4 on or before September 1st.

Goals

The center's goals are to help children:

Develop communication skills

Learn to think, reason and to solve problems

Develop social skills.

Orientation

Before a child begins attending the center, the parent must attend orientation with the center's administration to discuss center and classroom procedures.

Enrollment Requirements

- ❖ Parent Contract with required signatures
- ❖ Fees
- ❖ Application Form
- ❖ Health Information (with current immunization record)
- ❖ Birth Certificate
- ❖ Waiver of Liability
- ❖ Emergency Contact Form
- ❖ Acknowledge Form
- ❖ Good Health Form
- ❖ Vehicle Form
- ❖ Payment Frequency Form

Enrollment Requirements for Pre-K

In addition to the documents listed above, social security card, proof of residency and Eyes, Ears, Dental and Nutrition Form are required.

All information is updated annually.

Program Fees and Other Charges

Registration Fee

A \$60 registration fee is an annual fee that is due at the time of application and every spring of the following year. This fee is utilized to cover administrative cost.

Weekly Tuition Fees:

- ❖ \$100 for two-year olds
- ❖ \$95 for three-year olds
- ❖ \$50 for After-School (Pre-K students)
- ❖ \$60.00 After-School pick-up

Tuition payments are used to provide the highest possible quality of care and environment for your child. Parents or guardians must designate whether payments will be made weekly, biweekly, or monthly. All weekly and biweekly tuition payments must be paid in advance on Mondays by 5:00 p.m. and monthly payments must be paid at the beginning of the month.

For those parents that receive state assistance, the parent responsibility is due as indicated above. If the parent's portion of payment is not received by 5:00 p.m. Tuesday of each week, a 10% surcharge will be charged to the account and the Department of Family and Children Services will be notified of the late payment.

Five consecutive days of non-attendance per year are allowed free of charge (vacation). All other times, including illness, will incur a charge of the full weekly tuition rate. Tuition will not be charged for Spring Break, Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, and Summer Break.

Late Payment

Payments are considered past due if not paid in full by 5:00 p.m. Tuesday of each week. Payments may be paid by cash, check, cashier's check, money order or debit/credit card. A 10% surcharge will be added to tuition that is not received by the due date. If tuition payment is not paid by the end of the week on Friday at 5:00 p.m., childcare services will be terminated and any unpaid balances will be forwarded to ASU Fiscal Affairs for collection of payment. The child's slot will be held for one week, and then filled by the next applicant on the waiting list. **THIS POLICY WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.**

Return Checks

Returned check fee is \$35.00. Once parent has been notified through written letter, the return check fee plus the tuition will have to be paid before child can return to the Center. Parents are given two weeks to pay those fees before the account is referred over the ASU Business Office. After the second return check, you will be required to make payments with either cash or money order.

Field Trips

Some field trips will require a fee. The cost of the field trip will be posted in your child's classroom.

Late Departure

A fee of \$10.00 will be charged to a parent if the child is not picked up by 5:35 p.m. additionally a fee of \$2.00 per minute will be charged to a parent who picks a child up after 6:00 p.m. This charge must be made in cash and must be made on the evening that the charge is incurred.

Key Cards

Key cards are available for purchase to those parents wanting to purchase one. The cost is \$5.00 per card. The key card allows the parent to swipe to gain entry into the building.

Termination of Enrollment

A two-week advance, written notice is required to withdraw your child from the center. Tuition paid in advance will be refunded upon withdrawing your child.

ASU-ELC reserves the right to terminate services if the child fails to adjust to our program given a reasonable amount of time and/or our inability to meet the child's needs. We will give two weeks' notice of termination for which full tuition is due, whether or not the child is in attendance. We reserve the right to give written notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the Center's staff or other children in attendance.

Anyone who terminates daycare and has a balance that is outstanding will need to have the account settled within 30 days. All accounts not settled within 30 days will be turned over to ASU's Business Office regardless of amount owed.

Health and Safety

Center staff is trained in first aid. When minor accidents occur, which may or may not require medical attention, staff will handle the situation until parents can be notified. Attending staff will fill out an accident report for parent and center files.

Illness

For the benefit of your child and others, it is important that you keep your child home when he/she is not well. Any child, who shows extreme discomfort from the mouth, ears, stomach problems, etc., is considered ill and will be temporarily removed from the center. If a child becomes ill at school, he/she will be removed from the classroom and wait in the front office until they are picked up.

In an effort to create a healthy and safe environment, the ASU-ELC will adhere to the following policies:

- a. A child's parent/guardian will be notified immediately if they exhibit any of the following symptoms of contagious illnesses listed below:
 - a. Fever of 100 degrees F. (auxiliary) or higher within 24 hours
 - b. Thick, colored nasal discharge
 - c. 3 or more loose, watery stools within 24 hours
 - d. Vomiting of 2 or more occasions within 24 hours
 - e. Any evidence of lice
 - f. Any unusual rashes not associated with diapering, heat or allergies.
- b. Children must be free from these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school, and a doctor's note must be submitted to the office.
- c. The Director must be notified immediately if a child in any classroom is diagnosed with, and/or exposed other children to any contagious illness. In these events, an Exposure Notice will be sent out to the appropriate families.
- d. Staff members must be overly cautious in regard to hand washing for both adults and children at school. Hands should be washed at the following times:
 - a. Upon arrival at school
 - b. Prior to handling or eating food
 - c. After using the toilet or helping a child use the toilet
 - d. After blowing nose and cleansing a child's nose.

Discipline

The Early Learning Center's approach to discipline is positive. The staff will try to reason with a child or redirect unacceptable behavior. If this is not effective, the time-out method will be used. This is simply removing the child from an activity for a designated amount of time.

The staff does not administer corporal punishment. If the child continues to misbehave after reasoning, redirecting and time-out have been used and the child

is exhibiting aggressive behavior, an Aggressive Behavior Report will be completed. After the third Aggressive Behavior Report, the parent will be called to pick up the child.

After the student has been sent home three times for aggressive behavior, the student will be dis-enrolled from the Center. Unacceptable behavior is considered to be, but not limited to, causing bodily harm to himself/herself, other children within the Center, or to a staff member.

Parents of children enrolled at the ELC will discipline their children according to the center's policies and procedures while they are signed in at the center. Parents who prefer to use any other method of discipline will have to execute it outside of the center's jurisdiction. If during regular center hours, the child must be signed out and the discipline cannot occur within the building premises. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Meals/Nutrition

Copies of menus are posted in the lobby and in each classroom for parents to review. If your child has an allergy or physical intolerance to certain foods or food group, we must have a physician's note stating the intolerance. The Center's meals and snacks are prepared and provided through Aramark which is the food service provider for Albany State University. If a child has to bring his/her lunch due to food allergies, we encourage parents to pack nutritious foods and 100% juices, water or milk in their child's lunch, otherwise, parents **are not** allowed to bring food from home. All food in the child's lunch box must be labeled with names and dates.

ASU-ELC staff must be aware of any food allergies among the children in their assigned class.

Family Style Dining - ASU-ELC has incorporated family style dining.

- Children will set the table before the meal and clean up after the meal is over.

- Teachers should sit with the children as they are eating.
- Teachers should allow the children to pour and serve their own food. Young children can serve themselves, but that doesn't mean there won't be spills. Young children need to be able to make mistakes as they improve their skills. Help "hand-over-hand," if necessary, as they learn to serve themselves.

Medical Emergency

Our staff will take every precaution to ensure the safety of all children. If the staff determines that medical care is needed, every possible effort will be made to first contact the child's parent so that the parent can plan further steps to be taken in the particular situation. If emergency medical attention is needed and the parent cannot be reached or if there is no time to reach the parent first, the child will be taken to Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital by ambulance. A signed permission form is on file for all children.

Medication

If a child should require medication while in our care, staff can administer the medication if the following conditions are met:

- ❖ Medication is only given to a child if the parent has signed a medication form. A new form is required weekly for continued doses of medication.
- ❖ The medication is in its original container and has a pharmacy label with the child's name, name of the drug and directions for administration.
- ❖ Non-prescription medication will be dispensed only if the child's physician approves the administration and dosage on official letterhead or prescription pad.
- ❖ Parents will be notified immediately once there is a noticeable adverse reaction to prescribed medications

Curriculum

The center offers the following state-approved curriculums:

- ❖ Creative
- ❖ High Scope

Children with Special Needs

If a child has special needs, the parent/guardian is to discuss the nature of the child's special need with the Director, the Office Manager and the child's teacher prior to enrolling the child, in order to determine appropriate placement. If the child's teacher suspects that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, the teacher will discuss the concern with the parent, and with the parent's written consent a referral will be made to the Dougherty County School System Special Education Department. A therapist will make contact with the parent and schedule an assessment for the child.

Child Assessments/Parent Conferences Procedures

- ❖ ASU-ELC Teaching Staff will conduct assessments as an integral part of the classroom curriculum. These assessments will be used to support children's learning, using a variety of methods such as, observations, checklists, rating scales, weekly participation reports, daily reporting notes, and anecdotal records. Teaching staff will use these assessments to implement the curriculum to promote and support children's development and learning, including cognitive skills, language, social-emotional development, approaches to learning, health, and physical development.
- ❖ Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held three times a year. The first conference will take place in early fall, and will be considered an informal "goal-setting" conference. This conference will introduce parents to our assessment process, as well as gather information from families (such as family culture, home language, and personal experiences) for curriculum

development and individual teaching. The second conference for families will be to formally present the assessment of developmental progress of each child across all developmental areas. The final conference for families will be to discuss goals that were met and areas of improvement for the next level of learning.

Sign In/Sign Out

Parents are required to drop off and pick up children from their classroom. Daily sign in/sign out is required by parents or other authorized adults as it is listed on the child's registration packet. Parents must sign in/out their child(ren) using their pin code as well in the child's classroom. A person on the current registration form who is unfamiliar to the staff must show identification before he or she is allowed to pick the child up from their class. No person will be allowed to remove a child from the premises if their name is not on the authorized pick-up list.

Weather Closings

The Albany State University Learning Center follows the same inclement weather closing policies as Dougherty County School System. If Dougherty County Schools remain open the center will remain open, and likewise if Dougherty County Schools close. Official announcements will be broadcast on local radio and television stations.

Birthdays

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday, we urge you to plan this in advance with the teacher. Only cake/cupcakes, ice cream, and drinks may be brought into the center. Clowns and dress-up costumes are not allowed.

Clothing

The center's programs are designed for free play and exploration of the environment, with messy activities on the agenda on most days. It is important that children wear comfortable, washable play clothes to the center. Sneakers are preferred over sandals, since they are safer, but sandals with socks may be worn. Flip flops will not be allowed. Parents are asked to provide an extra set of clothing, labeled with the child's name, in a backpack or tote bag, to be left in the cubbies.

Children go out to play every day, at least for a short period of time, even in very cold weather. Appropriate warm clothing, including hats and mittens, with the child's name, must be supplied. In the summer, water play is a favorite activity, and children need swim suits and towels.

It is also recommended that the girls do not have "excessive" hair beads in the hair.

Cubbies

Each child has a cubby that is labeled with his or her name. Parents are reminded to check their child's cubby every day for important items and information.

Parental Involvement

Parents are strongly encouraged to become involved at the Albany State University Early Learning Center in various capacities and at whatever level they feel comfortable. There is no obligation, and we respect each parent's busy schedules. Parents, grandparents, and other significant adults in the lives of the children may wish to volunteer in the classrooms. Please talk to your child's teacher about how you can be involved in your child's experience here.

Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Meetings are held on the second Tuesday in each month at 5:30 p.m. The PTO's mission is to promote and encourage communications among parents,

teachers, administration and community. The PTO organizes and sponsors school events, which deepen our community spirit and enhance our children's educational experience at the ASU-ELC.

Parents are also encouraged to be involved in the learning process of their child. Please ask your child questions about what was learned and extend this lesson with interactions with your child.

Personal Items

Children are requested to leave food, gum, candy, money, or other valuables at home. Please do not allow your child to bring toys or other prized possessions to the center except on special occasions.

Grievance Procedure

If you have a concern with the classroom please address it first with the lead teacher. If the issue is not resolved, you may address it with the Director. If an agreeable resolution cannot be reached, a formal grievance may be submitted to the Director of Title III Program.

*Welcome to ASU Early Learning
Center, we are excited about the
future of our Baby Rams and*

looking forward to having a
Ramtastic School Year!

