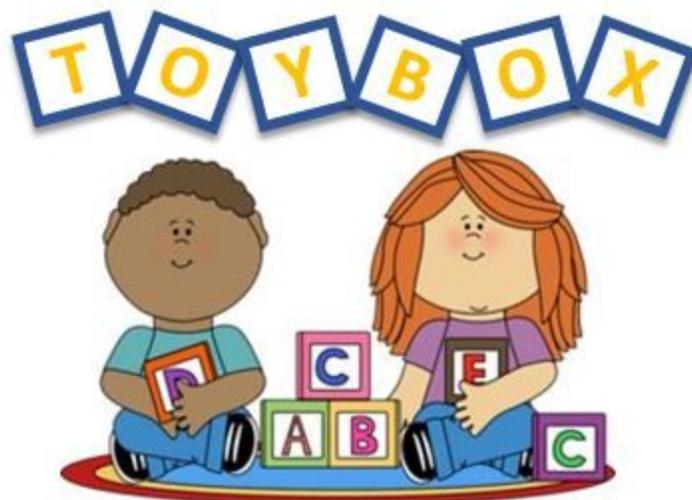


# TOYBOX

## Parent Handbook

### 2020-2021

### School Year



## **WELCOME**

Welcome to the Gilbert Public Schools High School TOYBOX, Early Learning Center. We hope you and your child will find our program to be very exciting.

What do we offer your child? An Early Learning Center is often a child's first group experience outside of daily family life. In a rich stimulating environment, the child is interested and motivated to safely explore the world around him/her. The TOYBOX Early Learning Center provides the opportunity for children to develop social relationships with peers, gain a positive self-concept and foster an attitude of enthusiasm about school at an early age.

We use a wide range of materials and media to stimulate motor and intellectual development. Play is an important part of our program. Through "play," the child learns to express him/herself in many ways; to think critically, solve problems creatively, and to interact positively in group situations. Dramatic and imaginative play help the child to better understand him/herself, their family, and community. And... it's fun!!!

Through teacher structured and student choice activities, the child touches, tastes, smells, hears, and sees the world around him. Our program is creatively planned with the child's mind, skills and interests as the first consideration. We encourage the child to express him/herself through experiences that most interest him/her, and to experiment in a safe, non-threatening environment, with new skills, activities and ideas. We believe it is most important to encourage each child according to his/her development level.

## **TOYBOX ORGANIZATION**

TOYBOX stands for Training Opportunities with Youngsters to Broaden Occupational eXperiences. The TOYBOX Program is an early learning center within an occupational high school laboratory setting. The high school students observe, plan, and work with the children under the direction and guidance of our professional staff. Prior to working in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center, high school students have taken prerequisite coursework covering a variety of Early Childhood Education topics including developmentally appropriate practices and positive guidance. Working in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center provides the high school students with hands-on experience which allows them to gain valuable knowledge and skills that can be utilized in a variety of careers related to early childhood.

## LICENSING

The GPS TOYBOX Early Learning Centers are licensed and regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services. Annual inspection reports are available for public viewing, upon request.

Questions or concerns regarding this program can be addressed to:

Arizona Department of Health Services  
Bureau of Child Care Licensing  
150 North 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ste. 400 Phoenix, AZ 85007-3244  
(602)364-2539 (602)364-4768 (Fax)  
<http://www.azdhs.gov/als>

When the TOYBOX Director is not available, the TOYBOX Early Learning Specialists will be in charge.

## ELIGIBLE CHILDREN

Registration for the GPS TOYBOX Early Learning Center takes place in the spring for the following school year. Registration is completed online and is on a first-come, first-served basis. All children must be at least 3 years old on the first day of school and must be independently toilet trained. **Independently toilet-trained is defined as the ability to use the restroom without caregiver's prompting, can wipe their own bottom, and without the use of special clothing or equipment.** Children must be able to independently dress/undress themselves.

## TUITION CHARGES & FEES

The yearly registration fee is \$35.00 per child. The \$35 registration fee is **non-refundable**. The current tuition rate for TOYBOX is \$576.00 per month for full time enrollment and \$448.00 per month for part time enrollment (three days/week). Please note that the monthly payment deadline will be the 25th of every month regardless of non-school days or holidays, and is not dependent upon the schedule you chose for your child. Payments received after the 1st of the month will incur a \$25.00 late fee. Two weeks of unpaid tuition will result in your child being withdrawn from the program. **If your child is absent for a full week, you will be required to pay half of the weekly tuition to hold your child's place in the program. There is a limit of two holding periods per school year. There are no provisions for occasional absences.**

Should your child be left beyond closing time, a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed. If your child is picked up late more than twice, they may be withdrawn from the program.

Gilbert Public Schools TOYBOX reserves the right to revise any fees, as conditions may require, upon written notification to parents.

## HOLIDAYS

The TOYBOX follows the GPS school calendar and will be closed on all Gilbert Public Schools holidays. These are as follows:

Labor Day	Veterans Day	Thanksgiving break*
Martin Luther King Day	Presidents Day	Spring Holiday* (Good Friday & Monday)
Fall Break*	Winter Break*	Spring Break*

\*Check the GPS Calendar located at <http://gilbertschools.net/calendars> to confirm specific dates each year.

On all one day holidays, and the week of Thanksgiving, there will be no discount for the week's tuition. During Fall Break, Winter Break, and Spring Break, no tuition is due.

**\*\* TOYBOX will close at 3:30 P.M. at the end of each grading quarter. \*\***

## CHANGE IN PROGRAM/ WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM

The TOYBOX Early Learning Center requires **two** week's notice of all changes in your child's program schedule, such as changes due to vacation leave or going from part time to full time. We require **two** weeks written notice of withdrawal from the program.

**\*\* See also Discipline Policies for Withdrawal Procedures\*\***

## GENERAL PROCEDURES

### EMERGENCY INFORMATION & IMMUNIZATION RECORD CARD

1. It is critical that you keep emergency information current. This includes phone numbers where you can be reached.
2. If you are going to be out-of-town or some place other than your regular place of work, please be sure updated contact information with your respective TOYBOX program.

## ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

When an accident or injury occurs in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center, an 'Incident Report' form is filled out, signed by an adult staff member and the parent. One copy is given to the parent while one copy is retained in the child's file. The parent will receive this written notification within 24 hours of the accident/injury.

If medical attention is necessary, it is either administered by an adult staff member or the school nurse. If the accident is severe or requires further medical attention, the parent will be notified by phone within 30 minutes.

If an emergency occurs, the adult staff member will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child. This may include calling 911, calling school security/nurse, notifying the Director, and/or evacuation using the center's Accident, Evacuation, and Emergency Plan.

## ILLNESS

Each child enrolled in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center must have a completed immunization record and 'Emergency Information & Immunization Record Card' on file **before the first day attending TOYBOX**. In order to protect the children enrolled in our program, your child must be kept at home if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- 1. A fever of 100 degrees or higher. A child cannot return to TOYBOX until they have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducer such as aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin).**
- 2. An undiagnosed rash or sore, discharge from the eyes or ears, a persistent cough, vomiting, or diarrhea. (They must be symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of over-the-counter medication)**
- 3. Any symptoms of a communicable disease. (Pink eye, strep throat, lice, flu, etc.)**

**\*\* The Director must be notified if your child has any communicable disease. If your child develops any of the above symptoms while in our care, we will contact you to arrange for pick-up. \*\***

## MEDICINES

The administration of prescription medication will be handled by the school nurse under the following guidelines:

1. Prescription medication will be brought in the original container with the medication name,
2. prescription number, child's name, and directions for dosage. 2. The parent will be asked to fill out a permission form on the first day the medication is brought to the Health Office.
3. If needed at home, medication will be returned to the parent each night when the child is picked up.

**\*\* Please note that non-prescription medication will not be administered in TOYBOX. \*\***

## **INSURANCE**

Gilbert Public Schools District (GPS) carries liability insurance, which covers the GPS TOYBOX Early Learning Centers. Our insurance coverage is provided by Arizona School Risk Retention Trust, Inc. This coverage applies to any time your child is signed into the TOYBOX Early Learning Center including off-site field trips. This policy **does not** provide accident/medical coverage and we suggest each child be covered on an individual or family health care plan. Information about a student medical plan is available from the athletic office on your campus.

## **SIGNING IN & OUT**

Parents are required to sign in each child upon arrival, to notify a staff member of his/her arrival, and to sign the child out upon departure. All sign in and out signatures must include, **at least, first initial** and full last name per state licensing requirements **NO INITIALS.**

If you wish for someone other than those persons listed on your **'Emergency Information and Immunization Record'** to pick up your child, please notify the preschool adult staff members **in person or by phone.** A password system has been set-up should this situation arise. Anyone picking up your child should be prepared to show proper identification before the child will be released.

## **PARENT VISITATION**

We will welcome and encourage parent visitation at any time. You have unlimited access to the TOYBOX Early Learning Center during business hours for the purpose of contacting your child, assessing the care provided or the premises. Stop by and eat lunch with your child, tuck him in for his nap, or observe the classroom whenever you like. Please keep in mind that some children will handle this parent visitation better than other children. If your child is having difficulty with your visits, we may ask that you limit your visits to our observation room until they adjust to their new environment and routine. We ask that you are considerate of the activities going on, so that the high school students can complete their plans.

## **DISCIPLINE**

A positive learning environment is essential for the wellbeing of all children. This is created through respect, kindness, encouragement and positive guidance. We believe that it is important for the TOYBOX Early Learning Center to maintain an atmosphere that allows all children to learn and grow. Fostering appropriate social skills for success in school and in life is a primary focus. This means teaching with love, understanding, and support as well as helping children gain self-control and practice communicating their feelings effectively.

Positive reinforcement will be used throughout the day. This is done by acknowledgement, praise, and positive feedback as children make appropriate choices. Refocusing and redirection will always be attempted before a child is asked to sit away from the group. If a situation arises where a child's choices inhibits the learning process or jeopardizes the quality of care provided to other children, they will be removed from the situation. At this time, the teacher will also make a point to help the child identify why they were removed from the activity and what needs to be done to successfully rejoin to the group. In the event that a child must sit away from the group, staff will still be able to maintain visual supervision.

## **DISCIPLINE (cont.)**

We believe the early years are a time for teaching children how to use self-control and to regulate their emotions. It is essential that any measure to correct a child's behavior will focus on teaching these necessary life skills. We do not hit, spank, humiliate, or threaten children, nor do we withhold food as a punishment.

Aggressive behavior cannot be tolerated in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center. This includes biting, hitting, kicking, scratching, pinching, spitting, profane language, inappropriate gestures, etc. Parents of children who exhibit aggressive, inappropriate behavior or consistently do not respond to redirection will receive written notification at the end of the day. If your child has recurring issues in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center, a meeting will be arranged with parents and teachers to discuss the issue.

If you have questions at any time, you may contact us to arrange a phone call or in person meeting. Please understand that it is difficult to address your child's behavior at length during drop off and pick up times. A phone call or a prearranged meeting will provide more time to privately discuss the situation in more depth. We appreciate your understanding and support in this matter.

If the TOYBOX Early Learning Center determines that it is unable to provide services to meet the needs of a child without jeopardizing the quality of care provided to other children, parents may be asked to withdraw their child from the program.

## **TOILETING ACCIDENTS**

If a child has a bowel movement accident, we will make the child as comfortable as possible (also taking into consideration that we don't want to embarrass them) and contact a parent to come and pick up the child if necessary. If the accident is due to diarrhea, then the child must be taken home. Please be advised, this does not apply to urinating accidents. We do realize that many young children will have "accidents" on occasions, especially in a new situation such as the beginning of school year. However, if accidents become frequent, an adjustment period will be discussed to determine how to best meet the needs of your child and maintain the state enforced licensing standards. Please also keep in mind we are not licensed to change diapers, including Pull-Ups.

**\*\*\*YOUR CHILD MAY BE REMOVED FROM TOYBOX UNTIL HE OR SHE IS INDEPENDENTLY TOILET TRAINED AND CAN RESUME THE PROGRAM. \*\*\***

## **DRESS**

Bring your children to school in comfortable clothes that allow them to move around and not worry about getting dirty. **Children must wear shorts/pants under dresses/skirts.** It is also important to make sure they are appropriately dressed for the season. Child must wear closed toed shoes. **Flip flops, sandals, or heels are not appropriate. \*\* Closed toed are best for keeping children safe on our playground and throughout the day! \*\***

## **SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN**

The Gilbert Public Schools TOYBOX Early Learning Centers offers limited provision for individual needs of special children. Since TOYBOX is an operation of GPS, these accommodations may be provided through the AMANECER Preschool program. The program can be reached at (480) 497-3461. A copy of the child's IEP must be kept in the child's TOYBOX file.

## **PESTICIDE APPLICATION**

In the event it becomes necessary to apply pesticide on the premises, parents will be notified in writing 48 hours prior to the pesticide application. The pesticide information as described in R9-3-306 of the Arizona Rules and Revised Statutes will be included in the written document.

## **PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES**

### **MEALS & SNACKS**

Parents have a choice of purchasing a school lunch using My School Bucks, sending a check, or sending a sack lunch with their child. In addition, we serve two snacks each day. Morning snack is a light snack that will sustain a child who has eaten a balanced breakfast until lunch. Please be sure your child has eaten breakfast prior to arrival at TOYBOX Early Learning Center. If a lunch from home is selected, please do not include soda, pop, candy or other sweets.

**\*See Empowerment guidelines below\***

**\*We also request that you make each of us aware of any food allergies, so that we can immediately respond appropriately to your child's special needs.\***

## **EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM**

As a facility that is licensed with State of Arizona Department of Health, we are also participants in the state's Empowerment Program. This is a program that is focused on ensuring centers are incorporating specific **nutritional guidelines** and healthy practices such as sun safety, oral health, and reducing tobacco use in the community. This means that we must serve meals family style, provide families with information about sun safety, tobacco cessation, and ensure that children are receiving meals that are balanced with all food groups. We are also required to provide at least an hour of physical activity for the children daily, limit screen time to less than 3 hours or less a week, and limit juice intake to 4 ounces or less a day. If you have any further questions regarding the TOYBOX Early Learning Center participation in this program, please feel free to contact the TOYBOX Director. You may also find additional information regarding this program at the Arizona Department of Health Child Care website [www.azdhs.gov](http://www.azdhs.gov).

## **NAP TIME**

The TOYBOX Early Learning Center provides time for children to rest daily in the afternoon. Children rest in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center on mats or cots. All children will lay down for a quiet rest period.

## **WHAT TO BRING**

To ensure you child's comfort, please provide two **complete** changes of clothing (underwear, socks, etc.) and a small lightweight blanket for naptime. **\*Please check with your center if a crib size sheet is needed\*** To avoid loss, please label all belongings with your child's name.

We respectfully ask that you leave your child's toys at home. **\*We are not responsible for lost or broken toys and unlabeled articles.\*** No guns, war toys, or other toys of violence are allowed, even on specified Show and Tell days.

## **OUTDOOR PLAY**

Fresh air and exercise are essential to child's physical well-being. If there are medical reasons that your child cannot play outdoors, we will be happy to comply with your physician's' request when presented with his/her written instructions. Otherwise if a child is well enough to attend TOYBOX, he/she is well enough to go outdoors. Please be certain that your child comes dressed for outdoor activities. (jacket, hat, shorts under skirts and dresses, **closed-toed shoes which allow for running and playing on the playground surface and in the sand – no flip-flops, etc.)**

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips to places of interest in the community will occasionally be scheduled. In advance of each trip, you will be notified of the details and written permission will be required.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Gilbert Public Schools TOYBOX Early Learning Centers **do not** provide public transportation to or from our centers. Parents and/or guardians are responsible for transporting their child to and from the GPS TOYBOX.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Because birthdays are special, you may want to bring a treat to celebrate. Please make arrangements in advance with the TOYBOX staff. According to state guidelines, all birthday treats must be store bought and sealed.

## **CHILD FIND PROGRAM**

TOYBOX Early Learning Center is proud to support the mandated Child Find efforts as outlined by the Arizona Department of Education. In compliance with the law, we will conduct Child Find developmental screenings on all students within their first 45 days of attendance in our program. We will discuss any developmental concerns that arise based upon your child's screening with you.

***Thank you for entrusting your child to us! We are committed to providing your child with a safe and fun environment where he/she can grow with love and guidance. You can help us achieve these goals by providing us with comments and/or suggestions, and through your daily involvement!***

**PARENT HANDBOOK:**

We encourage you to thoroughly read the parent handbook, so that you better understand our policies and program. **Please note** that TOYBOX does not open until 7:00 a.m. each day. Although our staff is there earlier than 7:00, the door will remain locked until then to allow them time to prepare the TOYBOX Early Learning Center for the day. TOYBOX Early Learning Center closes each day promptly at 4:30 p.m. (please note the late pick-up policy).

Please be aware that there will be a daily rest period for all the children & time frame varies at each site. This may be scheduled later than what your child is used to, but the children usually adapt quickly to this change. Please also note that one of the requirements for admission into the TOYBOX Early Learning Center was that your child be independently toilet trained. We are not licensed by the state for diaper care and also do not have the approved **facilities** that allows for diaper changing. We do realize that many young children will have "accidents" on occasion (see toileting information), especially in a new situation such as the beginning of school. However, if accidents become frequent, an adjustment period will be discussed to determine how to best meet the needs of your child and maintain the state enforced licensing standards.

Aggressive behavior will not be tolerated in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center. This includes and is not limited to biting, hitting, kicking, scratching, pinching, spitting, profane language, inappropriate gestures, etc.

Parents of children who exhibit aggressive behavior or consistently do not respond to redirection will receive written notification at the end of the day. If your child has a recurring issue in the TOYBOX Early Learning Center, we will arrange a meeting with parents and teachers where we will discuss the issue.

Lastly, we want you to feel free to visit TOYBOX Early Learning Center anytime throughout the day. In the beginning of the school year, we have found that the children will adjust quicker in the mornings if you leave promptly upon drop-off, for at least for the first few weeks. Also, if your child has a hard time returning to his/her group or activities once you have come in to check on them, we might ask you to limit the amount of times you come into the TOYBOX Early Learning Center until the child has adjusted to the periodic visits. We appreciate your understanding in these matters.

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE PART BELOW TO THE TOYBOX CLASSROOM THE 1st WEEK of SCHOOL**

**YES, I HAVE READ THE TOYBOX PARENT HANDBOOK AND WILL ADDRESS ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE TOYBOX PROGRAM**

**CHILD'S NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT'S SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT'S SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_