



# Stoler Early Learning Center at the Rosenbloom Owings Mills JCC

## Frequently Asked Questions

Kindergarten 2020/2021

### What are the hours of operation for Kindergarten?

The ELC will be open 8:30am - 4:30pm, Monday – Friday.

### Are you offering Early-drop Off or Late Stay?

Our number one goal is keeping our children and staff safe. Therefore, consistent groupings will be maintained while in our care. We wish we could continue to accommodate families who need extended care, but our number one priority will be making sure to limit risk and keep our school as safe as possible.

Parents must arrive on time at the end of the day. Our late fee is \$2/minute. If you arrive late 3 times, you will be asked to come up with an alternate plan to arrive on time to pick up your child.

### What is the cost for Kindergarten?

Kindergarten will cost \$1,380 per month. Tuition will be withdrawn on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month prior. As an ELC family, you will receive complimentary JCC Family membership as well.

### How does reopening impact class sizes and child/teacher ratios?

We will keep our classes in small “pods” to limit exposure to one group of children as opposed to the entire school. At all times class pods will remain together throughout the day without mixing with other class pods. Kindergarten will have a maximum of 2 teachers and 15 children per class.

*\*Please note this program will require a minimum of 8 students to run.*

### Is there a screening policy for teachers and children upon entry?

Yes, temperatures for both staff and children will be taken daily. There will also be a daily brief health questionnaire for all members of our team and for parents during drop off.

### What are the protocols at drop off and pick up?

#### Drop-Off

Parents/guardians should bring a thermometer in the car with them each day. Each parent/guardian will take their child’s temperature and confirm it with a member of the ELC team. If you do not have a thermometer, a member of our staff will give the child a temporal scan to check their temperature. This information is kept in a daily log. The staff member will be wearing a mask at all times and keep a 6-foot distance. You will also be asked a few standard health questions. Once cleared, the parent/guardian may leave and a staff member will escort your child(ren) to their classroom.

Children with a temperature of 100.4 or above will not be permitted to attend school. Children exhibiting signs of a cough, having trouble breathing, a sore throat, blisters, rashes or appearing visibly ill will also not be permitted to attend.

- Drop off will begin at 8:30am.
- Teachers and parents are required to wear masks during carpool.
- Parents will not be permitted to enter the building.
- Parents are responsible for getting their child(ren) out of their car seat.



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- Children will immediately wash their hands upon entering the building.
- Pick-up will begin at 4:15pm.

## **Pick-Up**

Once your child is brought out, parents/guardians should exit their car (while wearing a mask and respecting social distancing) and collect their child from a member of our staff. You are responsible for putting your child back into their car seat. Please remember that parents are not allowed to enter the preschool.

In the case of carpools and/or ride-shares, consistency (with children and adults) is recommended. Ride-shares with children in your child's classroom are preferred. It is also recommended that the same person drop-off and pick-up daily.

## **Will children or staff be required to receive a COVID test before the start of the school year?**

We are not requiring this, but we do ask for 100% transparency to help keep our community safe. If your child is showing any symptoms, please notify us immediately and keep them home until the symptoms clear. Similarly, if any member of your family has come into contact with a person with a confirmed case of COVID you must notify us immediately. We are asking for your partnership on this, we cannot keep our school healthy without your help!

## **How do I pick-up my child(ren) early or drop-off late?**

We ask that you only drop-off late or pick-up early if it is an emergency or for a doctor's appointment. Parents/Guardians will not be permitted into the ELC. If you need to pick-up or drop-off, there will be specific procedures to call the main office and go to the ELC entrance to check in where we will meet you with your child(ren).

Please review the times of the program and make sure it works for you and your family. If a family is consistently dropping-off late or picking-up early, the family may be asked to leave the program. It is imperative that we keep children in their assigned groups throughout the day and pulling staff to bring individual children for late arrival or early pick up makes that extremely difficult.

## **Are visitors permitted?**

Unfortunately, at this time, we are not able to accept visitors in to the Stoler Early Learning Center.

## **Are swim lessons/free swim still offered as part of the ELC program?**

At this time there will be no swim lessons offered. Once we determine when the indoor pool will be opening, and if we can safely provide children group swimming lessons, we will notify our families and send out a schedule for your child's class.

## **Will there be specials or field trips?**

Health and safety of our community is our number one priority; therefore, we will not offer field trips this year. We are in the process of figuring out how to safely bring programming to your child(ren). We will have innovative ways to offer them music, art, movement, science and so much more! We will keep you updated as these plans progress.

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## How will lunch be handled?

Lunches will be brought from home. Lunches must be entirely disposable (brown bag or large Ziplock bag) and clearly labelled. Tupperware containers and silverware will not be permitted. We will provide disposable cups, forks, and spoons. Teachers will wear gloves during all aspects of food service. Lunches will not be refrigerated. We recommend freezing a yogurt tube or sending in a bag of ice to act as an ice pack (it will defrost in time for lunch!).

## Can we send a reusable water bottle to school with our child?

No, you cannot send in re-usable water bottles. Water will be served to the children throughout the day. Please note, our water fountains will be turned off due to CDC guidelines.

## Will children spend time outside?

Yes! Physical distancing will be strictly enforced between classes. There will be a schedule to ensure children have time on our playgrounds and in the other spaces we use around our building/campus, with enough time in between for cleaning and disinfecting equipment.

## What about hand washing and improved hygiene/sanitation?

We will implement the following prevention and mitigation strategies to slow and limit COVID-19 exposure and spread:

- Practice recommended regular and routine handwashing practices
- Avoid use of items that are not easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Post signs with COVID-19 prevention and control practices.
- Provide policies and education on COVID-19 symptoms and response.
- Ensure adequate supplies of tissues, hand soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer, household cleaning products suited for the facility.

We have developed a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection by teachers and additional housekeeping staff. In addition to washing hands upon arrival, after outdoor time, and before meals, increased handwashing procedures will be encouraged.

Staff will be disinfecting frequently touched surfaces (e.g., sports equipment, door handles, art supplies, games, etc.) between use as much as possible. Classes will have their own supplies for items that cannot be sanitized between uses and children will have individual supply bins for art supplies, etc.

## Who will be wearing masks?

All adults will be required to wear cloth or disposable face coverings throughout the day (even when in the classroom), as well as all students in our Kindergarten program. Under the updated Expanded Mask Order that Governor Hogan enacted on Friday, July 31st, as of 5 pm, all Marylanders over the age of five are required to wear face coverings in the public spaces of all businesses across the state.

Face coverings will also be required in public areas, whenever it is not possible to maintain physical distancing. The expanded order continues to provide certain exceptions, including for medical conditions. [Read the governor's order.](#)

Each child must also have a spare mask in their cubby, should the mask that they come in with become soiled throughout the day. Please ensure your child's mask does not have any



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adornments (ie: buttons, stickers, or other choking hazards) and label your child's mask with their name and room number.

## **Are vaccinations required?**

Yes! All children who attend our program must be up to date with their vaccinations. There are no exceptions to this rule.

## **Does the JCC have a policy regarding out-of-state travel for students or staff?**

A State of Maryland order was issued on Wednesday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, which went in to effect on Friday, the 31<sup>st</sup> at 5:00pm requiring that any student or staff member who travels to a state identified as having a positivity rate higher than 10% and identified as a "hot spot," by the State of Maryland, may not return to school until after 14 days of quarantine. This applies to personal, family, or business travel of any kind. Marylanders are advised to postpone or cancel travel to these areas until their positivity rates decline. Non-compliance could result both in compromising the health and safety of our community and in the closure of the building for all. [Read the travel advisory.](#)

We will continue to monitor all government announcements as well as MDH and CDC guidelines and will adjust our policies and protocols as needed.

## **What happens if a child or teacher develops symptoms during the day?**

If a child or staff member develops symptoms, they will be isolated and required to go home until they are cleared by a doctor to return. If the child or staff tests positive for COVID-19, we will immediately notify parents in their classroom of possible exposure and contact the Maryland Department of Health to report. We will maintain confidentiality of any individuals exposed or diagnosed.

## **What if someone is diagnosed with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19?**

Any staff or child exposed to a person diagnosed with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 may not work or attend school until they have completed self-quarantine following the CDC guidelines. Persons who have recovered from COVID-19, must be cleared for release from isolation according to CDC guidelines.

If a group has a staff member or a child that is found to have a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19:

- The local health department, as well as the parents of children in the group, will be notified immediately, and the group shall quarantine following the CDC guidelines.
- Individuals may not work at or attend until completing self-quarantine and obtaining clearance from the individual's primary care physician.
- Based on consultation with the local health department, a classroom or the entire school may be closed based on level of contact and potential exposure.

## **If the school must close at any point due to COVID-19, will a refund be issued?**

Should our Kindergarten program be ordered to close by county, state, or federal officials at any time, families will be required to meet their financial commitment for the duration of that time period as we will provide virtual learning for your child while the class/school is closed. Materials will be provided.



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## **What is the refund policy if our child is unable to attend school once it begins?**

Kindergarten is a 10-month program. It will run from Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, through Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup>. If any changes must be made to your child's enrollment, we require a minimum of 60 days' notice, including un-enrollment.

## **Will the Kindergarten teachers be expected to adhere to daily home/school communication?**

In J Early Childhood, we place a high value on direct and open home-school communication. The teachers and administration will share relevant interests, issues, and information with you and we hope that you will do the same! Our primary method of communication will be through **StoryPark**, our parent portal.

StoryPark is a way for us to document and share the experiences children have throughout the kindergarten day. Our educators will be writing stories for their entire class and for each individual child, which will share about their learning, friendships and classroom news.

As always, you can reach your child's teacher directly by e-mailing them, calling the school at 410.559.3556 and having a member of our administrative team transfer you to your child's classroom, or messaging them through StoryPark. Please note that our teachers are busy exploring and engaging with your children throughout the day so they will find time that works for them to respond to e-mails and correspondence. Please notify the teacher if there are changes in your child's normal routine so that we can best support your child.

## **What would happen should the JCC need to close the ELC or the Kindergarten class, due to COVID-19?**

Should the JCC need to close, our Kindergarten class will go virtual in the most developmentally appropriate way our educators can. We will ensure that Zoom classes will take place at consistent, designated times throughout each day and will provide children with plenty of screen breaks and movement experiences to ensure a balanced, whole-child approach to at-home learning.

## **What is the JCC's pedagogical philosophy?**

We believe in a comprehensive, child-centered approach to learning and focus on using exploration and discovery as a vehicle for children to learn by providing open ended-provocations. By offering the students opportunities for hands-on experiences that help build lifelong critical thinking skills and foster confidence. Teachers are expected to use our approved curriculums to plan and implement a developmentally appropriate, content-rich program for children with diverse backgrounds and skill levels.

We know that the best way to help children succeed long term is to teach them to be creative, confident thinkers by providing them with structure, routine, consistency and multiple learning opportunities. Today's children are tomorrow's leaders. It is our job to ensure that these little leaders become good people and caring adults who are creative, resilient, curious, and empathetic. We want these future citizens to have healthy, strong relationships and positive approaches to lifelong learning. Their education at this age will lay the foundation for lifelong learning.



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## What are the teaching credentials for the Kindergarten Teacher?

MSDE requires that non-public school teachers must possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree from an accredited University. Once the JCC determines how many children will enroll in kindergarten and how many classes we are able to run to meet the needs of our community, we will announce the teachers and provide families with a statement of Teacher Qualifications, as required by MSDE.

## What subjects would be taught throughout the day in a kindergarten classroom?

The content areas that will be covered will include the following domains: social emotional competencies, language and literacy, mathematics, sciences, social studies, physical well-being, motor development and fine arts. The teacher will consider cultural variations and values based on students' interests, abilities, and family backgrounds, as well as their personal observations and dialogues. Teachers will be reflective practitioners to ensure that their daily lessons are meeting the needs of their students and create opportunities for social interaction, physical activity, creative expression and Jewish experiences.

## What curriculum will the Kindergarten use?

Our Kindergarten teachers will use a variety of educational resources to plan learning experiences and lessons for the children. Building on the familiar foundation of the Creative Curriculum, Healthy Beginnings and The JCC ELC holiday curriculum, Chageinu, the teacher or team of teachers, will plan their weekly Kindergarten lessons using MSDE approved Kindergarten Common Core curriculums, which we are still researching. We will let you know as soon as we make our final decision.

Teachers will also take into account the students' personalities, strengths, needs, interests, background experiences, developmental levels, accommodations, cultural backgrounds and other family values when planning their lessons.

## What will the daily schedule look like in the Kindergarten class?

The daily schedule will be structured, yet flexible and provide for a variety of experiences and levels of difficulty. It is difficult to provide a sample schedule prior to knowing the children who will make up the class, as our educators will be responsive to them and their needs and the structure and pace of the day will follow the children's needs to maximize their engagement.

Teachers will allow time for individual instruction and small group learning, as well as whole class activities. A balance of indoor and outdoor activities, as well as active and calm activities, will be incorporated into the program each day. Child-initiated learning will be blended with teacher-guided activities for a comprehensive educational experience. This will be evident when documentation of the children's work and ideas is displayed throughout the room and communicated with parents daily.

## What will the Kindergarten Classroom look like?

We believe that the physical environment is an essential part of a child's learning. Our classrooms are set up with clearly defined centers, which enable children to explore materials, make choices, work together and independently, and experience a wide range of activities:

- Block areas where children learn to build and practice using a variety of math and social studies concepts

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- Math Center with engagement manipulatives designed to encourage children to explore
- Science and Exploration where children can observe and conduct experiments
- Writing Center where children will dictate stories, illustrate them, and practice writing
- A library corner where children listen to stories and look at books
- An art center where children paint, explore art media, and participate in activities
- A dramatic play area where children role-play
- A cooking area where children learn math and science concepts
- A science area where children observe and do simple science experiments
- A Sensory area where children will expand their learning through open-ended materials such as water and sand tables, etc.

Center exploration encourages social interaction with both peers and adults, self-regulation of behavior, language development, time management, age-appropriate academics, trying new things in a safe environment, etc. Research shows that child engagement is optimized in well-structured environments with novel materials. Having centers that display materials related to the learning at hand provides the child with opportunities for deeper exploration, experimentation, and persistence with new challenges as they arise.