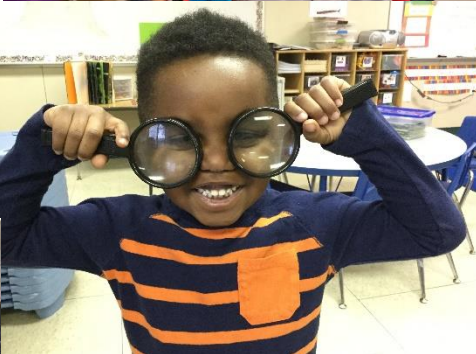




2016 – 2017 Family Handbook



**Kalamazoo RESA Head Start
Administration Office
422 E. South Street
T: 269.250.9845 F: 269.250.9868
www.kresa.org**



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Welcome	3
Important Dates	4-5
Enrollment Information	6
Admission Information	6
Withdrawal Information	7
Program Information	7
Attendance	7
School Closings/Delays	8

TRANSPORTATION

Busing	8-9
Field Trips	10
Self -Transportation	10

HEALTH & NUTRITION INFORMATION

Health Requirements	11-12
Child Illness	12
Medication Policy	13
Safety	13

Accidents/Injuries	13
Nutrition Policy	14

EDUCATION INFORMATION

Philosophy Toward Behavior Management	15
Daily Schedule	16
Parent Teacher Conferences	16
FA Home Visits	17

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Volunteers	17
ICHAT Forms	18
Policy Council	18
Family Resource Events	18
Fatherhood/Male Program	18
Abriendo Puertas	19
Feeding the Mind	19

RESOURCES

Community Resources	19
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Parent/Guardian's Acknowledgement	20
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Your Child's Site Information

Site Name: _____

Teacher Name: _____

Classroom Phone #: _____ Family Advocate/Phone #: _____

Site Supervisor/Phone #: _____

Days of Operation: _____ Hours of Operation: _____

Transportation #: _____



Introduction

Welcome Families!

We are so excited that you have chosen to enroll your child in school at Kalamazoo RESA Head Start! We are proud to partner with you to provide comprehensive pre-kindergarten to 3 and 4 year olds. Our goal is to partner with you to teach your child important language, literacy, numeracy, and social emotional skills needed to be ready to engage successfully in Kindergarten.



Stephanie Lemmer, Principal

At Kalamazoo RESA Head Start we hold high expectations for all children and families to ensure that every child, has every opportunity to succeed! We work to empower families to advocate for their children, and family in school, and in the community through partnership with our Family Advocates, and engaging in parent involvement activities. We encourage you to become involved in your child's classroom.



Rachel M. Roberts, Assistant Principal

Please get to know your classroom teaching team, and your Family Advocate. They are excellent resources to ensure that your child meets all of the Head Start program requirements to promote a healthy life! We are here to partner with you and find ways to support your involvement in your child's education!

After all, it takes a village!

Stephanie Lemmer, Ed.S
Principal, Kalamazoo RESA

Rachel M. Roberts
Assistant Principal, Kalamazoo RESA

Do you know any other 3 or 4 year olds?

We are always accepting applications.

Please direct your friends and family to our website, www.kresa.org, or call 269.250.9845.

dream big, start small!

Calendar of Important Dates

All Sites except West Campus

First Day of School	September 19
Parent Teacher Conferences November 10 – Students attend – evening conferences November 11 – No School for Students – daytime conferences	November 10 – 11
Thanksgiving Recess – No School for Students	November 23 - 25
Professional Development – No School for Students	December 23
Winter Recess – No School for Students	December 26 – January 6
Professional Development – No School for Students	January 27
Professional Development – No School for Students	March 6 – 7
Conferences – No School for Students	March 8 – 9
Midwinter Break – No School for Students	March 10
Professional Development – No School for Students	March 30
Spring Break – No School for Students	March 31 – April 7
Memorial Day – No School for Students	May 29
Last Day of School	June 8
End of Year Home Visits	June 9 – 16

Calendar of Important Dates West Campus Only

First Day of School	September 6
Parent Teacher Conferences November 10 – Students attend – evening conferences November 11 – No School for Students – daytime conferences	November 10 – 11
Thanksgiving Recess – No School for Students	November 23 – 25
Professional Development – No School for Students	December 23
Winter Recess – No School for Students	December 26 – January 6
Professional Development – No School for Students	January 27
Professional Development – No School for Students	March 6 – 7
Conferences – No School for Students	March 8 – 9
Midwinter Break – No School for Students	March 10
Professional Development – No School for Students	March 30
Spring Break – No School for Students	March 31 – April 7
Break – No School for Students	May 1 – 5
Memorial Day – No School for Students	May 29
Last Day of School	June 7
End of Year Home Visits	June 8 – 16



Program Information

Enrollment Information

To be eligible to participate in Kalamazoo RESA Head Start, a family must meet three criteria:

- The child must be 3 or 4 years of age by September 1 of the program year.
- The child's family must:
 - be earning wages that fall at or below the federal poverty guidelines or, currently receiving public assistance, foster care subsidy for enrolling child, or child's family is homeless (per McKinney Vento) or,
 - have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Child must live within the boundaries of Kalamazoo County



There is no fee for program participation.

Admission

In order for the child to attend school, we will need:

1. A completed Child Information Card signed by the parent or guardian with a current phone number
2. A certificate of immunizations
3. Health plans for any chronic health conditions or allergies
4. Physical/Well Child Exam within the first 30 days

(Program staff will assist families with establishing medical homes to meet program requirements).

Moving from the Kalamazoo RESA Head Start Service Area

Sometimes families must leave the program before the end of the year. As soon as you know that you plan to withdraw your child, please notify the teacher and your Family Advocate of your child's last day. Our program staff would like to help you transition to a new Pre-K program.

Program Information

The Kalamazoo RESA Head Start Program provides comprehensive services to children 3 to 5 years old and their families. All Head Start classrooms operate from September to June. A calendar, including dates that school is closed will be provided.

- Half-day classrooms for 3-year-olds provide 3.5-hour class sessions in the morning and afternoon, Monday through Thursday.
- Full day classrooms for 3-year-olds provide 6-hour sessions, Monday through Friday.
- Full-day classrooms for 4-year-olds provide 7-hour class sessions, Monday through Thursday.
- Extended-day classrooms provide up to 10 hours of class sessions, Monday through Friday.

Attendance

We believe that children enrolled in our program should **attend regularly** because they gain more benefits from the program. We encourage you to make it a goal to have your child ready to **attend school every day, on time, and for the entire instructional day.**

Children who attend regularly:

- Adapt more readily to the classroom environment;
- Have more opportunities to practice what they are learning;
- Learn that school is important and fun; and,
- Establish a positive pattern for attendance early in the school experience.



If your child will be **absent** from school, call the classroom staff as soon as possible. You may leave a message on the answering machine if needed. If you do not call to excuse their absence, program staff will contact you.

School Closings/Delays



In the case of severe weather, the **Head Start Classrooms will close if the public school district where the Site is located is closed.** Local school closings are announced on the radio, television, and over the internet (you will not see a message that KRESA Head Start is closed). You will also receive a School Messenger Announcement on your phone in the event school is closed.

If your public school district is delayed, AM sessions will be cancelled, and full day classrooms will be delayed for the same duration as the district.



Busing

Kalamazoo RESA Head Start transportation services are contracted through Dean Transportation. KRESA Head Start is committed to providing transportation to as many families as possible.

- You may be offered transportation for your child to the site/classroom, however, transportation is not guaranteed.
- First priority is given to families who have children that need to be picked up or dropped off at child care and/or live more than 1 mile from the classroom site.
- In order to receive transportation families must live within the route area.
- **Transportation services are not door-to-door.**

Family Responsibilities

- Families will treat staff in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Families will be at the bus stop 10 minutes before the bus is due to be at the stop. The bus driver will wait 3 minutes at a stop.

- If there is no one at the stop to get the child off the bus, the child will be returned to the school if the drop off is in the mid-day, or the transportation office at the end of the day.
- Transportation will attempt to contact families if the child has to be returned to the school or to the transportation office.
- Keep Child Information Card (CIC) updated, especially phone numbers and emergency contact information. Children will only be released to an authorized person listed on the Child's CIC and presents photo ID. Contact your classroom teacher and transportation if you need to make a change to your information.
- Children being picked up from child care must be dressed and ready to board the bus when it arrives. Families should communicate this expectation to their child care provider.
- Child care providers will remain present while the child is boarding and exiting the bus.
- An authorized person will remain with the child at the stop and escort their child to and from the bus.
- **Families will contact transportation if their child will not be riding the bus at 269-250-9861.**
- If the child is not at a stop for three consecutive days without contacting transportation, bus services will be suspended until transportation is notified.
- Allow transportation up to two weeks to make a transportation change.
- Families should understand that for the first couple of weeks the routes may not run on time.

Program Responsibilities

- Head Start and transportation staff will treat families in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Children will be kept safe.
- Children will only be released to authorized people listed on the Child Information Card.
- Buses will do their best to be on time. If the buses are more than 10 minutes late, transportation will make every attempt to contact families.
- The program will try to accommodate transportation requests as long as time permits, and the change is within the transportation route.
- Bus drivers will wait 3 minutes at a stop before moving on to the next stop.

Field Trips

- On occasion, our classroom curriculum lends itself to field trips. Classroom staff will notify parents of specific trip dates, times, and locations. A signed permission slip will be required in order for your child to attend the trip. Field trips will occur during regular school hours.

Self-Transportation

Several of the Kalamazoo RESA Head Start centers are “self-transport” sites. This means **you are responsible** for getting your child to and from school each day.

- It is important your child arrives to **school on time**. When you bring your child to school at the beginning of class, you will need to sign your child in. **It is our policy that parents accompany their child into the classroom.**
- It is important you pick up your child from **school on time**. When you pick up your child at the end of the class session you will need to sign your child out. **Classroom staff are not permitted to sign your child out for you.**
- If someone other than you will be picking up your child, please make sure their name is on the Child Information Card. Your child cannot be released to anyone who is not on the card or you have not given permission to in writing.
- Please let anyone who is picking up your child know that they will have to show a **photo ID** before the child will be released.
- If your child is not picked up at the end of the class session and we are unable to contact you, your emergency contacts will be called to pick up your child.
- If your child is not picked up on time, without making prior arrangements, a call may be made to Child Protective Services.





Health & Nutrition

Health Requirements

Kalamazoo RESA Head start is committed to providing comprehensive health support to all families.

Family Responsibilities

1. Obtain a **Physical/Well Child** exam within 30 calendar days of your child's first day of school, which includes:
 - Growth Assessment
 - Hemoglobin
 - Hearing and Vision
 - Lead Screening
 - Up-to-date Immunizations
2. Children who do not have an up-to-date Physical/Well Child exam within 30 calendar days will be excluded from attending until an up-to-date exam is received.
3. Obtain a Dental Exam within 90 days of enrollment completed by a Dentist.
 - Unfortunately, dental screenings by a hygienist do not meet the requirements of a dental exam per Head Start requirements.
4. Contact your Family Advocate or our health staff when a health concern or question arises.
5. If your child has a chronic health condition, the following must be provided by a doctor, prior to attending school:
 - A treatment plan
 - Any required medication in its original container with prescription label
6. Provide documentation to program staff as your child obtains an updated Well Child Exam, Dental Exam, and 6 month teeth cleanings.

Program Responsibilities

1. Work with families to assist meeting the program health requirements.
2. Provide families with a folder to hold all important health and program documents.
3. Provide the following health services:
 - Hearing and Vision Screening
 - Hemoglobin Screening

- Lead Screening
4. A Family Advocate will assist you in establishing a dental and/or medical home, if needed.
 5. Communicate with you about opportunities to attend dental, hearing, and vision clinics. (Note: We encourage **ALL** families to take their child to these appointments as clinics are not guaranteed).
 6. Coordinate follow-up treatment that may be required for health or dental needs, if needed.
 7. Follow Doctor's treatment plan and administer medication as directed by a doctor.

Child Illness

Head Start requires that families keep their child home when they are ill. **If you are keeping your child at home, please contact classroom staff and transportation.** If your child becomes sick at school, classroom staff will contact you to pick-up your child.

Children **cannot attend class** until the following symptoms have subsided for **24 hours**:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Persistent coughing
- Diarrhea 2 or more times in 24 hours
- Vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours
- Redness of eyes or eye drainage
- Yellow/green nasal drainage for 7 days or more
- Any type of unidentified rash or sores



Exceptions are made when a doctor provides a note indicating it is safe for the child to return to school.

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, they will be temporarily excluded from attending. A doctor's note clearing the child to return to school will be required. If you have questions regarding your child's health, or our Health Services, please contact our Registered Nurse at 269.250.9851.

Medication Policy

Children requiring prescription or over-the-counter medications will be excluded until the following requirements are met:

- Medication Permission Form giving staff permission to administer the medication must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian.
- A note from the doctor indicating that the prescribed medication, or over the counter medication, must be administered during school hours, the name of the medication, dosage, time to be administered, and possible side effects.
- Medication must be current and in the original bottle with the prescription label on it; or provide over the counter medication in the original container with the child's name written on it.



Safety

Kalamazoo RESA Head Start ensures that the physical environment supports child safety and well-being. The primary focus of the safety plan is the prevention of disease, injury, and management of potential health hazards. Each of the classrooms has a complete Safety Plan.

The Plan outlines the purpose, rationale, guidelines and procedures for each area below:

1. Child and staff hand washing
2. Handling bodily fluids
3. Cleaning and sanitizing all equipment, toys & other surfaces
4. Controlling Infection

Parent Notification for Accidents, Injuries, and Incidents

Two-way communication between home and school is our top priority. If your child is involved in an accident or injury, program staff will contact you by phone immediately. If they are unable to reach you over the phone and it is an emergency, they will proceed to contact your emergency contacts that are located on the Child Information Card. **Reminder: Please be sure to keep the information on your Child Information Card up-to-date at all times.**

Nutrition Policy



Kalamazoo RESA Head start partners with local school districts to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program. The CACFP provides cash reimbursement to the local school districts for nutritious meals and helps children develop healthy eating habits. The CACFP is administered by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

Through the CACFP you can be assured that your child is getting balanced, nutritious meals and developing healthy lifelong eating habits. Proper nutrition during the early years ensures fewer physical and educational problems later in life.

Breakfast	Lunch	Snack (serve 2 from the 4 food groups below)
Milk Fruit, Vegetable, or Juice Grain/Bread	Milk 2 Fruit/Vegetable servings Grain/Bread Meat or Meat Alternate	Milk Fruit, Vegetable, or Juice Grain/Bread Meat or Meat Alternate

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Food from Home

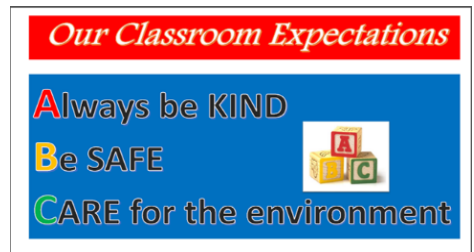
Please do not send food from home into the Head Start classroom. All meals are provided. If your child has food allergies or needs dietary accommodations, the Kalamazoo RESA Head Start nurse will contact you to set up a food replacement plan.



Education

Philosophy toward Behavior Management

Here at Kalamazoo RESA Head Start, we use Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a program that encourages and teaches students to continuously make good behavior choices. We teach students to **Always** be kind, **Be** safe, and to **Care** for the environment. Teachers teach these expectations to all students and provide frequent opportunities to practice. A full time **Behavior Specialist** is also on staff to provide additional support to classroom staff and families to aide in teaching behavioral expectations.



Methods we do use:

- (a) Redirect
- (b) Reteach appropriate behavior
- (c) Teach replacement behavior
- (d) Practice expected behavior
- (e) Engage family in problem solving
- (f) Create an individual behavior plan for reoccurring behaviors
- (g) Consult with the Behavior Specialist for coaching methods
- (h) Consult with Mental Health Specialist for social emotional support.

Methods we do not use

We do **not** use the following means of discipline as outlined in the State of Michigan Licensing Notebook (R400.8140), at Kalamazoo RESA Head Start:

- (a) Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
- (b) Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her.
- (c) Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
- (d) Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- (e) Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities.
- (f) Excluding a child from daily learning experiences.
- (g) Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.
- (h) Timeout is not an appropriate method of discipline for children under three years of age.

Daily Schedule

Our program uses research based curriculum to guide and plan instruction. The Creative Curriculum for Preschool Teaching Guides are utilized in each classroom for implementing engaging, hands-on studies that are relevant to children's daily lives. It offers comprehensive daily plans that support teachers as they help every child explore, investigate, learn, and succeed. Preparing children for kindergarten is a primary focus, and the curriculum aligns with the early childhood learning domains which are outlined by the Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework.

A typical day in a Head Start Classroom will consist of the following:

- Arrival/Greeting
- Meal Times – breakfast, lunch, and/or snack
- Brushing Teeth
- Free Choice
- Small Group
- Outdoors – children go outside **every day**, please be sure your child is dressed for the weather
- Whole Group
- Rest/Nap Time – only for our full day and extended day classrooms
- Dismissal



***Please see your child's teacher for their individual classroom's schedule. ***

Parent Teacher Conferences and Home Visits

At KRESA Head Start, **we hold Parent Teacher Conferences twice throughout the year, once in November and again in March.** During conferences, teachers will discuss your child's academic and social-emotional progress. Parents will be asked to provide input into creating academic goals for their child.

Classroom staff also conduct a minimum of **2 home visits with each family at the beginning and end of year.** These home visits are very important as they help children and families feel comfortable sending their child to school, and provide an opportunity to say goodbye at the end of the program year. Parents are encouraged to ask questions and share concerns regarding their children or the program.

Parents may schedule an appointment with their Teacher, Family Advocate, or Site Supervisor at any time to address questions or concerns.

Family Advocate Home Visits

A Family Advocate team is assigned to each classroom to provide further support and information to Head Start families. Family Advocates will conduct a minimum of 3 home visits in the Fall, Winter, and Spring.

The Family Advocate's purpose is to build a personal relationship with your family in order to provide support to assist in meeting the needs of your children. We believe that parents are their child's number one teacher. We plan to support you by identifying and achieving various goals. These goals may include:

- Health
- Family Engagement
- Transition
- Well-being

Our Family Advocates will also make referrals for your family to outside community organizations, as needed.



Parent Engagement

Volunteers

Volunteers are critical to the success of our program. Head Start is comprehensive and family oriented. We encourage families to volunteer in their child's classroom and participate in other aspects of the program. Some ways volunteers can assist are:

- In classroom activities
- Policy Council
- At the administration office
- Read to children
- Play educational games
- Attend Family Resource Events

To find out on how you can help serve, please see your child's Teacher or Family Advocate.



ICHAT Forms

To ensure all children are safe, **every person who volunteers in the classroom (including field trips) must complete an I-Chat form and a Central Clearance form.** Parents may obtain a form from their Teacher or Family Advocate. Once your form has been returned, it is sent to our human resources office for processing. The Family and Community Partnership Coordinator will send letters out to the volunteers and classroom teachers, letting them know their volunteer status.

Policy Council

The Kalamazoo RESA Head Start Policy Council includes Head Start parents and various community members. The Policy Council is responsible for making program decisions, such as approving the budget, hiring, and recruitment policies. The Policy Council representatives are elected by Head Start parents. The Policy Council meets once a month and is open to anyone who would like to attend. Please let your classroom Teacher or Family Advocate know if you are interested in being a Policy Council representative this year.

Family Resource Events

Throughout the year, there will be fun family activities, resources, and information to keep families engaged. These events will give you an opportunity to be an active participant in your child's education, and a chance for you to network with other families. More information will be sent home about these opportunities:

Wellness Fair
Family Dance
Community Baby Shower

Employment/Education Fairs
March Is Reading Month
Family Resource Night

Fatherhood/Male Involvement Program

The Fatherhood/Male Involvement Program is for fathers, grandfathers, uncles, or any male influence in your child's life. The program creates a bond within the male participants who see the importance of building a relationship with their children. The main goal is to help males find various ways to be supportive within their child's education. Those interested may contact their Family Advocate for more information.

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors is a ten-session, evidence-based parenting, leadership, and advocacy program for Latino parents with children ages 0 to 5. The program meets once a month. Dinner and childcare is provided. Each meeting will have topics that range from early childhood development to school readiness, personal health, social and emotional well-being, economic well-being, parenting styles and leadership, and advocacy.

Feeding the Mind--Little Jr. Chef

Feeding the Mind is a fun family program held monthly at various sites to connect families to the classroom. Topics include: making healthy food choices, balancing food and physical activity, keeping food safe to eat, and shopping on a budget. Each event includes a light meal, activities for children, resources for parents, and creating a fun, nutritional snack together as a family.



Community Resources

Child Care Resources
269.349.3296

Hispanic American Council
269.385.6279

Housing Resource Inc.
269.382.0287

Kalamazoo Community Mental Health
and Substance Abuse Services
269.373.6000

Kalamazoo County: Health and
Community Services
269.373.5066

Kalamazoo RESA Preprimary
Evaluation Team (PET)
269.250.9670

Kalamazoo Deacon's Conference
269.344.7333

Kalamazoo Drop-In Child Care Center
269.382.3640

Kalamazoo Gospel Mission
269.345.2974

Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes
269.343.3663

Michigan Works
269.383.2536

Salvation Army
269.344.6119

YWCA of Kalamazoo
269.345.5595

Legal Aid of Western Michigan
269.344.8113

Gryphon Place
269.381.1510

Acknowledgement



Child's Name: _____ Parent/Guardian Name: _____

This is to acknowledge that I:

- received a copy of the Family Handbook
- a Head Start staff member explained the handbook and program
- agree to adhere to the program policies outlined in the manual
- will commit to participate in the program and play an active role in my child's education
- understand there is a Licensing Binder at my child's site which is available for families to view during regular business hours and includes:
 - all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans
 - licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare

Thank you for taking the time to review this handbook. All of the staff members here are looking forward to offering your child and family an enriching experience.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Head Start Staff Signature

Date