

DISD Rosella Scott Gator Academy Policies and Parent Handbook



2023 - 2024

We are pleased that you have chosen Gator Academy as your early learning center. Like you, we are interested in your child's total development. Our commitment is to provide you and your child with the best in education and childcare. This handbook is designed to acquaint you with our program, policies and procedures. Please read and refer to this handbook as needed.

Gator Academy is available for all district employees. We provide care for children from 6 weeks to 5 years. Our goal is to provide each child with an environment that is nurturing, safe, clean and where children are encouraged to grow as unique individuals. By offering developmentally appropriate programs, we are allowing children to learn at their own pace and in ways, which are best for them. If you have any questions regarding our program's policies, please feel free to contact the Program Director at any time.

PHILOSOPHY

Children learn through experiences. They are given many opportunities to explore, interact, and experiment to construct their knowledge. Play is an important process through which children are given many of these opportunities and is therefore vital to learning. Children are encouraged to make choices and guidance is present when appropriate. The learning environment is safe and nurturing so that children will feel comfortable in making choices. Instructors are aware of a child's development and provide appropriate opportunities for learning. Parents provide the foundation upon which learning is built and are encouraged to play an active role in their child's development.

This program is sensitive to the needs of the children in all areas of development: social, physical, emotional and intellectual. The curriculum is in accordance with the criteria for accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the highest national accreditation available for childcare providers. Children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age will all actively participate in learning and exploration.

CURRICULUM GOALS

Our curriculum is designed with specific objectives for each age, developmental level and child; however, the following goals are incorporated into every classroom:

- Developing safe and healthy habits in young children
- Fostering positive self-esteem
- Providing opportunities for creative expression
- Supporting the development of social skills
- Stimulating cognitive problem-solving skills
- Strengthening communication skills
- Enhancing fine motor skills and gross motor skills
- Assessing, the individual needs of the child

ENROLLMENT / APPLICATION

All children must be officially enrolled at Gator Academy before attending. The following is required of all families:

- Signed Child Care Center Enrollment Forms
- Complete Enrollment Information
- Health and Immunization Records
- Health Assessment with a Physician's Signature
- Discipline and Guidance Policy
- Special Permission Forms (transportation, water-play, etc.)
- Enrollment / Payroll Authorization Agreement Form

TUITION AND FEES 2023 – 2024 SCHOOL YEAR

An annual registration fee of \$155 per child is due at the time of enrollment and is non-refundable. This fee covers administrative costs and supplies. The fee for two children is \$260 and \$315 for three children. Tuition will be payroll deducted. All other fees, including enrollment, will be paid via credit card.

Tuition Rates

- Infants - (6 wks. 12 mo.) \$205 per week
- First Steps & Toddlers - (12 mo. – 24 mo.) \$ 190 per week
- Early Pre-School - (2 – 3 yrs.) \$180 per week
- Pre-school - (3.5 yrs. – 4 yrs.) \$180 per week
- Pre-Kindergarten – (4yrs – up to 5 yrs. old)180 per week

Drop-In Rates, biased on availability only

- Daily drop-in fee is \$40.00 per day per child

Tuition and the Enrollment / Payroll Authorization Agreement Form are signed at the beginning of the school year. Tuition is calculated for the year and does not change at child's birthday or when a child is moved up to a new class. All meals and snacks are included in tuition.

An additional charge will also be assessed to parents who pick up their children after 6:00 pm at the rate of \$1.00 per minute per child. Families who continue to pick up late may be removed from the program.

When multiple children from the same family attend the center, there will be a \$10 discount off the tuition of the oldest child.

A two-week notice must be given to end care. Tuition change calculations must be given to payroll by the 5th or 20th off the month and be signed off on by the director and parent.

FMLA – If a parent is out on leave, the director will then recalculate the weekly tuition of the enrollment child (ren) and submit to payroll. Once the DISD employee returns to work, tuition will resume payroll deduction process. Due to Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account reporting, Gator Academy is unable to accept out-of-pocket tuition payments by check or credit card. Unless it is a drop in fee and/or yearly registration fee.

Third Party Payments/Subsidies/NCI Reimbursements – DISD no longer accepts third-party payments or subsidies. Families eligible for NCI assistance are responsible for full fees and tuition. Families receiving outside tuition assistance are responsible for registration fees and full annual tuition.

ROOM ASSIGNMENT

Placement of a child in a classroom is determined by the age and developmental level of the child. We want your child to be placed where their needs are met, and their interests challenged. While we do accept input from parents about room assignment, the Gator Academy Director and teachers will make the final decision based on what is best for the child. Children may transition throughout the school year based on development and enrollment.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The professional staff at Gator Academy will work with and include children with all types of skills and abilities as long as the care provided to any one child does not put other children enrolled in the program at risk. If the classroom atmosphere continues to be disrupted by continual behavior of a child, we reserve the right to ask the child be withdrawn from the facility.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday – Friday from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm during regular school calendar days. ***Hours of operation / calendar may be adjusted to reflect approved DISD calendar.***

ATTENDANCE

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the daycare center staff. If your child is ill, you should notify us of the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. In order to keep your child's space, tuition will need to be paid in full. There will be no alterations of the payroll deducted amount unless the child is withdrawn from the program. There will be certain times during the year that you will not be charged for childcare, they are as follows:

- Thanksgiving Break
- Winter Break
- Spring Break

SIGN IN/OUT

We encourage the children to arrive by 8:30 am. Children should be escorted to the classroom by a parent and released to a member of the staff. Parents are responsible for signing their child in and out on the log sheets in the lobby. **Please note that as long as the child's parent is present on Gator Academy premises, the parent is responsible for the child. Children are never to be left unattended in classrooms, common areas, or restrooms. Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe.**

CHILD RELEASE POLICY

Children are released only to a parent or a person authorized by written permission from the parent. Gator Academy **cannot** release any child to an unauthorized person; therefore, we must emphasize the importance of keeping this information current and accurate for your child's records. We will not release a child to an older sibling unless they are 18 years of age or older and we have written parental permission.

Parents should provide the daycare center staff with a driver's license number or other identification of any person designated to pick up a child. Before the child is released, the designated person will be required to show a picture ID and a copy will be made.

In order for us to maintain the safety and well-being of the children and adhere to State Licensing Rules, we ask that you do not call and request a new person be added to your child's pickup list. Any requests to change or update must be in writing.

CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

It is the intent of Gator Academy to meet the needs of children especially when the parent may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation, or remarriage. However, we cannot legally restrict a non-custodial parent from visiting the child, reviewing the records, or picking the child up unless we have been furnished with current legal documents. Copies of these documents must be kept in the child's file.

PARENTS COMMUNICATION

It is important for parents to know what is happening in their child's classroom. Gator Academy will send home newsletters monthly or as needed to keep parents informed. We will also send emails as needed.

Main Number: 281-229-7930

- Front Office Extension: 7930
- Infants Extension: 7937
- First Steps Extension: 7936
- Toddlers Extension: 7933
- Early Pre-School Extension: 7932
- Pre-School Extension: 7934
- Pre-Kindergarten Extension: 7931

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Parents will be notified of events and general information via the Parent Information Board, email and website. Parents will also be notified in writing in the event that your child has a specific need, in the event a communicable disease has been reported, or if there is a change in our policies or procedures.

CONFERENCES / QUESTIONS / CONCERNS

All parents are invited to participate in parent / teacher conferences. Occasionally a teacher or the director may request a parent conference when there are special concerns. We ask that parents respect this request with prompt attention.

Parents are welcome to visit at any time during the hours of operation to observe your child, how the center operates, and the activities that your child is participating in. If you feel you need a conference with the teacher, we ask that you schedule a time with the teacher so that instruction and supervision of the children will not be interrupted.

VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

If you choose to volunteer at the program and participate in our classrooms you must first have a completed background check on file at Gator Academy approved by TDPRS. Please contact the director prior to participation so that this can be completed. We look forward to you being a part of our classrooms. We have an Open-Door policy here at Gator Academy and encourage family and authorized guests

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Texas, and so is the failure to report it. Gator Academy is concerned about preventing child abuse and neglect. As required by law, childcare workers must report any suspected case of child abuse or neglect to the proper agency. DFPS Child Abuse hotline number is 800-252-5400.

Our employees will complete at least one hour of annual training in child / abuse and neglect focusing on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect, including (1) factors indicating a child is at risk for abuse or neglect; (2) warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect; (3) internal procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect; and (4) community organizations that have training programs available to child-care center staff members, children, and parents.

We will increase your awareness and the awareness of our employees on issues regarding child abuse and neglect by routinely sharing information on the types of abuse and neglect, causes of abuse and neglect, the warning signs of abuse and neglect and other related information.

Primary methods of prevention will include the general distribution of information related to child abuse, including how to recognize and report abuse and what resources are available for the prevention, intervention, and treatment of child abuse. We will also utilize services and interventions targeted to high-risk families. Gator Academy will utilize strategies to coordinate with community organizations who offer services for high-risk families. We provide information programs for pregnant women that encourage prenatal care, teach childcare techniques, and assist parents of children with special needs with referrals. Within the community, Dickinson ISD will identify community and faith-based organizations that sponsor food banks and shelter programs. These programs address the lack of resources such as adequate shelter, childcare for working parents, appropriate nutrition, health and mental care, transportation, and education. We will also identify organizations that provide aid in prevention through crisis and emergency services, parent education, domestic violence shelters, and health and mental health treatment for victims.

You must take action if you are aware of abuse or neglect. There are two ways it may be reported:

1. Call 1-800-252-5400, the Abuse Hotline toll-free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, nationwide, or
2. Make a report through the secure website, www.txabusehotline.org.

You will receive a response within 24 hours. If this is a life threatening or emergency situation, call your local law enforcement agency or 911 immediately. If we suspect that a child has been abused or mistreated, we are required to report it to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, 1-800-252-5400 and/or to a law enforcement agency.

DISCIPLINE / GUIDANCE METHODS

We believe that the purpose of discipline is to help children develop self-control and to become responsible for their own behavior. Knowing what behavior is appropriate in a situation is an important skill. We are committed to helping children learn to express feelings appropriately, to consider other people's feelings, and to negotiate their own conflicts.

We use non-punitive methods of discipline, which are directly related to the child's behavior and encourage the child's participation. Teachers work closely with parents to understand each child and to determine which methods work best for that child.

If a child exhibits continually disruptive and unsafe behavior in the classroom or office, the parent will be called to come immediately and take the child home for the remainder of the day. Continual disruptive behavior may result in the child being asked to be withdrawn from Rosella Scott Gator Academy.

Gator Academy discipline / guidance policy complies with the Texas Administrative Code and Rules in Subchapter L of the Minimum Standards (www.tdprs.state.tx.us)

BITING

Rosella Scott Gator Academy recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for infants up to early preschool. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bitten or might even bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. Children in the infant up to early preschool classroom who are caught biting are redirected to different activities. Children in the toddler and early preschool classroom will be placed in "time-out" and reminded, "We do not hurt our friends." It is not common for children three years of age or older to be involved in a biting incident. If this does occur, the situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Also, talking with your child about their day and discussing what behavior is acceptable and what is not is another way to reinforce good and kind behavior. Parents will be notified by an incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in a biting incident. This information is confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff of Rosella Scott Gator Academy cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party.

POTTY TRAINING

Potty training should begin at home. The following are signs of potty-training readiness. Children who are ready for potty training should display several of these signs, not just one or two:

- Express an interest in the potty
- Express the need to go potty (verbally and/or body language)
- Able to dress and undress
- Uncomfortable in wet diapers
- Stays dry for two or more hours
- Interested in big kid underwear
- Has regular bowel movements

Once the child has had success at home for approximately one month, the child may begin wearing pull-ups to Rosella Scott Gator Academy. After two fully successful weeks of potty training in the classroom, children are permitted to wear cloth training underwear. During this time parents are asked to provide 2 complete changes of clothes, including a pair of shoes in labeled Ziplock bags. Parents should still provide pull-ups for nap time until the child is completely potty trained. Soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag in order to be replaced the following day, so parents should check backpacks on a daily basis.

HYGIENE / ILLNESS / SYMPTOM FREE RULE

Every effort is made by our staff to prevent the spread of germs. Gator Academy utilizes the following guidelines to protect your child as well as others from contagious illness.

If any of the following conditions occur while your child attends, you will be notified, and your child must be picked up within an hour.

- An under-arm temperature of 100 degrees or greater
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (*two or more frequent, abnormally loose stools*)
- Head Lice
- Eye Infection
- Symptoms of an infectious disease such as ringworm, pink eye, etc.
- Communicable disease (refer to the Communicable Disease chart for Child Care Centers at www.tdprs.state.tx.us)
- Any other condition deemed necessary by the director / teacher for the well-being of your child and the other children enrolled.
- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the facilities activities.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, please notify the director. It is important for us to be aware of what children may have been exposed to so that we can communicate with parents.

24 Hour Symptom Free Rule

Your child must be free of symptoms of illness for at least 24 hours before resuming attendance. Fever-free means without medication for fever reduction. Please keep in mind that if we sent your child home because of illness, the child will not be admitted the next day because the 24-hour period will not have elapsed. Do not rush a child's return to school following an illness. Gator Academy reserves the right to require a doctor's statement before the child can be re-admitted.

Medications

Unless otherwise approved by management, Gator Academy will only administer one medication per student no more than twice a day. In order for Gator Academy staff to administer medication, we must adhere to the following guidelines:

- All medicine must be in the original container.
- The container must be labeled with the child's name.
- Over the counter medication must state the amount to administer by the child's age and / or weight.
- Containers must be labeled with the date prescribed and the date brought to the center.
- Medicine must include directions on administration of the medication.
- Prescription medications must include the name of the prescribing physician on the container.
- All medications must have an expiration date, and we cannot administer medication after the expiration date.
- Medicine can only be administered to the child for whom it was intended.
- Parent's must sign an authorization form and include the dates and times the medication is to be administered, and these directions must follow the label directions.
- Gator Academy staff will not administer any medication/treatment that requires an extended time to dispense.

All topical ointments, including but not limited to sunscreen, bug repellent, and diaper creams must be labeled with the child's name and have signed authorization before use.

FOOD AND SEVERE ALLERGIES

At the time of enrollment, parents of children with severe allergies are required to provide a signed copy of the "Authorization for Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies", detailing any of the child's Allergies. This form must be filled out by the child's physician and parents and must be updated annually. Parents must also sign the "Release and

Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies” form. This form releases Rosella Scott Gator Academy from liability for administering treatment and taking the necessary actions set forth in the “Authorization for Emergency Care” form. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy (see above).

HEALTH/IMMUNIZATION/HEARING/VISION/TB TESTING

In accordance with state law, parents must provide the center director with a dated record that the child has been immunized. ***The health and immunization form must be completed.*** In addition to regular immunizations, children should also have a TB test completed and included in the immunization record. There must be a record with a rubber stamp or signature of the physician or health personnel. Under special health conditions the parent must provide a certificate or affidavit signed and dated by a physician duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States, stating that the required immunization would be injurious to the health and well-being of the child or a member of the child’s family or household. If immunizations conflict with religious beliefs, parents must sign an affidavit. (See your director for instruction).

ACCIDENTS / EMERGENCIES / FIRST AID

Gator Academy works hard to always provide a safe environment for children. However, part of growing up can include bumps and bruises. Gator Academy is equipped with simple first aid supplies and if a child has a minor accident, the staff will provide appropriate first aid to the child. When injuries occur, the teacher that witness the accident will complete an accident report and provide you with the white copy and the yellow is to be kept in the child’s file.

If a child has a serious injury, a trained staff member will provide first aid and you will be contacted to pick up your child. If there is an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, 911 emergency personnel will be called and the parent and/or the child’s physician will be notified. If a child needs to be transported by an ambulance, a staff member will accompany your child if the parent is not immediately available. When the parent is not available, alternate names in the child’s file are contacted.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE / DRILLS AND SEVERE WEATHER

Gator Academy places a high priority on being prepared for a variety of emergencies that may arise. We have set up an emergency plan as follows:

- **Stay informed.** Gator Academy staff monitors alert statuses of any kind on a daily basis. When an alert is in a heightened state, the radio and internet are checked regularly for breaking information.
- **Assess the situation and act.** Upon receiving pertinent information and / or official notification, a decision is made to either move to a predetermined safe area of the building, evacuate or conduct a shelter-in-place.
- **Communicate.** Each classroom maintains an emergency contact list with pertinent information for each child. In the event of an emergency and after the necessary action is taken, Gator Academy staff will call parents to inform them of the status of their child and the situation. Gator Academy Director will make every effort to email any emergency information.
- **Evacuation.** Fire and evacuation drills are held routinely to acquaint the children with evacuation procedures. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom.

Fire or Need to Evacuate

1. Teachers will gather class; daily attendance roster and first aid kit then follow emergency exit path as indicated by emergency planning maps. Children under 24 months old will be placed in emergency evacuation cribs. Anyone who is impaired or needs assistance will be assigned teacher or administrative personnel to ensure safety while exiting the building.
2. The director or appointed staff will gather emergency contact information binder and ensure all staff has exited the building.
3. Once all have safely exited the building, all teachers and students will meet on the porch of the *Key T Wellness* center located next door to Gator Academy. The director or designee will communicate with the fire official on the scene and with Dickinson ISD officials to determine if parents will be called to pick children up on site or at the DISD

ESC building located on FM 517 near Hwy 3

4. Parents will be notified by the director of pick-up location. If transported to the DISD ESC building, transportation will be provided by DISD buses.

Severe Weather or Tornado

1. Teachers will gather class, daily attendance roster, and first aid kit, and then evacuate from the classroom to the following locations by age:
 - a. Infants & First Steps rolled in beds to laundry room area.
 - b. Toddlers to Kitchen.
 - c. Ages 3-4 to girl's bathroom.
 - d. Older 4's to boy's bathroom.
2. Once the severe weather has passed the director will contact maintenance, to survey for any damages.
3. If the building is damaged, the staff will then follow procedures for evacuating the building.

In the event of flooding or hurricane Gator Academy will close based on the recommendations of Dickinson ISD and local authorities. If severe weather threatens and Gator Academy must close, we will close within 30 minutes of last campus for DISD closing.

Toxic Leak, Chemical Spill or Explosion

All classes will remain in classrooms. Doors will be shut and secured with tape. Air conditioning will be turned off. The director or person appointed will be in contact with DISD, City and Emergency Response personnel. Once a plan of action that allows outside activity has been determined parents will be notified of the pick-up plan.

WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS

On days when Dickinson is closed due to bad weather, the center will also be closed. Please tune into the following television stations for school closing information: Channels NBC, CBS, ABC and Fox. Radio stations: FM 95.7, FM 100.3, FM 99.1, FM 92.9, FM106.5, FM 93.3, AM 740, the Dickinson ISD website and the phone alert system. If a hurricane or severe storm calls for the district to close Gator Academy will close as well. Parents will be notified by phone calls and email.

NUTRITION AND MEALS

Good nutrition is critical in physical and cognitive development.

- Breakfast 6:30 am - 8:30 am
- Lunch 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
- PM Snack 2:30 pm - 3:30pm

Menus are planned carefully to meet nutritional guidelines. A copy of the menu is posted on the Parent Information Board. Meals are included in your weekly tuition rate.

For children with allergies or food restrictions: Any changes to the list of foods a child is allowed to have must be noted in writing and given to the director and teacher. Please mark on the menu what foods your child may or not have. We serve 2% milk for ages 2 and up and whole milk for 12-24 months. If any other milk is needed, please provide that milk. Infants and toddlers who need more than 2 cups of milk a day should provide that milk. Please take cups home daily to wash. Parents of infants and toddlers that are not yet ready to eat table food must provide formula, baby foods, or any other nutritional supplies for their child. No bottles will be given outside of the infant and toddler classrooms.

Breast Milk

If you are a breast-feeding parent, you have the right to provide breast milk for your child while at the center. Please bring breast milk in individual bags and frozen or already prepared in a bottle for use. If you choose to breast feed while at the center, please let us know and we will provide you with a comfortable chair and place for breast feeding.

BIRTHDAYS / CELEBRATIONS / HOLIDAYS

Gator Academy celebrates the children's birthdays in age-appropriate ways in the classroom. The celebration, however, is kept simple, and child centered. Parents may bring cake / cookies / cupcakes that are store bought and labeled with the ingredients (State Minimum Standard Rule). These will be served during the afternoon snack time. The child's birthday observance at the center is not intended to take the place of the family's special observance at home.

Gator Academy does observe traditional, national, cultural, and seasonal holidays with activities that are child-centered, educationally oriented and developmentally appropriate.

DAILY CARE SUPPLIES

Parents are responsible for supplying all diapers, creams, lotions, powders, wipes or pull-ups for their children. All Parents are responsible for supplying extra clothes for their children. Please see classroom specific supply lists for more information.

- Bottles / Formula - All bottles must be pre-made with lids and each part labeled with child's name if needed.
- Baby Food – Labeled with child's name
- Breakfast, Lunch & Snacks if not eating food provided by Gator Academy
- Diapers & wipes labeled with child's name. All children entering Preschool 3's & 4's MUST be potty-trained.
- Jacket – When necessary, for outside activities and labeled with child's name
- Pacifier with holder – labeled with child's name if needed
- Change of clothing – labeled with child's name. If extra clothes are used MUST provide new set the next day.

NAPTIME AND INFANT SAFE SLEEP POLICY

We must provide a supervised sleep or rest period after lunch for children 18 months or older (www.tdprs.state.tx.us). Infants sleep according to their individual schedules.

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at center will follow these safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome / Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS/SUIDS):

- Always put infants to sleep on their backs unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant's health care professional [§746.2427 and §747.2327].
- Place infants on a firm mattress, with a tight-fitting sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements for full size cribs and for non-full-size cribs [§746.2409 and §747.2309].
- For infants who are younger than 12 months of age, cribs should be bare except for a tight-fitting sheet and a mattress cover or protector. Items that should not be placed in a crib include soft or loose bedding, such as blankets, quilts, or comforters; pillows; stuffed toys/animals; soft objects; bumper pads; liners; or sleep positioning devices [§746.2415 and §747.2315]. Also, infants must not have their heads, faces, or cribs covered at any time by items such as blankets, linens, or clothing [§746.2429 and §747.2329].
- Do not use sleep positioning devices, such as wedges or infant positioners. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe. Their use may increase the risk of suffocation [§746.2415 and §747.2315].
- Ensure that sleeping areas are ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult [§746.3407(10) and §747.3203(10)].
- If an infant needs extra warmth, use sleep clothing (insert type of sleep clothing that will be used, such as sleepers or footed pajamas) as an alternative to blankets [§746.2415 and §747.2315].

- Place only one infant in a crib to sleep [§746.2405 and §747.2305].
- Infants may use a pacifier during sleep. But the pacifier must not be attached to a stuffed animal or the infant's clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that might be a suffocation or strangulation risk [§746.2415 and §747.2315].
- If the infant falls asleep in a restrictive device other than a crib (such as a bouncy chair or swing or arrives to care asleep in a car seat), move the infant to a crib immediately, unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant's health care professional [§746.2426 and §747.2326].
- Our childcare program is smoke-free. Smoking is not allowed in Texas childcare operations (this includes e-cigarettes and any type of vaporizers) [§746.3703(d) and §747.3503(d)].
- Actively observe sleeping infants by sight and sound [§746.2403 and §747.2303].
- If an infant is able to roll back and forth from front to back, place the infant on the infant's back for sleep and allow the infant to assume a preferred sleep position [§746.2427 and §747.2327].
- Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times daily. This will help them strengthen their muscles and develop normally [§746.2427 and §747.2327].
- Do not swaddle an infant for sleep or rest unless you provide an Infant Sleep Exception form 2710 signed by the infant's health care professional [§746.2428 and §747.2328].

BRINGING ITEMS FROM HOME

Children frequently want to share with the class nature items and treasures from home. Such items are especially welcomed if they support the topic being studied. It is always a good idea to check with a child's teacher first before bringing objects to school.

We discourage children from bringing toys from home; although we do allow items of comfort, such as a stuffed animal or special blanket. Gator Academy is not responsible for toys or other items brought from home. **We do not allow toys of violence.**

DRESS CODE

Please dress your child in play clothes that are durable, comfortable, and appropriate for play and the season. We will go outside daily, weather permitting. Because a wide variety of activities take place at Gator Academy, we recommend clothes that allow for freedom of movement. We encourage hands on play so your child will get DIRTY. We are not responsible for stained or ruined clothing; so, please dress your child accordingly.

Clothing Not Permitted - Heely's bathing suits (summertime excluded), and jackets with long strings. **Please label all items with your child's name.**

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is a daily part of our program required by Texas Child Care Licensing. Classes will participate daily in outdoor activities based on the age group of the children and the weather. In extreme heat, unacceptable air quality, rain or cold outdoor play will be excluded. In cooler temperatures, teachers will dress children in coats, hats and gloves that are provided by the parents and outside time will be shortened. In hot weather time will be limited. Water will be taken to the playground daily as well. Parents are encouraged to send sunscreen and mosquito repellent in lotion or wipe form.

TRANSPORTATION

We require that parents sign a transportation form. However, Gator Academy will NOT transport any students without prior notification and under very special circumstances.

FIELD TRIPS

All children who go on a field trip must have a signed permission slip, emergency medical consent form, and emergency contact information. All field trips will be posted.

ANIMALS

No animals are allowed on the premises, however, in the event a pet visits the facility, we will notify parents in writing when the animal will be present.

WATER ACTIVITIES

Children will occasionally have water activities. These will be posted, and parents will be notified. Parental permission must be given before any child can participate in a water activity

NOTICE REGARDING GANG FREE ZONE

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. This new statute requires that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed child care centers.

AHERA ASBESTOS NOTICE

In accordance with 40 CFR Part 763 of The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), Dickinson ISD hereby notifies all interested parties of the availability of the District Asbestos Management Plan.

The Plan and a copy of site inspections and assessments are available for review during normal office hours in all school offices and the Educational Service Center. To view the plan, please contact the principal, assistant principal or school secretary at any of the schools or the Compliance and Safety Officer at ESC. The Dickinson Independent School District is committed to providing a safe environment for students, parents, teachers and other staff.

Some construction material used in your building may contain asbestos. Please rest assured that Dickinson ISD has taken all the required precautions to make sure that the asbestos is not harmful to building occupants. As required, a six-month periodic visual inspection is conducted to ensure that these areas have not been disturbed and are maintained in good condition. The results of these inspections are available in each school office and the Central Administration office.

PEST CONTROL NOTICE

As part of our commitment to provide your child with a safe, pest-free learning environment, the Dickinson Independent School District may periodically apply pesticides to help manage insects, weeds or pathogens. Pesticide applications are part of our integrated Pest Management (IPM) program, which relies largely on non-chemical forms of pest control. Pesticide applications on DISD property are made only by trained and licensed technicians. Should you have questions about this district's pest management program or wish to be notified in advance of pesticide applications, you may contact the IPM coordinator at Central Administration

CHECK ACCEPTANCE POLICY

Dickinson ISD utilizes Paytek Solutions to collect on checks returned due to insufficient funds. Paytek Solutions will charge a \$30 fee (plus tax) for checks returned for insufficient funds. Paytek Solutions will attempt collection by writing letters and / or telephoning the check writer. Insufficient checks and fees shall be paid to Paytek Solutions over the phone by credit card, debit card, or electronic check; by mail with a money order or cashier's check; or in person at any Money Gram location. If you have questions, please contact Paytek Solutions at (800) 641-9998.

PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOTAPE

By signing this handbook acknowledgement, you give permission for your child to be photographed and videotaped in Gator Academy and during program functions and activities. You understand photographs may be taken by center staff or by other parents attending events. Gator Academy will not release personal information regarding your child such as name, address, or date of birth to any person not the guardian of the child without written permission from the parent or guardian. Photographs taken by Gator Academy or DISD may be used in newsletters, the DISD web site or in classrooms.

Should a parent have any concerns regarding our program, please discuss it immediately with the director. We appreciate the opportunity to provide childcare services, and sincerely hope that you are satisfied with our service. We want all children to be safe, happy, and growing mentally, emotionally, and physically strong.

A copy of the State of Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care centers is available for your review at any time in the director's office.

Gator Academy (operation #1520519) is licensed through the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

At any time, you have the right to review Texas Minimum Standards, our licensing reports and all information regarding the operation of our program. All information is available at Gator Academy or on the website listed below.

You may contact TDPRS if you have any questions or concerns.

123 Rosenberg, Suite 500 Galveston, TX 77550 409-766-5924

http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/About_Child_Care_Licensing/

**Student Information Form
2023 - 2024**

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Assigned Class: _____ Anticipated Start Date: _____

My child feels most comfortable _____

My child feels most scared _____

My child's favorite activities are _____

Parent/Guardian #1: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Parent/Guardian #2: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Emergency Contact Information:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

I received a copy of the policies and parent handbook

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Enrollment forms completed and verified on: _____

Director's Signature: *Rita Janet Lopez*