



parent handbook

2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR



alpert jcc early childhood education

ROOTED IN PLAY, GROUNDED IN PURPOSE

Shalom,

Thank you for choosing Jewish Long Beach's Alpert Jewish Community Center and welcome to the Early Childhood Education Center. You have chosen to be a part of a school with a proven track record of excellence. We are thrilled that your family has chosen us and we say, welcome! At the AJCC ECE, we build a love of learning and a community that lasts a lifetime. From the youngest toddlers to the oldest Pre-K students, we encourage independent thinking and decision-making that prepares our graduates to be responsible leaders when they leave our doors.

AJCC ECE PHILOSOPHY- We believe at the AJCC ECE children learn best through experiences built on individual strengths and meeting children where they are developmentally.

EDUCATION AND FOUNDATION- Our program offers an educational opportunity to nurture children's curiosity and inquisitiveness, and an academic foundation to achieve success in school and in life.

TEACHERS AS EDUCATORS- Early childhood educators foster intentional teaching practices while providing rich and diverse experiences that guide children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, creating a classroom environment that supports joy, cooperation, and a sense of community. We respect and engage in full partnership with children and families. Together, our goals are to inspire your child; to make sure each moment of childhood is one of wonder, joy, and learning ensuring that the milestones today pave the way for a lifelong love of learning.

We hope from the moment you step in the door and meet our team, that you feel at home. Our school community is a place where every child, every family, and every educator are a part of who we are. We build our learning from the children's lives and experiences in ways that allow them to grow at school and home with you. There is nothing we take more seriously than developing the leaders of tomorrow!

Again- we say welcome! We take our opportunity to join your Early Childhood journey very seriously and are forever thankful that you picked us!



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PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY & CURRICULUM STATEMENT	3
AJCC ECE CURRICULUM	4
AJCC ECE FACULTY	5
OPERATIONAL POLICIES, HOURS, AND DAYS OF OPERATION	5
ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL	5
IMMUNIZATION POLICY	7
MEDICATIONS	8
MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES	8
PARENTAL NOTIFICATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES	9
SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS & TEACHING STAFF ON LEAVE/ABSENCES	9
DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY	10
FOOD AND SNACK POLICIES	12
KOSHER & NUT POLICY	12
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS	13
HOLIDAYS	13
NAP/REST TIME, ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES & SLEEP POSITIONING	13
ENROLLMENT	14
SPECIAL NEEDS	14
OUTDOOR LEARNING TIME	14
CLOTHING REQUIRED FOR ACTIVE PLAY & SELF-HELP SKILLS	15
WATER ACTIVITIES	15
COMMUNICATION	16
TADPOLES APP	16
ECE PARENT COMMITTEE	18
PARENT CONFERENCES & COMMUNICATION	18
REQUEST NOTICE	18
CONFIDENTIALITY	19
PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING QUESTIONS, CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS	19
FEES, PAYMENTS & CONTRACTS	20
TERMINATION OF SERVICES & WITHDRAWAL FROM CENTER	20
PACKET FORMS CHECKLIST	22

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY & CURRICULUM STATEMENT

The Alpert Jewish Community Center Early Childhood Education Center is designed to meet the needs of the whole child, including the areas of social, emotional, creative, physical, cognitive, and language development. The curriculum emphasizes developmentally appropriate play-based learning experiences. The environment is carefully planned to provide quality care and education for young children. This approach recognizes the uniqueness of each child and their family. Adults involved in the child's life are viewed as partners in the educational process and are encouraged to actively participate in decisions affecting the care and education of the child. To help children reach their maximum potential, our program solicits parental input and uses authentic assessment in the planning of individualized experiences based on early learning standards for content areas like literacy, math, science, and social studies. Also, birth-to-three standards and benchmarks for early learning include the areas of communication, cognitive development, social-emotional development, creative expression, and motor development. The daily schedule is organized to meet the children's needs for a balance of active and quiet play, large and small group interactions, and indoor and outdoor activities.

The role of the teaching staff is to:

- Stimulate children's learning by listening, questioning, giving choices, making suggestions, and allowing for a balance between child-centered and teacher-initiated activities.
- Provide a variety of activities, learning materials, and projects to engage young children.
- Adapt and modify curriculum to ensure access to all children.
- Promote language and literacy development through interactions, direct teaching methods, and print-rich environments.
- Serve as a role model with Jewish values as a foundation.
- Respect and respond to family culture, while creating a culturally sensitive environment.
- Support continuity of care, both inside the center and from home to center.
- Communicate and develop positive relationships and partnerships with parents and families.
- Observe and record developmental data, while assessing individual plans as needed.
- Foster creativity while reinforcing and enhancing curiosity.
- Provide an inclusive and anti-bias environment in the classroom.
- Use multiple teaching methods based on early learning standards.

AJCC ECE CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is child-centered and based on children's interests and developmental needs. **In our program, all children are given opportunities to:**

- Practice decision making by selecting activities from a variety of learning centers, i.e., language, discovery, blocks, computers, and manipulatives.
- Express themselves creatively through art, music, dramatic play, movement, and the use of unstructured materials.

- Develop appropriate concepts and thinking skills through the exploration of a wide variety of concrete materials and activities.
- Experience warm, positive interactions with children and adults.
- Verbalize feelings in a supportive, accepting environment that encourages independence and self-control.
- Enjoy and participate in language experiences, i.e., conversations, stories, puppets, books, songs, and creative dramatics.
- Participate in many physical activities to develop fine and gross motor skills, i.e., puzzles, beads, playdough, climbers, tricycles, and balls.
- Contribute ideas to written curriculum plans through small and large group discussions.
- Explore technology, including computers with age-appropriate software, iPads, and microscopes for preschool.

AJCC ECE FACULTY

Our staff is made up of caring and concerned professionals. Each staff member is knowledgeable about child development and experienced in working with young children. We have a strong commitment to continued learning and training for all our staff. Consultants, workshops, conferences, and staff meetings provide the teachers with on-going opportunities for professional growth, reflective supervision and ongoing modeling and instruction.

OPERATIONAL POLICIES, HOURS, AND DAYS OF OPERATION

We welcome parents into our school and the classrooms when our facility is open. Feel free to come and visit. To maintain consistency for the children, it is best to talk with the teacher about the best times to visit. The center opens at 7:00am and closes promptly at 6:00pm. Please note that the teaching staff are not available to care for children before the center opens; thus, no one is admitted to the classroom area before 7:00am. All children must be picked up before the center closes. Remember that your child needs the security of knowing that you will be on time every day. Please call us at 562-426-7601 ext. 1090, if an emergency arises.

Late fees of \$25 per hour (until 6:00pm and \$1.00 per minute after 6:00pm) are strictly enforced if your child is not picked up by the end of their school day (12:30pm, 3pm, or 6pm).

An Early Drop-Off fee of \$25 will be strictly enforced if your child is scheduled to begin their day at 9:00am and they are **dropped off earlier than 8:55am.**

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Early Morning Care (7:00am - 9:00am) - We are happy to serve breakfast to the children until 8:45am. Classes begin at 9:00am.

At pick-up time, we ask that you take responsibility for your children from that moment until you exit the building. Please keep your school calendar handy to check special days and schedules. The AJCC ECE closes on legal and Jewish holidays.

AVAILABLE DROP-OFF TIMES

3pm-4pm (one hour)

7am – 9am, 4pm – 6pm (two hours)

Part day Drop in on unscheduled day- 9am-3pm (6 hours)

When is the Center Open?

Days of operation are included on the AJCC ECE Calendar. A calendar will be provided each school year, listing start/end dates, staff professional development days, and holidays. A copy of the center calendar will be provided to parents at enrollment and posted on the AJCC website.

What should I do when bringing or picking up my child?

Parents must bring their child into the classroom each morning and check them in with one of the classroom teachers at the door. Parents must sign the child in each day by completing their daily drop-off notes in Tadpoles, and by checking in with one of the classroom teachers. As you leave, always say goodbye, and tell your child you will return to pick them up. This helps your child transition into the room. Parents should come to the classroom/group at the end of each day to take their child home. Please check out with the teacher prior to leaving for the day.

For the safety of all children, adults are not allowed to let children out of the car in the parking lot to come into the center without an adult; or, to expect children to wait outside to be picked up by parents. A center staff member must be aware of each child's arrival and departure. For arrival and departure, we encourage you to share information about your child with an employee, preferably either the classroom teacher or the Director. This helps us respond appropriately to your child throughout the day and helps us to plan the curriculum.

What are the procedures for the release of children?

The parent or guardian must complete appropriate forms for other adults (18 years of age and older) to be authorized to pick up a child. The center staff will not release a child to an unauthorized adult. Both parents should also be listed on the form. A child's parent will be allowed to pick up her/his child unless legal documentation is provided to the center, such as a divorce decree or restraining order. Photo identification is required to verify the identity of adults picking up children. Make sure that any authorized adult is aware that they will be asked for a photo ID; copies of the ID will be made at the front desk to be kept in the file for release of the child.

Smoke-free Facility

The entire AJCC facility and outdoor play areas are completely “smoke-free.” No smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

The C.D.C., American Academy of Pediatrics, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommend the following schedule for childhood immunizations. Parents must show their child’s Immunization Record as proof of immunization. Children entering our program must have the following immunizations:

- By 18 months - 3 Polio, 4 DTaP, 3 Hep B, 1 MMR, 1 Hib, 1 Varicella
- Between 4 - 6 years old - an additional DTaP, MMR, Varicella, Polio
- DtaP = Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis
- Hib = Haemophilus Influenzae type B
- Heb B = Hepatitis B
- MMR = Measles, Mumps and Rubella
- Varicella = Chickenpox

Keep me home if...



I have a **fever**
Over 100 in the past 24 hours



I’m **vomiting** or
have **diarrhea**
2 loose stools or vomited twice in
the last 24 hours



I’m **coughing**
or **sneezing**
Unless cleared by a doctor



I have **lice**
until 24 hours after treatment



I have a **new** or
undiagnosed rash



I’m just not
feeling well
Unable to participate in normal
activities

Remember!

- Have a plan for who will stay home with your child
- Let your teacher know your child’s symptoms when they stay home
- For sick-related absences, call the ECE Front Desk: 562-426-7601 ext 1090

What happens if my child gets sick at school?

They will be cared for by our staff in isolation until you come to pick them up. In instances of illness, parents must pick their child up within half an hour of being notified of their illness.

If my child gets sick, what are the requirements for them to return to school?

The 24-hour sick policy is very hard for parents . However, children can and will be asked to remain home until they are 24 hours symptom free. A child must be well enough to participate in all daily activities and

not require more care than the center can provide to be admitted each day. In our program, this includes outdoor play since this is an integral part of each day’s curriculum. The group will play outdoors unless there is a weather alert; children who are not well enough to play outdoors, or to participate in the day’s other activities, must be kept home for the day. Precautions are necessary to protect the health of all children in the group. Parents will be notified of any communicable diseases that are reported to the center. Parents must notify

the center of any communicable or contagious diseases, i.e., head lice, pink eye, exposure to chickenpox, etc., which their child or immediate family members have awareness of and/or symptoms.

MEDICATIONS

If your child is well enough to participate and able to be admitted to the classroom, medication and special medical procedures will be administered to the child as follows:

- Medication must be in the original container, labeled with the child's full name and date.
- Medication will only be administered to the child for whom it was intended.
- Medications must be administered according to label instructions and in amounts for the child's age, or as amended by a physician. NOTE: Fever-reducing medication will not be administered to mask symptoms of a contagious illness.
- Medication will not be administered after the stated expiration date. If medication is needed, the parents must sign a permission form each time, requesting the staff to give the medication to their child. The form must be filled out, indicating the child's full name, the name of the medication, the date, the time, and amount to administer.
- Medication for recurring medical problems, such as asthma attacks or allergic reactions, will require a form to be completed to meet the following DFPS standards:
- Parents can give permission for up to six months to administer medication when symptoms occur.
- A new authorization form is required every six months, or less if changes are needed.
- Non-Prescription medication requires a form to be filled out by the parent, and at times, a physician's signature might be needed.
- The form must describe in detail the information on the symptoms to watch for.
- The parents will be notified IMMEDIATELY if this medication is given.
- Any substance such as lip balm, cough drops, other medication-type substance brought to the center, must not be left in reach of a child in a cubby or diaper bag/backpack; but should be given to a staff member to be placed in locked storage and out of the reach of children. The staff must also have a permission form signed (if it is to be administered at the center).
- No medication can be administered by telephone approval.
- Diarrhea treatments like Pedialyte fluids or rice water will not be substituted for regular diets so that children may attend the center while illness is treated. Children must be symptom-free before attending care.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

What if my child gets sick or injured while at the center?

It is important that parents have a backup system in place to ensure that sick children can leave the center quickly. If a child has an illness which requires their home, the parents will be notified at once. Parents must come to pick up and attend to their sick child immediately. Parents or authorized adults must come as soon as possible to avoid exposing others to an illness. Appropriate attention and supervision will be provided until the child's parent or authorized adult can arrive to pick up the child. The center cannot provide care for ill children until it is time for doctor's appointments, or other reasons.

- Parents will be notified verbally upon pick up of the child of any injuries, such as minor cuts, scratches and bites which require first aid by center employees. The center staff will always call the parent immediately if:
 - A child bumps his/her head, or something appears to be more serious and needs a parent decision for possible medical treatment.
 - In the case of critical illness or an accident occurring at the center medical attention is required by a healthcare professional.

For these reasons, all contact numbers must always be current. The information provided by parents on the enrollment form for emergency medical treatment and transporting children to hospitals (if necessary) must always be up to date to ensure the safety and health of all children in care. Parents are required to sign the form authorizing the Director or a staff member to obtain medical aid in the event of a serious injury or illness occurring at the center if parents can't be reached. In this case, parents will be notified as soon as the child's medical needs have been met. In case of a medical emergency arising from sudden illness or accident, the AJCC ECE Staff will decide whether to call 9-1-1. If the emergency personnel determine that transport to the nearest hospital is necessary, a staff member will go with the child and remain until the parent arrives. All Staff members are certified in both First Aid and CPR and will give treatment until additional support arrives.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Parents will be notified any time there is a situation related to their child's safety or health. The center must be able to contact parents at the contact numbers provided in their child's file. Some situations, such as policy or procedure changes or changes in the enrollment agreement, require written notification to parents. Written notification will be provided to parents regarding any changes in the center's policies or procedures. The parents must sign a form stating they have been notified about these changes as they occur.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS & TEACHING STAFF ON LEAVE/ABSENCES

During absences, an employee's assignment may change. If they know in advance they will be out, the teaching staff will tell parents about the absence. Absences due to a teaching staff's illness or unknown situations may result in a substitute in the classroom.

Substitute employees working with our children are carefully selected to ensure quality early care and education services. The summer months and days between sessions may also require a change of assignment for temporary coverage due to personal leave and vacations. Parents will be notified about these changes in writing (Tadpoles, notes, memos, etc.), with as much advance notice as possible. On occasion, you may need to drop off or pick up your child at another classroom, as we accommodate an employee's absence and locate substitute care. On those days, every attempt is made to ensure continuity by placing children with a familiar teacher/group.

DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY

Preschool is the time to learn socially acceptable behaviors. We understand that children are learning. We gear our curriculum and programmed activities toward this goal. We believe in channeling a child's inappropriate behavior through redirection, positive reinforcement, problem-solving techniques, logical consequences and, if necessary, a short separation from the classroom's activities.

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child.
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. A teacher may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include the following:
 - Using praise and encouragement of good behavior, instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
 - Remind a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
 - Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
 - There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:
 - Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
 - Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training.
 - Pinching, shaking, or biting a child.
 - Hitting a child with a hand or instrument.
 - Putting anything in or on a child's mouth.
 - Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child.
 - Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
 - Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with a door closed.

- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

All guidance techniques:

- Will be consistent.
- Will be based on understanding each child's 14 individual needs and development and promote self-control and acceptable behavior.
- Staff are fully trained in Conscious Discipline and use those techniques for guidance. Consistent with our study and use of Conscious Discipline, the following are examples of how we focus on engagement and redirection in the classroom. When a child's behavior exceeds the limits of expected classroom behavior, the teacher follows these guidelines:
 - Teachers will use non-judgmental responses and descriptive praise to recognize and encourage positive behavior. Example: "You did it! You put the blocks back on the shelf when you were finished so no one would trip on them."
 - Teachers will use assertive commands to provide clear expectations and guide children through the directions using modeling. Example: "Jason, walk carefully in the classroom, with each foot going like this (modeling the walking)."
 - Teachers will use redirection to find alternative options to children's choices. Teachers will offer two acceptable choices and state one non-option firmly. Example: "You may build a tower with the blocks like this, or you may connect them to build a road like this. You may not swing them in the air; that is unsafe."
 - Teachers will practice self-reflection and active calming before responding to children's upset to be in-tune and present in the moment.
 - Teachers will use empathy and reflection to build emotional awareness in children. They will observe body language cues and facial expressions of the child to identify possible emotions. Teachers will then name the emotion and offer a potential reason why the child is experiencing it based on the circumstances. Example: "Your arms are going like this (demonstrate), and your face looks like this (demonstrate). Your body is telling me you might be feeling frustrated because you wanted to keep building with your Legos."
 - Children will be taught active calming techniques, such as breathing, during times of non-stress. These same techniques will be used to return children to a calm and relaxed state during times of stress. Once a child has returned to their calm, they will be offered two acceptable choices to move forward. Example: "There you go. Your body is calming down. You have a choice: you can pick up the large blocks or the small blocks. Which do you choose?"
 - Teachers will hold children firmly and safely if the child's behavior is such as will harm themselves or others.

No staff member of this facility will ever use physical punishment of any kind. We do know that sometimes the above steps may not always work. Our focus is on being present with the child and helping them calm down. If that is not safely possible, the child may need to be separated from the group – either inside or outside of the classroom. Parents may also be included in the discussion if the behavior(s) continues.

FOOD AND SNACK POLICIES

The foods that children eat influence their growth, development, capacity to learn, and overall behavior. Some examples of our snacks are: Fruits, Crackers, Cheese, Cereals & Yogurt

Sugary, high fat foods will be avoided. Wholesome nutritious snacks are served each day. Often, the children participate in baking activities during this time. The AJCC ECE Staff prepares and provides snacks for all children. Children are encouraged to taste all the food served. They are never forced to eat if they choose not to eat.

If a child has any food allergies, the school must be notified in writing by the child's health professional or physician, including the symptoms resulting from the allergy, the remedies and food substitutions, and precautions to be taken. When a child needs a special diet, the center must receive a written statement from the physician describing the type of modifications needed for the special diet. Please leave gum, candy, food/drinks/snacks brought from home, etc. in the car or at home. These items can create problems among children in the room. Children should not bring bottles to the center, if possible. The staff will collaborate with you to help ease separation anxiety and develop alternative methods of helping your child feel secure. Also, if your child's lunch has food that needs to be kept cool, please place an ice pack or frozen juice box in his/her lunchbox.

KOSHER & NUT POLICY

The Jewish Community Center and the AJCC ECE has a policy of keeping "Kosher-style." We ask that children's lunches include either a meat lunch or a dairy lunch. It is preferred to have no mixing of milk and meat products within the lunch you send. Never send shellfish, pork or products containing lard. Children in our center are not permitted to share lunches. When bringing special treats for classroom parties, please remember to adhere to the policy below. Please call the ECE office if you have any questions.

We recognize that food allergies can cause serious, life-threatening conditions for some children. To keep all our children safe, the AJCC ECE has moved forward with creating a nut-free environment for all of our children's safety. We cannot guarantee a completely nut-free environment since other activities and programs occur within the preschool space outside of school hours. We will, however, maintain a no-nut environment in our classrooms during preschool hours.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The ECE has a preapproved list of options from which to choose to bring for your child's birthday celebration. Only the pre-approved options or cookie vendor can be used for classroom celebrations. This policy is subject to change or adjustments.

Party Invitations

A word of explanation about our school policy regarding the sending home of party invitations: Sometimes, we need to put ourselves in the children's places and try to feel as they feel. When invitations to a party are distributed at school, or via email, if only some of the children are invited the other children may feel very sad and left out.

HOLIDAYS

The AJCC ECE is a place of Jewish joy and celebration. Through the teaching of songs, the preparation of foods and the explanation of history, we share the following Jewish holidays and celebrations: Shabbat / Havdalah, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Chanukah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim, Passover ("Pesach"), Yom Ha'Atzmaut ("Israel's Independence Day"), Shavuot, & Lag B'Omer.

There will be many special programs and activities to which parents are happily invited and encouraged to come when it is safe to do so. The AJCC ECE does not observe Halloween, Valentine's Day, Christmas, or Easter. We celebrate Jewish and national holidays only. (These holidays are further explained at the end of this manual.)

NAP/REST TIME, ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES & SLEEP POSITIONING

All children are required to have a quiet time after lunch. Children are provided with cots/mats to sleep or rest upon. A child may bring his/her own blanket, pillow, and/or stuffed animal if he/she chooses to do so. The following will be adhered to by staff: An appropriate nap time will be created by providing a restful environment. This includes turning off lights, shading windows to outside sunlight, providing a comfortable temperature and letting children snuggle with blankets, pillows, a stuffed animal, doll, or other familiar object. Individual attention to help a child go to sleep, if needed, will be given. This includes appropriate touching such as rubbing or gently patting a child's back, arm, or leg; stroking hair; and maybe even rocking some toddlers. The rest area will be light enough to allow visual supervision. Nap or rest period will be between 12:30pm and 2:30pm, depending on individual schedules and classroom schedules. Children are not forced to sleep; and all children are provided with a supervised rest period on their cot/mat, to rest quietly.

ENROLLMENT

The AJCC - ECE is committed to enrolling and serving all children. It is our goal to provide appropriate and beneficial inclusion for each child. Program modifications will be made on a case-by-case basis, as individualized learning needs will vary for each child. To provide a positive experience for each child, the staff continually observes and assesses individual and classroom needs.

Determinations will be made concerning the child's continuation in the program. We reserve the right to reconsider your child's enrollment if pertinent information regarding medical, psychological, educational, or other relevant evaluation or medical care has not been adequately shared with the preschool administration. This would include and is not limited to occupational, physical or speech therapy, psychological, psychiatric, neurological evaluation/care, or developmental pediatric evaluation. Families will also be required to sign a release of information in order for early childhood staff to obtain information from these providers of services.

Parents may be requested to have their child assessed by a professional of their choice or by one of the professionals listed on the available resource list when it is perceived as necessary by preschool staff. If we are unable to accommodate your child's level of function, or if their behavior limits their ability to participate in or benefit from our preschool program, we reserve the right to reconsider your child's attendance.

In certain situations, additional staff support and/or accommodation may be required at an additional cost to the parent. A current physical (within the past 6 months) and current immunization records are required for enrollment. Physicals are required annually. The Center follows the recommendations of the NAEYC.

SPECIAL NEEDS

The AJCC - ECE provides programming for young children with special needs. A major effort is made to integrate these participants into appropriate ongoing AJCC classes, groups, and events. Our goal is to provide participants with developmental, physical, and learning disabilities an opportunity to improve self-esteem and social skills, as well as develop new and meaningful relationships, and participate in the Jewish community to the fullest extent of their ability. Our staff meets with therapists, doctors, etc. to ensure that each child's individual needs and goals are being met.

OUTDOOR LEARNING TIME

Children participate in outdoor learning center time in the morning and afternoon unless it is raining or a local health alert due to air quality has been issued. Children will not be allowed to go outside on red ozone days. Outdoor time is an integral part of your child's day. Since your child will

go outside in very hot and very cold weather, please dress your child appropriately and send extra clothes for the season.

On days when the temperature is extreme, extra precautions are taken, such as shortening the amount of time your child spends outside. We are not able to provide staff to stay inside with a mildly ill child, therefore parents will need to make alternative care arrangements if their child cannot go outside.

In hot weather, we encourage the children to drink water and play in the shade. We require parents' permission to apply sunscreen. In cold weather, we layer the children's outer clothing. Please send hats and mittens for cold days, in addition to sweatshirts and coats. We believe that the playground is probably the safest place to be in the winter as staying inside in close contact with others encourages the spread of germs and limits exposure to fresh air and exercise. Children need outdoor play and exercise to be healthy.

CLOTHING REQUIRED FOR ACTIVE PLAY & SELF-HELP SKILLS

Children learn through play: They may get dirty and need to have their clothing changed. Each child must have two (2) complete sets of clothing (excluding shoes) for emergency changes as needed during busy play days. Each item must be labeled with the child's name. Toileting accidents are treated matter-of-factly. No child is punished or made to feel ashamed.

Parents must bring enough extra clothing and/or diapers to ensure that the child's daily needs for clean and dry changes can be met while in care at the center. Children must be dressed in simple, washable clothing suitable for play.

Also, clothing should be easily managed by children for toileting. Pants with suspenders or tight belts are difficult for children to manage when toileting and should be avoided as school clothes. Tennis shoes are suggested as footwear for children as they are soft-soled and provide safe footing. Children should not wear boots since an accidental kick can result in injury to a child or another person. Also, sandals can be dangerous when worn while climbing. The children will be playing outside almost every day, including cold days. Each child needs appropriate clothing such as hats, scarves, mittens, coats, and long/short pants for different types of weather.

WATER ACTIVITIES

Water activities in our program include sensory tubs, sprinkler play, splash pools and swimming pools (for 3 years and up). Care is taken to ensure the health and safety of children during water

play activities by preventing children from using sprinkler equipment on or near a hard, slippery surface, such as a driveway, sidewalk, or cement area. All sprinkler play equipment and hoses are stored out of children's reach when not in use. Sensory bins are emptied and disinfected daily.

COMMUNICATION

At the AJCC - ECE, we encourage two-way communication. You will receive regular updates through Tadpoles, the communication platform that we use. You can send messages and provide feedback to your child's teacher in Tadpoles, too. Staff will also communicate with you through phone conversations, email or verbally in the school. Feel free at any time to schedule a conference to discuss your child. If you need communication in another language besides English, we are happy to provide you with an interpreter when possible. We will use email to communicate frequently. All parents will receive the weekly shabbat Note with important announcements and programming information. If you change your email address or do not receive weekly emails from the school, please contact us immediately so that we can update your information.

TADPOLES APP

Keeping you involved with the school and your child's daily experiences has always been a priority of ours and **Tadpoles** is our teacher to parent app that we use here in the ECE.

From Tadpoles, teachers can send photos and videos to allow you to see a glimpse into your child's day! We will keep you informed of the daily activities, learning experiences, and care events for your child each day. All photos & videos are emailed to you directly and you can also access them via the [free](#) Tadpoles Parent app, available on Apple and Android devices, or online at [Tadpoles.com](https://tadpoles.com) as well!

To create your account online, please use the following steps:

1. Visit [Tadpoles.com](https://tadpoles.com) and click log in at the top right
2. Select Parents on the left
3. Choose sign up under "use a tadpoles account"
4. Use the email address that is currently on file with our school
 - a. If it's a Gmail account, you can sign right in to the account
 - b. If it's not a Gmail account, enter your email, choose submit and check your email for the link to establish your password

Each classroom will be equipped with an iPad which will be specifically used for the Tadpoles program. If you see a teacher on a tablet, rest assured, they are only using the devices to input information into Tadpoles.

We consider all information captured within Tadpoles to be a private communication between our school and our families. No personal information is shared with any external parties and as a

parent, you will only receive information specifically about your child. The confidentiality of all information is maintained through the security features of the Tadpoles software.

We are very excited to be utilizing Tadpoles and know that it will positively impact the engagement of our families and our home-to-school connection. We feel confident that you will love Tadpoles and the level of involvement it allows you to have with your child's daily experiences while at school. We are happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have about this exciting program!

Tadpoles Frequently Asked Questions

Can I download multiple photos at once? Currently, there is not a way to download those photos en masse. You will need to download each photo individually. For quicker download and easier organization, you may want to try downloading those photos from the website!

What will happen to my account once my child leaves or graduates from his/her school?

Anytime that a child leaves a school, or graduates from a center, you will have access to that account for 90 days. We hope this gives you enough time to download all of your favorite memories!

I've tried logging in to my account, but it says "no children registered." Why?

Typically, that means the school has not added your email address to the child's profile or they have a different email address listed for you. If you reach out to the school, they can ensure they have the correct email you'd like to use for your parent account attached to your child's profile. If the correct email is listed by the school, and you're still having difficulty, reach out to us directly and we'll help you get registered!

Why can't I download all of the photos and videos of my child that I've received? If the photo or video contains other children or was tagged as including other children in the classroom, those photos and videos are protected from being downloaded or saved. For security reasons, parents can only download pictures of their own individual child.

I'd like to change the email address associated with Tadpoles? How can I change it? The school will need to update that email address for you! Once they have changed the email address, you can merge the old parent account data to the new! You'll login to www.tadpoles.com with the old email address, then click settings > child data > enter the new email address, once you follow the prompts that will merge the data over to the new email address for you.

I received a notification when my child is dropped off. Why don't I receive one when my child is picked up or checked out of school? We send you a notification when your child is dropped off or checked into school. When your child is checked out, that triggers the daily report getting sent to you! The daily report will serve as your notification of your child being checked out!

Now that I'm using the app, I would like to stop receiving the emails as well. Is this possible? It sure is! From the app, if you click on settings, you can opt out of emails. The first setting, "receive email communications" set that to "no" and you will no longer receive the information from Tadpoles in emails, you'll only receive it via the app. You can reverse this setting at any time!

I'm trying to download photos, but it doesn't seem to be working. I cannot find the photos. It's likely that Tadpoles doesn't have access to your camera roll/gallery and therefore can't save the pictures. On an iPhone go to Settings > Privacy > Photos > Turn Tadpoles to green. On Android, go to Settings > Apps > Tadpoles > Permissions > Allow access to storage.

My school utilizes the texting feature of Tadpoles and I wish to not receive those text messages. How can I stop them? If you reply "stop" to a text message received by your school via Tadpoles, you will not receive any additional texts. Please note, this will also remove your number from receiving emergency alerts via text as well. (As long as you have an email added by the school, you'll still receive this emergency via email).

Why can't I add drop off notes for my child? As a parent you can add drop off notes for your child the night before, any time after 7pm via your parent account. You will also have up to 20 minutes after your child has been checked in to school to add drop off notes for that day as well.

ECE PARENT COMMITTEE

The AJCC - ECE supports an active ECE Parent Committee, which plays a very integral role in our program, sponsoring on-going activities throughout the school year. Volunteer Room Parents are actively involved in these efforts which directly benefit the children. All parents are invited to attend ECE Committee meetings. Parents are our most important resource. We encourage you to contribute your skills and talents to enrich our program and your child's school experience.

PARENT CONFERENCES & COMMUNICATION

Parent-Teacher conversations are scheduled twice a year. A notice of the schedule will be sent home with your child. Evaluations and documentation of progress will be shared with parents during the conversation. If you wish to talk with the teacher or the Director at any other time, please call the ECE office. We are always happy to discuss questions and concerns with you. The ECE will close the three days prior to Thanksgiving for our Fall Conferences. Ongoing, daily communication, both written and photographic, is provided through Tadpoles. Parent bulletin boards provide posted notices and other information. We will use email to communicate frequently. If you change your email address or do not receive daily communications from the school, please contact us immediately so that we can update your information. Assessment of children's progress in the program is an ongoing process. Teachers develop portfolios for each child. As teachers observe your child and write individualized plans for him/her, an enhanced developmentally appropriate curriculum based on the child's strengths and areas of projected development will be created. A collection of your child's work and a summary of progress will be shared and discussed regularly with parents each semester. Parent conversations will be held in the fall and in the spring for in-depth discussions. Other parent-teacher conversations may be held at any time to discuss problems or concerns throughout the semester.

REQUEST NOTICE

The AJCC - ECE policy states that class assignments must be based on educational variables rather than parent requests. To maximize each child's potential, children will be carefully and thoughtfully placed in a group for the next school year. To guarantee the individual attention our children need, and to maintain licensing and best practice guidelines, class sizes are limited and will be strictly observed. The Early Childhood professional staff will place children in the class that best serves the child's developmental needs. Children need to be enrolled in their age group according to their date of birth. Staff will use the child's date of birth, informal observations, staff recommendations, parent conferences, and occasionally gender balancing to determine the most appropriate placement for each child. The final decision will be made by the ECE Administrative Team. Parents will be notified of class assignments just before school begins.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Children's records and information about children in the program must be maintained to promote confidentiality. All employees are expected to refrain from discussing confidential information about children and families in the program. Children's files will be kept in locked cabinets/closets. Records will not be released to a third party without written permission from the parent.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING QUESTIONS, CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS

Questions or concerns regarding the AJCC - ECE policies and procedures should first be discussed with your child's teacher or the Director, depending on what/who is involved. All problem-solving methods are based upon the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. Every attempt will be made to resolve differences through a variety of methods. If the teacher is unable to help resolve the concern or answer the question, please make an appointment with the Center Director. At that time, if the Director is unable to resolve or answer it, the next level is to appeal to the Executive Director of the AJCC. You may also contact the AJCC - ECE Committee Chair, whose contact info can be found in the Early Childhood office. The Center also plans informal meetings for individual/group parent discussions, and routinely gathers advice from groups of parents at meetings on difficult issues.

FEES, PAYMENTS & CONTRACTS

AJCC Membership is required for ECE participation. Prior to enrollment a non-refundable registration fee must be paid. (Refer to contracts for fee amounts.) No tuition will be refunded nor transferred upon withdrawal of the child from the school. The only exceptions to this rule are if the withdrawal is due to a) student illness, or b) mutual educational decision; and in both cases the refund must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer of the AJCC.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES & WITHDRAWAL FROM CENTER

For other situations or problems that could come up and result in termination of enrollment, parents will be notified prior to action being taken to terminate services. A conference to resolve the problem will take place immediately. If the problem can't be resolved and termination is necessary, one week's notice will be given to facilitate a smooth transition for the child. Childcare may be terminated by the Director at any time because of non-adjustment to the program or failure to cooperate with the policies of the center.

IMPORTANT DATES

August 2026

8/31 First Day of School

September 2026

9/7 Closed – Labor Day

9/11 1 PM Early Dismissal - Erev Rosh Hashanah, Lunch w/ Loved Ones

9/18 Fall Shabbat Dinner

9/21 Closed - Yom Kippur

9/25 1 PM Early Dismissal - Erev Sukkot

October

10/2 1 PM Early Dismissal – Sukkot Last Day

10/23 Tot Shabbat w/ Temple Israel

10/28 – 10/29 Picture Day

November

11/14 Family Movie Night

11/23 - 11/24 1 PM Early Dismissal - Parent Teacher Conferences

11/25 - 11/27 Closed - Thanksgiving

December

12/10 Family Chanukah Dinner

12/13 Chanukah Show

12/21 – 1/1 Closed - Winter Break, Play Days Available (12/21 – 12/23, 12/28 – 12/30)

January 2027

1/18 Closed - MLK Day

February

2/15 Closed - Presidents' Day

March

3/9 – 3/10 Picture Day

3/21 Purim Carnival

April

4/5 – 4/9 Closed - Spring Break, Play Days Available (4/5 – 4/9)

4/21 1 PM Early Dismissal - Erev Passover

4/22 – 4/23 Closed - Passover

May

5/31 Closed - Memorial Day

June

6/10 1 PM Early Dismissal - Pre-K Graduation

6/11 Closed - Shavuot

July

7/2 1 PM Early Dismissal - Picnic with Pals

August

8/13 1 PM Early Dismissal - Last Day of School

PACKET FORMS CHECKLIST

Forms are available at alpertjccece.org/parent-resources-center

Please sign the following forms and return them to the ECE Front Desk.

Child's Name _____ **Date** _____

Licensing Papers

- ☐ Identification/Emergency
- ☐ Physician's Report Next report needed by: _____
 - ☐ Immunization Records
- ☐ Pre-Admission Health History
- ☐ Personal Rights
- ☐ Consent for Medical Treatment
- ☐ Parent's Rights

Alpert JCC ECE Forms

- ☐ Admissions Agreement
- ☐ **Age Specific** Developmental History Form
- ☐ Allergy and Diet Restrictions
- ☐ Photo Authorization Form
- ☐ Sunscreen Form
- ☐ Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
- ☐ Volunteer Opportunities X2
- ☐ Diaper Changing Fee Form- Preschool/Pre-k only
- ☐ Late Fees

Code of Conduct

- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Child

Completed by: _____