



# PARENT HANDBOOK

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MISSION STATEMENT

Atlanta School of Excellence’s mission is to ensure our students develop their physical, social, and emotional development in a safe environment. We understand the importance of your decision to select a quality education for your child. We are not a daycare, but rather an educational learning center that strives to stimulate and nurture your child!





## WELCOME LETTER

Dear Parent,

Welcome to Atlanta School of Excellence! Choosing a childcare center for your child is one of the most difficult and important decisions that you will make. We are pleased that you have chosen us and will work very hard to provide the highest quality program for you and your child.

Atlanta School of Excellence was established in 2012 to provide full-time educational programs for children ages 6 weeks through 12 years. All our programs are licensed by Bright from the Start.

As Owner and Executive Director of Atlanta School of Excellence, I am committed to the profession of early childhood education. I hold a degree in Early Childhood Education. I have served as a community swing member on the Atlanta Public School Go Team, VP of the PTSA for Maynard Jackson High School, a member of Georgia Early Education Alliance for ready students, as an educational and financial consultant for small business. I hold active memberships in several professional organizations including the Georgia Childcare Association, Georgia Association for the Education of Young Children, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Black Child Development Institute and the Southern Early Childhood Association.

As you have already read, our mission is simple, and we will assert 100% of our efforts each day to accomplish it. The following material and information will hopefully provide you with a better perspective about our program, commitment and philosophies.

We look forward to working with you to provide the best program for your child. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

**Shemeka Maddox**

Executive Director





## PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

We believe that young children learn through direct experience. Our objective is to provide an enriching environment in which children can gain these experiences while feeling safe and secure.

One of the hallmarks of high-quality childcare is communication between faculty and parents. We place great emphasis on integrating the family into the educational process. You will be provided with a detailed overview of our curriculum, daily updates and monthly newsletters. In addition to extensive informal interaction, formal Parent-Teacher conferences are conducted twice during the school year. Parents are always welcome in our classrooms to read a story, share a special interest, or just to visit.

Play is the work of children, for it is through play that the children develop concepts about themselves and the world around them. At Atlanta School of Excellence, we provide a joyful, nurturing, and secure environment that supports the work of children.

## STAFF PHILOSOPHY

One of the most critical components to accomplishing our mission and successfully implementing our philosophy is maintaining the highest quality staff possible and providing them with the resources and support to be successful. A child's first school experience is incredibly special and very important. For many, it will dictate how they view learning for many years to come. The faculty and staff at Atlanta School of Excellence understand how crucial the first years of life and learning are. Our faculty is made up of dedicated and caring professionals who welcome the opportunity and challenge of educating your children. We



are confident that our faculty and staff will provide your child with superior nurturing and guidance while they are under our care. Many of our preschool and many of our toddler/infant teachers hold four-year degrees in Early Childhood Education or a related field. Of those that do not, many are actively engaged in Early Childhood Education classes through our tuition reimbursement program. In addition to formal education, all our staff have a genuine love for young children and a commitment to high quality education. All of our staff participate in continuing education and are certified in First Aid & CPR.

Our teachers are always available to meet with parents regarding questions and concerns. Please arrange a mutually convenient time with your child's teacher. (Teachers can frequently arrange telephone conferences during the end of the day—drop off and pick-up times are not good for lengthy conversations.)

We have a Meet the Staff pictures and Bios located near the classrooms with the teachers names and titles. Please refer to it. Except for infants and toddlers, all children

are required to address the faculty and staff by their proper titles (i.e. Mrs., Miss, Ms, Mr.) and their **last** names. **Please help us to maintain this standard.**

## ACCREDITATION

We strongly support and endorse the values and philosophy underlying Quality Rated centers.

Quality Rated programs have demonstrated a commitment to providing a high-quality program for young children and their families. While the accreditation process examines the total program, the greatest emphasis is placed on the quality of interactions between staff and children, and the developmental appropriateness of the curriculum. Health and safety, staffing, staff qualifications, physical environment, and administration are all reviewed during accreditation; but primary consideration is given to the nature of the child's experience.

As a Quality Rated center, Atlanta School of Excellence has been recognized as an early care and education program that exemplifies excellence in the care of young children. Being Quality Rated benefits everyone involved. Parents can be assured that Atlanta School of Excellence has met standards that exceed the minimum necessary for licensing. The staff of Atlanta School of Excellence has benefited from professional development and the children enrolled at Atlanta School of Excellence have an environment that is conducive to their individual growth and development.



## CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is based upon The Creative Curriculum, developed by Teaching Strategies Inc. It is based upon the most recent educational research and is generally recognized as the state-of-the-art approach to educating young children.

The core of the Creative Curriculum is to balance both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning, with an emphasis on responding to children's learning styles and building on their strengths and interests. All of this is done through well-planned learning and activity centers including: Library (language), Blocks (construction), Music and Movement, Art, Sand & Water (Sensory), Computers, Outdoor Learning, Cooking, Science and Math.

Each group has a defined, age appropriate curriculum (even infants). Weekly summaries are posted in the classrooms. Teachers have detailed plans for each day.

Each day brings new learning opportunities as children are provided a framework within which they will make both self-directed and guided choices.



## ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at Atlanta School of Excellence is open to children from ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Enrollment is granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or special needs; and without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy or special needs.

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child in Atlanta School of Excellence by completing the Enrollment Application online and paying the \$115 Application Fee and the first week of tuition. The Application Fee and tuition are non-refundable.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed fee agreement, registration fee, deposit and signed Parent Handbook receipt. In addition, all children must have a health form prepared by the child's physician on record that documents a physical examination within the previous 12 months, as well as up-to-date immunizations.

The Enrollment Application and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration.

Atlanta School of Excellence reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

There must be two emergency numbers on file that we may call if your child becomes ill and you are unreachable.

Emergency contacts must have the ability to transport the children if necessary.

Parents are required to notify Atlanta School of Excellence immediately should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change.

Physical Examination - The Georgia State Department of Health requires that each child admitted to the Center be examined by a licensed physician and have a signed certificate indicating the date of the exam. Yearly updates on exams are needed for all children, as well as documentation of updated immunizations.

Prior to starting, parents are welcome to attend the center with their children in order to facilitate a smoother transition.



## FINANCIAL POLICIES

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Fee Agreement prior to enrollment of their child. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.

## PAYMENTS

A non-refundable deposit equal to 1-week tuition is required to reserve space. This deposit will be applied to the first week tuition. If the child does not attend, for any reason, the deposit is forfeited.

Every family must fill out and return the attached Tuition Express authorization form. There will be no fee charged for ACH payments, however all credit cards will have a (3% bank fee added). When tuition or enrichment fees are due, your account will be billed. Payment can be made by check or credit card prior to the due date. All payments made with a credit card will be billed a 3% fee.

Enjoy the convenience of paying your childcare tuition on the go through the integration of My Procure families can access account balances and payment history at any time. Payments are to be made by debit/credit card. No cash or personal checks accepted. Payment of tuition is required in advance on Fridays, for the upcoming week. Monthly tuition payments made in advance (based upon the number of Mondays in a month)

Weekly tuition is due on Friday afternoon by 6:00 p.m. to avoid a \$30.00 late fee. The late fee will be added to the balance due. Tuition and other fees are required to be paid in full.





No deductions for absences of any duration or cause. Our staffing and operational costs are incurred based on enrollment on a 52-week calendar.

Payment of tuition is required in Tuition does not include fees for field trips and extra-curricular activities such as Spanish, yoga, etc. (where applicable).

Tuitions are based upon actual age, not group placement. Fees change beginning the month after a child's birthday.

There is no credit given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations or inclement weather.

### SUBSIDIZED CARE

Atlanta School of Excellence does accept CAPS childcare subsidies. Parents of a subsidized child must complete all required paperwork on time. Parents of subsidized children are also required to sign a fee agreement, agreeing to be personally responsible for the payment of tuition in the event they become ineligible to receive childcare subsidies or their subsidy is modified. Parents are responsible for the difference between our tuitions and the amount paid by CAPS.

### MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNTS

Atlanta School of Excellence offers a multiple child discount for one or more siblings simultaneously enrolled during the same school year. The discount is applicable to the tuition of the oldest student at 10%.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Within Atlanta School of Excellence, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of Atlanta School of Excellence who have a "need to know" in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as Atlanta School of Excellence strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, special needs information, or health related information of anyone associated with Atlanta School of Excellence. Regulatory authorities with legal rights may review children's files upon request.

Outside of Atlanta School of Excellence, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of Atlanta School of Excellence, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

You may observe children at our center who have special needs or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting). You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of Atlanta School of Excellence are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

## PARENTS RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at Atlanta School of Excellence, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Atlanta School of Excellence must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/ joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

**In the absence of a court order** on file with Atlanta School of Excellence, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Atlanta School of Excellence cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Atlanta School of Excellence suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. Atlanta School of Excellence staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the Center Director and are allowed in the childcare facility only at the discretion of the Center Director. An employee of Atlanta School of Excellence will always accompany visitors, throughout the center.



Parents are permitted to access their child's classroom and play areas anytime during operating hours. Per the new Georgia Bright From the Start regulations, extended family, i.e. grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc., must have a background check on file. Parents must have a criminal background check on file if visitation is longer than 30 minutes. However, we ask for your cooperation during nap time, in not disturbing the schedule.



## DISMISSAL

Atlanta School of Excellence reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with or without cause.

By enrolling your child at Atlanta School of Excellence, as a parent or legal guardian, you give permission for your child to be involved in the activities and events at Atlanta School of Excellence. You further understand that Atlanta School of Excellence is a private school with a goal to provide a positive, enriching childcare environment. Although rare, a situation may arise where it becomes evident that the needs of a child cannot be met effectively by our school. The dismissal of a child will only be determined after we have explored all of our options. Every measure will be taken to meet the needs of a child, not only regarding the individual child's needs, but also the needs of the other(s) children served. The parent will be a central figure in the discussion process. Atlanta School of Excellence can request dismissal within a two-week notice. The final decision of dismissal is based on the discretion of the Atlanta School of Excellence Director.

Some examples of such instances include:

### Student's Actions:

- ✦ Child unable to adjust to the program after a reasonable amount of time
- ✦ Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children • Ongoing uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- ✦ Excessive biting

### Parental Actions:

- ✦ A parent/guardian fails to abide by Center policies or requirements imposed by the appropriate

### Licensing Agency.

- ✦ Non-payment of tuition.
- ✦ A parent/guardian demands special services that are not provided to other children and cannot reasonably be delivered by the program. This includes requests that depart from the philosophy of Atlanta School of Excellence.

### Immediate Causes for Disenrollment:

- ✦ A parent/guardian is physically or verbally abusive or intimidating to Center staff, children, or anyone else at the Center.
- ✦ Potentially dangerous behavior by a parent or child;

### Disenrollment Process

If the behavior has not resolved after all remedial actions have been exhausted, a conference will be held with the child's parent/guardian to communicate the Center's decision to disenroll. A follow-up letter will be provided which will include, if applicable:

- ✦ the reasons for the dis-enrollment or suspension;
- ✦ the date of the dis-enrollment or length of the suspension, which affords the parent sufficient time to seek alternative care, (up to two weeks, depending on safety risks presented);

- ✦ the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return or to resume or continue enrollment at the Center;

**ASOE will not dis-enroll for the following**

- ✦ making a complaint to Bright from the Start regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements
- ✦ reporting suspected abuse or neglect occurring at the center
- ✦ questioning the center regarding policies and procedures If the center elects to disenroll a child, ASOE will maintain on file a record of the circumstances, parental notification, and corrective action taken

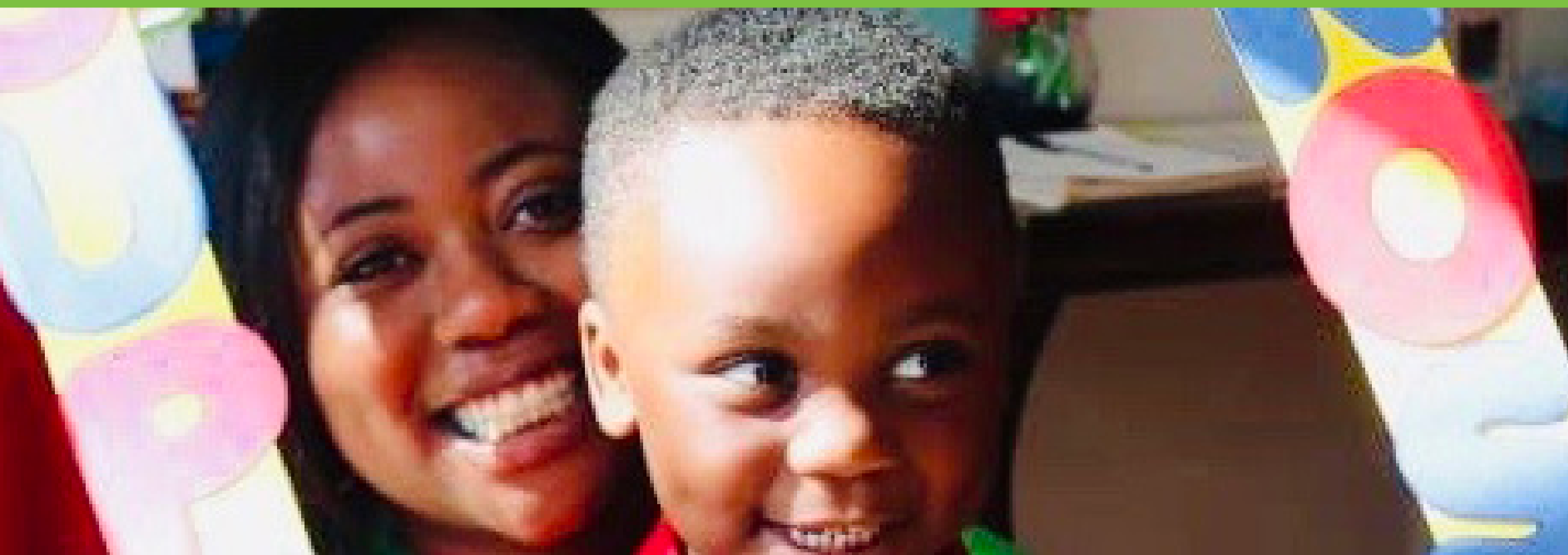
**WITHDRAWAL**

Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If the proper notice is given, any unused tuition will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged tuition for two additional weeks.

**ARRIVAL PROCEDURES**

It is important that your child's day begin on a positive note. Upon arrival, please sign-in with your password and again in your child's classroom. An authorized adult must accompany a child in and out of the building, at all times. Your child may experience some separation anxiety, which is normal. Experts suggest you comfort your child with a hug, tell them you are leaving, ensure them you will return, and promptly leave the classroom. While leaving a crying child can be difficult, most children stop crying within five minutes of the parents' departure. Linger in the classroom often worsens the departure.

We welcome parents to call and check on their child. At pick-up, feel free to spend time in the classroom and talk with your child's teacher about their day. Be sure to ask your child about his/her day, too!





PICKUP PROCEDURES

Once a child is signed out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on Atlanta School of Excellence premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, restrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents should handle all business issues prior to signing out their child.

Nobody under the age of 18 can be authorized to escort a child off the premises.

Please note that our closing time of 6:00 is not the time you must arrive to pick up your child, but the time by which you must have exited the premises.

Parents should take home all papers in the child’s cubby or school bag each day. Cubbies should be thoroughly cleaned out each Friday so that we can clean more thoroughly over the weekend.

LATE PICK-UP

We encourage you to arrive at least (ten) 10 minutes prior to the close of business (5:50 p.m.) to allow an opportunity to speak with your child’s teacher and check out. Pick-up time is 6:00 p.m.

Beginning at 6:01 p.m., a late pick-up fee of \$2.00 per minute, per child, is incurred. For example: arriving at 6:15 p.m., a Late Pick-up fee of \$30.00 (\$2.00 x 15 minutes) is due upon arrival. If your child has not been picked up by 7:00 p.m. and every attempt to contact you and your emergency contacts has failed, Atlanta School of Excellence

will contact the Fulton County Police and the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS).

After an excessive number of late pick-up arrivals, you may be asked to withdraw your child. Please understand that our staff is only scheduled until closing time. Like you, they have family and other obligations when their day is done. Your courtesy in considering this will be greatly appreciated.

EMERGENCY/ALTERNATE PICK-UP

At enrollment, parents will be presented with an Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form. Parents are encouraged to include on this form any, and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from Atlanta School of Excellence. In an emergency situation the child’s parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached staff will call the persons listed on the application until someone can be reached.



Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list.

The persons on the Emergency/Alternate pick-up form will be required to provide a photo ID prior to the Atlanta School of Excellence releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

All changes and/or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form. Please understand that we will be absolute in this rule. It's the law.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

Atlanta School of Excellence is a year-round school. We observe the following holidays: Good Friday; Half-Day Pre- K Step-Up Day (May); Memorial Day; Independence Day; the third (4th) week in July; Labor Day; President's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Thanksgiving Eve beginning at 12:00 p.m.; Thanksgiving Day; the day after Thanksgiving; Christmas Eve; Christmas Day; New Year's Eve; and New Year's Day; and the last Friday of Atlanta Public Schools' Spring Break. No discounts, credits or deductions are given for school holidays.

## EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

In consideration of the needs of our working families, we take great efforts to remain open under almost all situations. However, on occasion, like everybody else, we have to give in to the weather or some other emergency situation.

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call, of the pick up location should the children need to be evacuated from the child care center. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.

In the event of unusual weather conditions, such as snow, ice and/or power storm outage, please check our open, closed or open late status at Atlanta Public School and Channel 2 News listings, as well as direct email messages from Atlanta School of Excellence via Constant Contact and Remind. Note: It is our school policy to follow the City of Atlanta School System for snow holidays and other inclement weather closings. (Tuition will not be prorated.)



## Outside Activities

State licensing regulations require children to spend two (2) hours per day outside (with the exception of infants; who should only spend 1 ½ hours outside daily.) With the exception of a few extremely cold, hot or smoggy days, children will spend time outside each day. We require all children participate in the outdoor activities. We are not staffed to accommodate requests for children to stay inside. If your child is not well, including allergies, and cannot participate in outdoor activities, we ask they be kept home for the day

## CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

We have named each of our classrooms. At Atlanta School of Excellence we do not assign children to classrooms based strictly upon their age, but subscribe to developmentally appropriate placement. However, the approximate ages of children in each classroom is indicated:

- ✦ Little Lambs – ages 6 weeks to 1 year
- ✦ Creative Caterpillars – 1 year old
- ✦ Busy Bees – 2 year olds Wise
- ✦ Owls – 3 year olds Working
- ✦ Tigers– 4 year olds

## NAP/REST TIME

Adequate rest and/or quiet time are a very important component of a growing child's day. Infants are always allowed to nap, as needed. As your child graduates to the Toddler Rooms, only one nap per day is scheduled after lunch time. All children one (1) year old and older are assigned their own cot. They are encouraged to sleep or rest for a period of -1-2 hours if needed or depending on the individual child. Children who do not nap are allowed to quietly read a book, play quietly with puzzles or participate in other quiet activities. Each student requires two covers (one crib sheet –which fits snugly over the cots– and one small cover). It is mandatory that clean covers be brought in upon arrival Monday mornings and taken home for cleaning upon pick-up Friday afternoons. If covers are not brought in, the child cannot attend. Please speak with your child's teacher if you have special requests regarding naptime.



## CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please label all clothing with your child's first and last name with a permanent marker. We are not responsible for lost items. **Please bring your child to school in uniform.** Rubber-soled, non-slippery, closed-toe shoes are best for school. During the summer months (June and July) children may wear comfortable play clothes. Long dresses, light-up shoes, jellies shoes, cowboy boots, flip-flops and jewelry is prohibited. No book bags are allowed. We ask that you do not send or allow your child to bring food, gum or toys to school. As seasons change, please send your child to school with an appropriate jacket/sweater, coat and hat. Atlanta School of Excellence is not responsible for clothes soiled by paint, chalk, etc.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are important for Atlanta School of Excellence and our children. We share your desire to make your child's birthday a special one. In our experience, birthday celebrations are often overstimulating for children. For this reason, we ask the following limitations be observed: We celebrate birthdays during regular afternoon snack times. Please notify the Director and obtain a headcount from your child's teacher.

A special snack may be provided for all your child's classmates. We are also mindful of children who may have severe food allergies. Please discuss with your child's teacher about the appropriateness of the snack you choose. Peanuts, peanut butter, and snacks with peanuts (i.e. candy bars, etc.) are strictly prohibited, due to the severity of allergies associated. No candles are allowed. **Cakes, cupcakes, desserts much be purchased from a store or a licensed bakery.**

## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent conferences will be scheduled twice a year. A written notice indicating the exact dates and times will be sent home when the conferences are approaching. The conferences are a time when teachers can discuss your child's developmental progress with you at length. Parents are always welcome to request a conference at any time during the year if they feel it is warranted.

The Parents' Bulletin Board is in the hallway. Please check the bulletin board frequently. We post all social functions, parent meetings, conferences, timely news issues, etc. on the bulletin board.

## FOOD AND NUTRITION

Meals are included in the tuition. Meals include breakfast for those who arrive before 7:50 a.m., a morning snack of fresh fruit, a hot lunch, and an afternoon snack. Our meals comply with the State Nutrition Standards. We do not serve pork or beef and our foods are low sugar. We use a 4-week rotating menu which reflects the cultural and ethnic diversity of the children in our school. Menus are prepared and displayed each month. Children are encouraged to take at least one bite of each food offered; however, they are not forced to eat.

For safety, no food is allowed in the school from outside, with the exception of approved snacks for birthdays. If breakfast or lunch time is missed, we kindly ask that you please provide a meal for your child before dropping them off, and that the meal is finished before entering the school.



In the case of special dietary needs as prescribed by a physician, parents must furnish the food items. Please notify the Director and your child's teacher, **in writing**, of any food allergy your child may have, including the severity of such an allergy, and what to do in the event your child accidentally ingests such food. We will make every reasonable effort to accommodate children with food allergies; however, there are limits to our control in a large group care setting.

## INFANT FEEDING PLAN

A completed Procedures on Formula and Feeding Plan form is required for all infants. All parents must complete the Infant Feeding Plan, located in the front office, as well as in the Enrollment Package. Bottles must be labeled with the child's name, along with a daily label. Leftover formula will be discarded once the child has received the bottle. All bottles must be prepared with the formula upon arrival to the school. Diapers are

provided by the parents, which must be labeled and placed in the child's cubby. Pacifiers must also be labeled.

## SPECIALIZED CONSULTANTS

If a parent has concerns about their child they should first consult with the lead teacher in their child's room. There are many resources available in such situations, including the state birth to three program, public school screening, our social worker consultant amongst others. Parents are responsible for initiating these services, however Atlanta School of Excellence staff will work collaboratively with parents and outside parties to achieved desired goals.

## PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Atlanta School of Excellence will use electronic media to communicate daily summaries of each child's activities. The same media will also be used for sending pictures and videos as well as classroom announcements. General documents (eg. Family Meal menus, Lunch menus, curriculum summaries, etc.) will also be communicated via electronic media.

In the event a parent does not have access to email, or otherwise wishes to receive printed copies of communications, you will need to communicate this to your Center Director.

At minimum, annual parent questionnaires will be solicited via online surveys. These are a VERY IMPORTANT source for us to maintain the quality of our programs and we urge you to participate when requested. However, we seek your input at any time and urge you to communicate any concerns or problems to your Center Director or Assistant Director immediately. Should you feel this leaves your concerns or problems unresolved, please do not hesitate to email [smaddox@atlschool.com](mailto:smaddox@atlschool.com)- Executive Director

## DISCIPLINE

The goal of discipline is to help children to develop self-control; therefore, it is necessary for children to understand rules and the reasons for them, and to understand the consequences of their own actions. Preventing problems is essential to good discipline. The following techniques are used to establish discipline at Atlanta School of Excellence:

- ✦ Distracting Children from potential problems; Reminding children of the rules;
- ✦ Helping children to solve problems and to make choices;



- ✦ Allowing children to take time away from the group to regain control; Ignoring inappropriate behavior;
- ✦ Noticing and reinforcing appropriate behavior; Helping children to articulate their feelings; and
- ✦ Helping children to understand the consequences of their actions.

At Atlanta School of Excellence, we do not use abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. Children are not physically restrained in any manner, unless it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or others.

We may remove a child from a situation and redirect them to more appropriate behavior, however we do not practice “time out” as we believe isolation of a child is inappropriate and harsh at any time.

### TOYS FROM HOME

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are discouraged from bringing in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

Under no circumstances may children bring toys/items that depict weapons, violent or aggressive characters (i.e. super heroes, power rangers etc.). This includes clothing and backpacks.





## DRESS CODE

We have a shoeless policy in the infant and toddler rooms. Children in these age groups spend the majority of their time on the floor, therefore we require that all children and parents take their shoes off when entering these rooms.

Children are engaged in various activities during the course of the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children should be dressed in uniforms on Monday-Thursday and in seasonably appropriate, comfortable, clothing on Fantastic Friday.

Parents are requested not to dress children one or older in overalls, onesies, or clothing with difficult closures.

Coats, hats, gloves, scarves and comfortable shoes must be provided in the winter months.

Children are not permitted to wear open toed, and/or open backed shoes. No sandals, please. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes.

Children ages 3 through 5 should have one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center at all times. Children under 3 years of age should have two seasonably and size appropriate, complete changes of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes, shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. We will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes, coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots. Atlanta School of Excellence is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

### Jewelry/Accessories:

Children are discouraged from wearing jewelry of any kind. It is a safety hazard for your child as well as the other children enrolled in the program. In addition, Atlanta School of Excellence will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables.

Hair beads, barrettes, bobby pins, etc. are also discouraged. These accessories are considered to be safety hazards. When choosing accessories for your children be mindful of the potential safety issues they present not only for your child, but also for other children attending Atlanta School of Excellence.



## PARENT PARTICIPATION/VOLUNTEERS

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child’s school activities. There are many different ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the childcare center. Parents may volunteer to read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. Teachers will have posted in their classrooms any volunteer opportunities available

Many times throughout the year, we have special visitors come to educate the children. In the past we have had animal trainers, police officers, dentists, doctors, musicians, etc. The children are always excited to meet new people with special talents. We encourage parents to come in and share any unique talents that they have with the children. Please feel free to come and share any ideas, stories, songs, projects, games, etc. with the children.

If you are interested in participating at any time, please see your child’s teacher.

## HEALTH, HYGIENE & SAFETY

We strictly enforce our sick/illness policy. This policy is enforced for the protection of your child, our staff and other children. We kindly request your full cooperation in this regard by not allowing your child to attend school when they are sick and by picking up your child, within one hour of being notified, that your child is sick or ill. We cannot permit children with communicable diseases to attend or remain in school. A child with a fever over 100 degrees, diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea must not attend or remain in school. If your child is ill, including, but not limited to a severe cough or sore throat, undetermined rash or spots, boil, congestion, runny nose with yellow or green mucus, pinkeye, head lice, temperature over 100 degrees, severe headaches, upset stomach or diarrhea, he/she cannot be accepted into the school until these symptoms have been absent for 24 hours.

In the case where your child has a communicable disease, please notify the school immediately so we may notify our parents and take the necessary steps to sanitize the school. A written release from a doctor is required before your child re-enters the school. Atlanta School of Excellence will notify parents if a communicable disease has been introduced to the school. A child who has a temporary health condition that prohibits outdoor activities must not attend until the restriction is lifted. We are not staffed to supervise a single child inside while the rest of the class plays outside.



## PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be email to [enrollment@atlschool.com](mailto:enrollment@atlschool.com) prior to the child's first day of attendance. All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file at Atlanta School of Excellence.

All children are required to have a physical examination form filled out by a licensed medical professional, in order to attend Atlanta School of Excellence. The Physical Examination Form, indicating the child's fitness to attend Atlanta School of Excellence, must be completed and returned to the Center Director prior to enrollment. Forms need to be updated annually and with each new immunization.

## HANDWASHING

Hand washing is one of the most important steps in controlling illness. Our staff and children wash hands before eating, before handling food, after wiping noses, after using the bathroom or diapering, and following any messy activities. Please encourage this practice with your child at home. All staff & children must thoroughly wash hands when arriving at the center.

## DIAPERING PROCEDURES

- ✦ When changing diapers, we follow these procedures:
- ✦ Wash hands
- ✦ Wear plastic gloves
- ✦ Place paper barrier on the changing table Change diaper
- ✦ Wash hands
- ✦ Remove paper barrier Disinfect changing table

Parents are asked to be sure that their children arrive to school every day in a clean, dry diaper. If your child's diaper needs to be changed upon arrival, then please be mindful and follow the required sanitation procedures posted in the diaper changing area. Diapers will be checked by the teachers at least every 2 hours when awake and immediately after they awaken from nap. If the diaper is wet or soiled, it will be immediately changed. Diapers are only changed in designated areas and not elsewhere in the facility. Any clothing soiled with urine or feces will be removed from your child and placed directly into a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and will be sent home that day for laundering. Children's clothing will not be laundered at school. Also, please remember that if a child has more than 3 loose stools that cannot be contained by diapers or clothing, we will ask that you pick your child up and wait 24 hours until symptom free before bringing your child back to school.

## TOILET TRAINING

The teacher works on toilet training with the children while they are in the Busy Bees (older toddler) Group. The teacher and the child's parents will decide when the child is ready to be toilet trained. When the child shows an interest and is not afraid to sit on the toilet, we invite the child to use the toilet. When a child begins the process of toilet training, we require that the child stays in his/her pull up and uses the bathroom during the scheduled diapering time. When the child starts to have success on the toilet, we will encourage parents to put their child in training pants at home. Once the child begins having success at home, we invite the child to wear training pants to school. When children are being potty trained, please send them in appropriate clothing.

Children who are wearing training pants **MUST** wear clothing that they can take on and off by themselves. (i.e. pants with elastic waistbands, and a T-shirt or jersey. Please no onesies, snap T-shirts, overalls, etc.)

We do not separate the children by gender when they use the bathroom.

## MEDICATION

Atlanta School of Excellence is not required by law to administer medicine. We request our parents administer medication at home. Our policy does not allow us to accept medication of any kind on the

school premises. If medication is required, please schedule medication times during hours that your child will be in your care. Asthma pumps are allowed in the front office.

## BITING

In the best preschool settings, periodic outbreaks of biting may occur among infants and toddlers, and sometimes among preschoolers. This is an unavoidable occurrence in groups of young children. When it does occur, it can become scary, frustrating and stressful for children, parents and teachers. This is not an unusual occurrence among children going through the oral stage of their development. We understand as professionals not to blame children, parents or teachers, because there are no quick and easy solutions. Children bite for a variety of reasons: simple sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking

to be noticed, or intense desire for a toy. Repeated biting becomes a pattern of learned behavior that is often hard to extinguish because it does achieve results: the desired toy, excitement and attention.

Children may be teething, and biting may be a pleasant sensation for a young child. Knowing that biting will hurt is not yet understood by the child, nor is the "cause-effect" relationship internalized.

Our teachers select and monitor activities with anticipation that biting will not happen. There may be times, however, when the teacher cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.





Our policy for handling a biting incident is as follows:

- ✦ The biter is immediately removed from the group with a firm, "No." The bitten child is consoled, and the bitten area washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising. The biter is not returned to group play until they have been spoken to on a level that he/she can understand, and then redirected.
- ✦ The incident is documented by the teacher on an Atlanta School of Excellence Accident Report. A copy of the written Accident Report is given to the parent(s) of children involved at pick-up time. We reserve the right not to release the name of the biting child, as it serves no purpose and can incite an already sensitive situation.
- ✦ We look intensively into the context of each biting incident for patterns, in an effort to prevent further biting behavior.
- ✦ We work with each biting child on resolving conflict or frustration in an appropriate manner.
- ✦ We make an effort to adjust the environment and work with parents to reduce any child stress.
- ✦ We make special efforts to avoid potential biting episodes.

We work toward extinguishing the behavior quickly, while balancing our commitment to each family. Only after we have taken all necessary precautions, recommendations and adjustments for the biting child, we may deem it necessary to ask the child to be withdrawn.

## SANITATION

- ✦ We wash crib linens on a daily basis.
- ✦ We disinfect cots on a daily basis and children use the same cot each day. All infant/toddler toys are disinfected with bleach solution on a daily basis.
- ✦ All surfaces are cleaned and disinfected, weekly or more often.
- ✦ A professional cleaning service thoroughly cleans the center at least three nights a week.

## FIRST AID

ASOE's staff is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for children. All of our staff are certified in First Aid and CPR for both children and infants.

In the event of an accident, we are authorized to cleanse with soap, bandage a wound, apply ice and provide warmth and rest. Parents will be notified by a note or phone call of a minor incident. In the event of a serious accident, ASOE will use the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. Upon enrollment, parents sign an authorization form for emergency treatment by hospital staff.

The Center staff will handle the emergency first, and then notify the child's parent(s). If a parent cannot be reached, we will phone the emergency contacts indicated on your enrollment form. Someone will need to meet the child at the hospital and assume responsibility for the child.

Please keep us informed of any changes in the phone numbers of the individuals you have listed as emergency contacts.

## CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES

Atlanta School of Excellence staff are certified to administer EPI-PEN

Parents must also execute a “Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies” form. This form releases Atlanta School of Excellence from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the “Authorization for Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies” form, provided Atlanta School of Excellence exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

## COMMUNICABLE ILLNESSES

Atlanta School of Excellence follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined by the Center for Disease control. A copy of communicable disease are posted in our Front Lobby.

Children with any of the following symptoms will not be allowed to remain at Atlanta School of Excellence : Temperature of 101 or higher, conjunctivitis (pink-eye), strep throat, head lice, vomiting, diarrhea, rashes of unknown origin, or the presence of a contagious disease.

A child will be sent home if any of the above symptoms are seen during the day. It is expected that if a child leaves Atlanta School of Excellence after 12 noon, he/she will remain home the full next day to assure complete recovery. The center is not equipped to care for ill children. Each family must be prepared with a reliable emergency contact in the event the child becomes ill during the day and parents cannot be reached.

Once a parent has been notified, the child should be off the premises within one hour. If a parent is reached, but cannot pickup their child up within one hour, it becomes the parent’s responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child’s emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea which occur 3 or more times in a 24 hours period of time. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume after a 24 hour time period.

A child will be allowed to return to school if she/he has been on medicine for a contagious illness for 24 hours or is fever free. Fever free means NO Tylenol or any other antipyretic for 4 to 6 hours prior to checking in.

If a child is well enough to attend childcare, he/she is well enough to participate in outdoor activities.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the center director. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a “need to know” basis. If your child has a communicable illness, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable illness is present. Once again, only the communicable illness information will be shared.



## FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

Atlanta School of Excellence conducts monthly fire and emergency/evacuation drills. Parents, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation, parents may not sign children into or out of the program. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to sign their child into the program. Parents may feel free to wait with the child's class in the designated safe-zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the director or designate will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. As with the sick child pick up policy, children must be picked up within one hour of the telephone call.

## ALTERNATE SAFE LOCATION

Should the administration of Atlanta School of Excellence or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the child care Atlanta School of Excellence to be too dangerous to be occupied, the staff and children will be taken to one to our safe building next door to the school. Once the children are assembled here, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick up.

## INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. The Incident/Accident Report will be provided upon depart. The closing leadership team member will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later time because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day.



## LUNCH

We provide lunch for all children (except infants) who attend the morning session. Snacks are served in the morning and the afternoon. Lunch menus are sent home at the beginning of the month and are posted on the Parent's Bulletin board. Snack menus are also posted on the board. All lunches include vegetables and fruit. Milk or juice is served with all lunches and snacks.

### All age groups:

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions. (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets). Parents are responsible for providing food substitutions for their children on days that the Center is serving foods their children are allergic to.

### Infants:

Children enrolled in the infant classrooms must have all food items for consumption prepared and labeled each day the child is in attendance. This includes formula/breast milk bottles, baby food, snacks, and juice bottles. Be sure to prepare one more bottle than you think your child will consume in a day to assure that your child won't run out. Prepared bottles must be stored in the designated refrigerator and will be warmed in a water bath prior to feeding. No bottles will be microwaved. All bottles must be taken home by the parents each night to be washed.

Parents must provide and label all utensils and bowls necessary for feedings. Children will

not be fed directly from baby food jars, nor will the staff use previously opened baby food. Staff will mix baby cereal just prior to feedings. All unused food remaining after a feeding will be discarded.

Parents are required to complete a feeding schedule for their child on a weekly basis, or as the child's feeding requirements change. Staff will complete a daily chart for each child detailing for the parent what the child ate, when, and how much.

Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to come to the center during the day to feed their child.

## PEANUT FREE CENTER

Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions to Peanuts and products containing peanuts in some children, Atlanta School of Excellence does not serve any products that contain peanuts. We also require that when food is brought in by parents, whether as a "treat or birthday treat", or as an alternative food choice for their child, that they comply with this requirement. Peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. An allergic child can have a reaction from simply smelling peanuts on someone's breath, or touching peanut oil residue left on a countertop, not only from consuming peanuts or peanut products.

There are many acceptable food items that are peanut free and peanut product free in stores. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts, or peanut products have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut containing foods



and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, “may contain traces of peanuts.” For example, Plain Chocolate M & M’s have this statement on the label.

PHONE CALLS

Our teachers are always happy to discuss your child’s day and answer any questions that you may have; however, it is difficult to leave the children to take phone calls from parents. Whenever possible, it is much better if you can request a phone call from a staff member and they can call you during the day.

This way, the teacher can find a quiet time during the day when they can devote her full attention to the conversation without taking time away from the children.

If you have questions/messages during the day, we will be happy to pass them along to the teacher. If it is not a message that can be passed along to the teacher, please let whoever answers the phone know and we will make every effort to get the teacher on the phone.

POLICY FOR PERSONALLY HIRING TEACHERS

Hiring of teachers for personal services by parents is highly discouraged. This practice presents a conflict of interest for the teacher. If a parent does hire a teacher for a position (i.e. nanny, caregiver, etc.) Atlanta School of Excellence is held harmless from any and all responsibility. If arrangements are made with an ASOE Staff member for off-premises care of your child, the staff member must undertake such service(s) on his/her own time; not as a staff member of Atlanta School of Excellence. Atlanta School of Excellence offers no assurance for performance of such services, and none should be implied or inferred under any circumstances

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_,  
the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_,  
acknowledge that I/We have received a copy of Atlanta School of Excellence ’s Parent Handbook and have been given the opportunity to read the manual and ask questions about and understands the policies contained therein. Furthermore, I/We agree to abide by the policies set forth in the manual.

I/We understand that the policies described in the Parent Handbook are not conditions of enrollment, and the language does not create a contract between Atlanta School of Excellence and the parents. Atlanta School of Excellence reserves the right to alter, amend, or otherwise modify these guidelines, in its sole discretion, without prior notice.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_