



# Early Learning Centers

## Parent Handbook

(Revised 04/2023)

<p align="center"><b>E.L. Wiegand Early Learning Center 1</b> 1270 Foster Drive Reno, NV 89509 775-322-9030</p> <p><b>Program Hours</b> Monday – Friday 6:30 am - 5:30 pm</p> <p><b>Office Hours</b> Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm</p>	<p align="center"><b>Our Place Early Learning Center 2</b> 605 South 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Bldg. 605 Sparks, NV 89431 775-360-2495</p> <p><b>Program Hours</b> Monday – Friday 7:00 am – 5:30 pm</p> <p><b>Office Hours</b> Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm</p>
<p align="center"><b>Johnson Family Early Learning Center 3</b> 3700 Safe Harbour Way Reno, NV 89512 775-360-2494</p> <p><b>Program Hours</b> Monday – Friday 7:00 am – 5:30 pm</p> <p><b>Office Hours</b> Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm</p>	<p align="center"><b>Reno Avenue Early Learning Center 4</b> 785 West 6th Street Reno, NV 89503 775-360-2482</p> <p><b>Program Hours</b> Monday – Friday 7:00 am – 5:30 pm</p> <p><b>Office Hours</b> Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm</p>
<p align="center"><b>Early Learning Center 5</b> Address Coming Soon Ely, NV Phone Number TBA</p> <p><b>Program Hours</b> Monday - Friday 7:00am-5:30pm</p> <p><b>Office Hours</b> Monday - Friday 8:00am-5:00pm</p>	<p align="center"><b>Early Learning Center 6</b> 1200 El Rancho Drive Sparks, NV 89431 Phone Number TBA</p> <p><b>Program Hours</b> Monday - Friday 7:00am-5:30pm</p> <p><b>Office Hours</b> Monday - Friday 8:00am-5:00pm</p>
<p align="center"><b>Early Learning Center 7</b> Address Coming Soon Eureka, NV 89316 Phone Number TBA</p> <p><b>Program Hours</b> Monday - Friday 7:00am-5:30pm</p> <p><b>Office Hours</b> Monday - Friday 8:00am-5:00pm</p>	<p align="center"><b>Early Learning Center 8</b> 1250 Hanson Street Winnemucca, NV 89445 Phone Number TBA</p> <p><b>Program Hours</b> Monday - Friday 7:00am-5:30pm</p> <p><b>Office Hours</b> Monday - Friday 8:00am-5:00pm</p>

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## Early Learning Centers Overview

### Purpose, Philosophy, and Values

#### **Purpose**

The Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows (BGCTM) Early Learning Centers (ELCs) provide high quality early care and education to children birth through 5 years. There are currently five Early Learning Center sites located in the Reno/Sparks area. All sites are licensed through Washoe County Human Services Agency Child Care Licensing.

#### **Philosophy Statement**

The Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows Early Learning Centers create school communities where children, families, and staff feel safe, happy, included, and respected, and where learning through play is fun!

#### **Relationship Values**

Truckee Meadows Boys and Girls Club Early Learning Centers value respectful, safe, and friendly relationships for all children, families, and staff.

- Be Respectful: Use gentle hands; Take turns; and Use quiet voices.
- Be Safe: Wash your hands; Use your walking feet; and Clean up.
- Be a Friend: Everyone is included; Use kind words; Use helping hands.

## **Vision, Mission, and Goals**

### **Vision**

It is the vision of BGCTM Early Learning Centers that all children and families in the community have access to high-quality early care and education services.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of BGCTM Early Learning Centers is to inspire and enable the healthy development of all young children, especially those who are most vulnerable, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring members of the community. ELC staff strive to provide age-appropriate environments that enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development through a developmentally appropriate curriculum that meets the needs and abilities of each child.

### **Goals**

#### **For Children:**

- To develop positive and nurturing relationships with adults and peers;
- To develop a sense of trust and security;
- To identify and solve problems;
- To express thoughts and feelings appropriately;
- To think critically;
- To respect the feelings and rights of others;
- To use creativity and imagination;
- To work independently and with others; and
- To develop self-regulation skills and literacy and numeracy knowledge that form the foundation for school success.

#### **For Parents:**

- To feel good about their role as parents and about their children;
- To gain insight into the development and behavior of young children in general and their child in particular; and
- To work as partners with ELCs to provide an atmosphere of caring, acceptance, and support in children's education.

#### **For Staff:**

- To provide a positive and supportive working environment that promotes teamwork;
- To support respectful and honest communication between all staff members;
- To provide opportunities for staff to receive education through collaboration with community partners; To consider staff members first when promotional opportunities become available within the organization.

## **Programs**

### **Infant and Toddler Program**

Infant/toddler care is provided at all ELC sites serving children 6 weeks to age 3. Infant/toddler programs emphasize the importance of positive relationships in the development of young children. The bonds children establish during the first years of life provide the basis of learning throughout life. Children are provided with stimulating environments that provide learning experiences designed to meet the developmental needs of the whole child. The curriculum focuses on routines and is individualized to each child for nutrition and sleep.

### **Preschool Program (Fully Potty Trained)**

Preschool programs are provided at all ELC sites serving children ages 3-5 years. The curriculum includes opportunities for gross and fine motor skill development, creativity through art, music and movement, sensory play, science, math, and literacy activities that provide cognitive skills such as critical thinking, decision making, prioritizing, and organizing, and social-emotional activities like dramatic play, solutions kits, small group interactions, large group activities which promote self-regulation skills such as impulse control, communicating wants and needs appropriately, listening, following directions, and independence.

## **Inclusion**

ELCs are inclusive of children with special needs and do not discriminate based on children's needs or disabilities. ELCs do not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, or color when determining which children are served.

Developmental specialists are welcome to provide services to children with special needs within each ELC site.

## **ELC Staff**

All ELC staff and volunteers working over 15 hours per week are required to pass a background check and obtain a memo of eligibility in order to work at any ELC site. All staff also are required to meet Washoe County Child Care Licensing training requirements within 90 days which include but are not limited to CPR, First Aid, Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition, Signs and Symptoms of Illness, SIDS Prevention, Shaken Baby Syndrome, Child Development, and Obesity Prevention and Wellness. Additionally, each staff member must complete 24 Nevada Registry approved training hours each year. ELCs provide training to staff throughout the year and will close for three Professional Development Days each year. Parents will be notified in advance of Site closures due to professional development.



**Hours of Operation**

Hours of operation vary by site. Hours for each site are listed on the front page of the Parent Handbook.

**Holidays and Center Closures**

ELC Sites are closed on the following holidays: New Year’s Day, President’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Nevada Day, Veteran’s Day, Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving day, the Friday following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year’s Eve.

Copies will be sent out yearly to families through Brightwheel with exact days. Copies can also be picked up at the sites.

**Child Care Licensing**

All ELCs maintain current licensing requirements through Washoe County Human Services Agency. Copies of child care licensing regulations are located at each site. Childcare licensing reports are located at each site and can be found online at [https://www.washoecounty.us/hsa/childrens\\_services/child\\_care\\_and\\_early\\_childhood\\_services/index.php](https://www.washoecounty.us/hsa/childrens_services/child_care_and_early_childhood_services/index.php)

**Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)**

ELCs participate in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) administered by the State of Nevada. QRIS is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and community the level of quality in early care and education programs.

**Registration Fees, Tuition, and Payment Policy**

Families will be charged an annual registration fee of \$20 per year and an annual materials fee of \$80. These fees will be used to cover administrative support expenses and classroom materials.

<b>Tuition</b>	<b>Newborn -18 Months</b>	<b>18-24 Months</b>	<b>24-36 Months</b>	<b>36 Months Pre K*</b>
<b>5 Full Days</b>	<b>\$242</b>	<b>\$227</b>	<b>\$212</b>	<b>\$192*</b>

**All tuition fees are due by the Friday before each week or a late fee of \$5 per day will be charged. If tuition is one week behind, child(ren) can NOT attend until it is paid in full. A \$5 late fee will be applied per day until it is paid. No exceptions for absences, vacations, holidays, or annual staff development days.**

Questions about billing should be directed to the Director or Assistant Director at individual sites. Checks are made payable to the Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows. Payments are made through Brightwheel. Cash is not accepted.

Families who have more than one child enrolled or pay monthly will receive a 5% tuition discount.

One week of unpaid tuition is provided per school year (August to August) for each enrolled child. Tuition is due for any additional family vacation days.

\*To receive the \$192 tuition rate, the child must be fully potty trained and three years of age.

\*All children who are age 3 and up, must be potty trained in order to attend.

### **Refunds**

The ELCs only offer refunds to families who have been over charged. The ELCs do not refund families who were paying out of pocket, then receives a subsidies to help pay tuition. Any money that was paid out of pocket then was covered by a subsidy, will be used as a credit. This credit will cover any weekly copays that might not be covered by a subsidy and/or yearly registration and material fees. If a family disenrolls and there is a credit on their account, the Executive Director and CEO must approve the refund before it is granted. If a family disenrolls or moves to another site and owes a balance, must pay the balance prior to leaving the site. Balances that are not paid before leaving, they will be reported to their subsidy and case manager.

### **Late Policy**

Parents must call the site to inform staff if they will be late picking up children.

Parents who pick up children after the site's designated closing hour will be charged \$30 per child for the first 10 minutes after the designated pick-up time followed by \$3 per minute per child. Late fees must be paid before the child(ren) can return to the site. If a child is picked up late three times, the family will be asked to find alternative childcare and will no longer be enrolled.

If there has been no contact with the parent after closing time, staff will attempt to contact parents and emergency contacts. If parents or emergency contacts have not responded within 30 minutes of closing time, staff will contact Washoe County Child Protective Services or law enforcement. Staff will remain with the child until the child leaves the center with an authorized adult. Parents must message the admin through Brightwheel or call the site if someone who is not on the approved pickup list is getting their child. The parent is also responsible for adding anyone to their Brightwheel account before the child is picked up.

### **Tuition Assistance/Daily Care Contract**

Parents who receive financial assistance for tuition fees through child care subsidies are responsible for unpaid balances. Parents who are on "attendance" based contracts or who pay for care on a daily basis will be charged for the days their child is scheduled to attend, regardless of the child's presence in the program. Child(ren) need to be verified they are covered by any subsidy before the first start date. If admin are waiting to hear back from the case worker on what percentage is covered, parents must pay 50% of tuition until certificates arrive and coverage is verified.

### **Scholarship Fund**

The Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows offers a limited number of scholarships that reduce tuition. Partial or complete scholarships also are available to families in temporary need of financial assistance. All information regarding reduced fees is strictly confidential. Scholarships are reviewed on a quarterly basis to determine continued needs. Site Directors have information regarding scholarship funds. Prior to applying for BGCTM scholarship assistance, parents must apply for childcare subsidies through the

Children's Cabinet. Call 775-856-6200 for more information on childcare subsidies. Contributions for scholarship funds are gratefully accepted at all sites.

### **Over 10 Hours A Day**

Parents needing children to be in care over ten (10) hours a day will be charged at the hourly rate of \$5 per child after the 10<sup>th</sup> hour if prior arrangements have been made. Without prior arrangements, a late fee of \$30 per child for the first 10 minutes after the designated pick-up time followed by \$3 per minute per child will be collected for the time the child remains in the center. Families who receive assistance with child care tuition can talk with case managers regarding overtime charges if due to work-related activities.

### **Insurance**

The Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows carries general liability insurance for the Early Learning Centers. More information about general liability insurance can be obtained from the ELC Executive Director.

### **Custodial Parent Policy**

Parents have the responsibility for authorizing who is allowed to drop off, pick up, or visit their child in the center. The information is gathered at enrollment and is used regularly by the classroom staff to verify that children are only released to authorized adults. In order to maintain positive relationships with parents and to assure the safety of the children and staff, center personnel will not become involved in custody disputes. Parents/Guardians are required to provide a certified copy, with the original signature and certified seal of a current restraining order or any other court-ordered document that limits parents/guardians access to the child. The Director should be informed of any and all situations when parental rights are in question. Legal documentation of custodial agreements or restraining orders must be on file at the site in order to amend any information provided at enrollment.

### **Children's Records**

Licensing regulations require the following items to be completed and on file before a child can attend ELCs:

- Enrollment Form
- Certified Washoe County Health Department immunization record for child care and be up-to-date on their shots
- Health statement with physician's signature

Forms must be turned in prior to start date or within 30 days of starting.

### **Child Care Arrangements**

Any arrangement for child care that does not take place at ELC sites is strictly a private arrangement between the parents and the individual staff member. Parents and staff should understand that such arrangements are not within the course and scope of the staff member's job duties and that staff members are free to accept or reject such requests from parents.

### **Procedures for Complaints**

ELC staff members foster positive relationships by being proactive with parents. Families are encouraged to provide constructive suggestions for quality improvement throughout ELC sites. ELC Site Directors and the Executive Director are responsible for taking action to resolve complaints about the program.

The procedures for addressing concerns and resolving complaints are as follows:

If a complaint or concern is related to the conduct of a specific employee that matter must first be referred to the employee's supervisor. If the direct supervisor is not available the ELC Executive Director may be contacted.

If a complaint or concern is related to program policy or procedures the matter should be directed to the ELC Executive Director.

Complaints or concerns need to be made in writing and signed. Anonymous concerns or complaints will not be addressed.

- The follow-up process to respond to written complaints, concerns, or suggestions is:
- The Executive Director and Site Directors will review the information at weekly meetings.
- A written report from the Executive Director and sent to all involved parties.
- If the involved parties are dissatisfied with the response from the Executive Director, parties may request review by the CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows.

### **Civil Rights Complaints**

In accordance with federal law ELCs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, or disability. Staff members are trained in and abide by BGCTM affirmative action policies and procedures.

ELCs participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program. The USDA and the State of Nevada respond to concerns and complaints involving all USDA programs and activities. Anyone wishing to file a complaint may do so by writing a letter, submitting a form, or providing verbal notice to the sponsor, USDA, or State of Nevada in person or by telephone.

### **Confidentiality**

The privacy of the children and families at ELCs is respected at all times. Children and families are not to be discussed with anyone except in supervisory situations. Family information is safeguarded while in use and filed in locked file cabinets within not in use. Family contact information is kept in a location that is accessible to staff, yet secure enough to maintain the confidentiality of the information. Washoe County HSA Child Care Licensing staff and Washoe County District Health Department staff may access confidential family information upon request to ensure compliance with licensing and health regulations. All ELC sites are equipped with video cameras which are only viewed by ELC administrators. Video streams or recordings will not be released to parents.

## **The Role of Parents and Families**

### **Communication**

Communication with parents is essential to quality early care and education. Communication between parents and staff is carried out on a regular basis throughout the program year. Communication is

conducted in the parents' home language to the extent feasible. A variety of methods are utilized to share information with families including but not limited to

- Daily communication folders
- Child Portfolios
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Bulletin and whiteboards
- Newsletters
- Email bulletins and other correspondence
- Phone calls
- Brightwheel

### **Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement is valued by ELC staff and is crucial to children's school and academic success. Parents are welcome to visit any time. Children usually nap from 1:00 to 3:00 pm, which limits opportunities for parent involvement during those hours.

Parents are encouraged to participate and contribute to the success of their child and ELCs by:

- Completing child's developmental information on a regular basis through Ages and Stages Questionnaires; Ages and Stages Questionnaires-Social Emotional, and Brigance;
- Sharing personal interests such as hobbies, talents, music, favorite recipes, and family traditions;
- Donating approved materials to the school;
- Volunteering in the classroom or center by:
  - Working with children;
  - Participating in work days – clean up, painting, and maintenance of sites;
  - Housekeeping - classroom and kitchen clean up;
  - Working on things at home for the school – repairing books, making flannel board pieces, sewing;
- Completing surveys and evaluations geared toward program improvement;
- Providing information about their child(ren) informally through written and verbal communication with teachers and formally by attending parent-teacher conferences;
- Informing staff of concerns or asking about child development, curriculum, classroom management, or issues concerning the individual child(ren) or family circumstances;
- Attending parent meetings and trainings.

### **Special Events**

Class parties are held throughout the year and all children and families are welcome. Children who do not regularly attend on the day of the class party are welcome to attend when accompanied by a parent. Each classroom posts sign-up sheets so families are able to contribute to the event.

Children's birthday celebrations in classrooms must be pre-arranged with the teacher so that plans can be made for the treats. Any outside food or drink for parties MUST be store-bought and with the original packaging with ingredients listed. All sites are nut free, please be mindful when purchasing food or drinks for parties.

Troll and Scholastic book orders are offered throughout the year. Checks need to be made out to the respective company and turned in to site administrators. Online orders are encouraged.

### **Celebration of Holidays**

ELC staff understand and value holidays that reflect the cultural diversity represented in the classrooms. Parents are encouraged to propose the observance of holidays that reflect family background and values. The goals for appropriate classroom holiday observances are to validate children's experiences, make holiday activities fun and enjoyable, and promote connections among children and families. Parents should work with the teachers to plan celebrations.

### **Arrival and Departure**

Parents are asked to have their children arrive at the center by 9:00 am. Parents must call or message the admin team through Brightwheel by 9:00 am if child(ren) are not attending due to illness or for other reasons so that meals, staff, and activities can be planned appropriately.

Parents **MUST** call or message through Brightwheel by 9:00 am if the arrival time will be later than 9:00 am.

**Parents who bring children after 9:00 am without calling the center will not be accepted into care for the day.**

**Children may not be dropped off during lunch and naptime hours which are 11:00 am to 3:00 pm daily.**

Upon arrival parents must:

- Accompany children into the classroom. All non-enrolled children must remain with their parent to maintain ratios and group size regulations;
- Wash own and children's hands;
- Fill out the daily record for infants and toddlers;
- Make sure the teacher is aware of each child's arrival;
- Inform staff of any special information regarding the child including illness, loss of sleep, appetite, injuries, etc. that could affect a child's disposition;
- Sign child(ren) in on the Children's Cabinet timesheet and
- Sign in child(ren) on Brightwheel via QR code or Tablet.

**Siblings or other children must not be left unsupervised in vehicles.**

### **Separation**

Parents are encouraged to have a goodbye ritual that helps children learn to trust the parent will return. Sending your child to school with a smile, hug, and encouraging words can really set the tone for their day. Staff will comfort and reassure children; encourage children to talk about feelings; play out themes of separation and reunion; and provide parents with evidence such as photographs, that the child is

being cared for and is enjoying the activities of the day. Staff are available to work with parents to plan developmentally appropriate coping strategies to manage separations for use at home and the site.

### **Departures and Authorization for Pick-up**

Staff will only release children to authorized persons whose names appear on the enrollment form, the emergency contact form, on a written note from the parent, or on the Brightwheel app. Emergency contacts should be current at all times. Parents are responsible for keeping Brightwheel up to date with current authorization pick ups.

Staff are required to request identification from any unfamiliar person before the child will be released. Anyone who does not provide identification will be turned away.

The ELC policy of releasing children to authorized persons is applied as a daily routine, as well as during emergency or evacuation situations.

In the event an authorized adult picking up a child is suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the person will be discouraged from taking the child from the center, and other authorized adults such as emergency contacts for the child will be contacted. The person suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be informed that if s/he takes the child from the center, law enforcement will be immediately contacted.

### **Parking**

Parking lots are busy places during drop-off and pick-times. Please be aware that the speed limit is 10 mph. Please ensure children are holding the adult's hand or being carried by an adult when in the parking lot. Park in designated parking spots only. Parking curbside in front of the buildings in a non-designated parking spot, is not allowed.

**Siblings or other children must not be left unsupervised in vehicles.**

### **Children's Clothing and Belongings**

Children should come to school in comfortable and washable clothing. Children will be involved in painting, sensory play, and other messy play experiences, and clothes may get dirty or stained.

- Children should wear tennis shoes or other comfortable closed-toe shoes. Cowboy boots or open-toe shoes are not allowed for safety reasons. Parents can bring shoes similar to Crocs when a child is being potty trained.
- Each child will have a labeled space for belongings.
- Parents should leave two or three extra changes of clothing for infants and toddlers.
- Preschoolers should have at least one change of clothing.
- Children's clothing will be changed if soiled from eating or toileting accidents.
- Extra clothing should be changed seasonally or as the child grows. All clothing must be labeled with the child's first and last name.
- For children who are potty training, the child must have at least six changes of clothing with them at the site. If all six outfits have been used, a call to parents will be made. Parents must

bring in extra clothes within one hour of the phone call or a \$25 charge to their account will be made. Payment must be made before a child can return.

In accordance with Washoe County HSA Child Care Licensing regulations, parents must provide a blanket and fitted crib sheet for daily rest time. Blankets and sheets must be taken home and washed weekly. There is a \$5 per day fee for not bringing in blankets and/or sheets. All blankets and sheets must be labeled with the child's first and last name.

### **Children's Personal Belongings**

In Pre-K classrooms, Fridays are Show and Share day. Which is when children may bring in special toys that start with the letter of the week. **Toy firearms, knives, and swords are not allowed at any time.** All toys brought for Show and Share day must be labeled with the child's first and last name. Other than Show and Share day, toys or other items from home are not allowed. ELCs assume no responsibility for lost or damaged items. Toys from home are only allowed on Show and Share days.

### **Community Resource Referrals**

In order to support families, ELCs maintain a current list of community agencies that provide health, mental health, assessment, educational, and crisis intervention services (food, housing, clothing, etc.). Families are encouraged to talk with any ELC staff member at any time if interested in obtaining referrals to community agencies.

### **Children with Special Needs**

ELC teachers are available to participate in the development of a child's IFSP or IEP at the request of parents. Parents of children with disabilities should be involved in the process as much as they want to be and as much as they can be. The following are some ways in which parents can become involved:

- Before attending an IFSP or IEP meeting, make a list of things for the child to learn. Take notes about the child's behavior that could interfere with the learning process. Describe methods that have been found to be successful in dealing with these behaviors.
- Bring any information the school may not already have to the IFSP or IEP meeting. Examples include copies of medical records, past school records, or test or evaluation results. Parents are encouraged to provide real-life examples to demonstrate the child's abilities in certain areas.
- Find out what related services are being provided and ask each professional to describe the kind of service provided and what improvement is expected as a result of these services.
- Ask for activities that can be provided at home.
- Discuss methods for handling discipline problems that are effective with the child.

Parents have the right to ask for meetings with teachers, therapists, and other educational staff at any time. Parents with unresolved issues regarding children's education can ask for mediation from the State of Nevada Department of Education or a due process hearing.

### **Job Openings**

Vacant positions are listed on Indeed and the Boys and Girls Club website. Parents or family members are given preference for employment opportunities for which they are qualified.



## **Volunteering**

All parents are encouraged to volunteer. In addition to working directly with children, there are many other volunteer opportunities available. Teachers and administrators are available to discuss volunteering with parents. Volunteers are arranged through the Volunteer Coordinator at the Boys and Girls Club location.

In order to maintain high standards of care:

- All volunteers must be 14 years of age or older. Volunteers under the age of 18 must present written permission to volunteer from a parent/guardian along with other volunteer requirements.
- Volunteers must complete the volunteer packet.
- Regular volunteers who are present more than 15 hours per week must get a TB test.
- All volunteers must complete time sheets.
- Volunteers will never be left alone with children.

Volunteers must abide by the Volunteer Code of Conduct:

- To respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family, and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.
- To follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other staff members. Confidentiality is mandatory. Volunteers are expected to maintain a professional attitude and observe the ethics of working in an early childhood education environment. The privacy of the children and families is to be respected at all times. Children and families are not to be discussed with anyone except in supervisory situations.
- That no child will be left alone or unsupervised while under a volunteer's care.
- To use positive methods of child guidance, never engaging in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation, or employing methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

## **Classroom Policies and Procedures**

### **Curriculum**

ELCs believe play is at the center of learning. The ELC curriculum is designed to meet the individual needs of all children. ELC curriculum focuses on investigation, curiosity, discovery by play, and social interaction. ELC curriculum has two parts 1) a Weekly Curriculum sheet and 2) a Weekly Standard Goals.

- Teachers are responsible for creating and providing curriculum every Thursday.
- Teachers are required to attend curriculum training assigned by their Site Director.
- Teachers are required to follow site Pre-K standards on their Standard Goals.
- Teachers are required to follow their curriculum daily.

### **Staffing, Ratios, and Group Size**

Staff-to-child ratios must be maintained at all times.

- 1 staff person to 4 infants (0-9 months)
- 1 staff person to 6 young toddlers (9-18 months)
- 1 staff person to 6 older toddlers (18-24 months)
- 1 staff person to 9 two-year-olds (24-36 months)
- 1 staff person to 12 preschoolers (36-48 months)
- 1 staff person to 13 Pre-K children (48 months and above)

### **Guidance and Discipline**

ELC uses a trauma-informed and evidence-based discipline policy based on Conscious Discipline and the Pyramid Model for Social and Emotional Learning. Early Learning Centers focus on teaching children self-regulation skills such as impulse control, empathy, communicating wants and needs appropriately, following directions, and asking for help. The ELCs develop school communities where children, families, and staff share common beliefs and values about relationships and learning. All staff at the ELCs are given extensive training on Conscious Discipline throughout the year.

Some strategies used to promote self-regulation skills are:

- Being at a child's eye level when talking to him or her. This helps form relationships with children and helps children focus.
- Saying a child's name before talking to him or her. This will increase the chances that the child will listen by 80%.
- Telling children what they can do. (Your feet need to be on the floor. You need to go potty and then you can play. You can climb over here. Use gentle hands, please). These positive statements let children know the boundaries.
- Giving children choices. ("You can play with blocks or do art." "It is time to wash hands. Do you want to walk by yourself or hold my hand?" "You can sit here or here." **The choices must be attractive to the child and acceptable to the adult.** Choices help children form brain connections for making decisions and help children understand boundaries.
- Acknowledging a child's emotions. "You're frustrated because you wanted the phone."
- Using solutions kits placed in various areas of the classroom to help children choose acceptable activities.
- Acknowledging that all behavior is a communication. The messages behind behaviors mean: Am I safe? Do I matter? Do I belong? Can I trust that you help me when I need it?
- Using redirection to help young children make good choices. For infants and toddlers who want the same toy, say, "You can play with this truck or you can play with puzzles."

The following punishments are prohibited by Washoe County Child Care Licensing regulations and are never used at ELCs:

- Inflicting physical punishment in any manner or form, including but not limited to shaking any child.
- Verbally abusing or threatening a child
- Making derogatory reports about the child or family.
- Threatening a child with loss of love of any person.
- Threatening a child with punishment by a deity.
- Subjecting a child to any form of punishment which pertains to food, rest, or restriction the use of toileting or other bathroom fixtures.
- Subjecting a child to any form of punishment by other children.
- Physically restraining a child by means of an implement or device.
- Leaving child(ren) unattended for any amount of time, on the playground or in the classroom.

Employees must seek help from management as soon as a situation becomes too much to handle safely. If a child's behavior is impeding the learning of the other children in the classroom, the Site Director or Behavioral Specialist must be contacted. If the behavior continues after the intervention, the Behavior Specialist can be requested to observe by completing the Request for Classroom Observation/Training form.

### **Addressing Behavior Challenges**

When a child exhibits a problem behavior on a continual basis that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, the teachers will meet with the Site Director, Behavioral Health Specialist, and Education and Training Coordinator to document the problem behavior and ask for further guidance.

If the behavior problem is still not resolved, the teacher will request a meeting with the child's parents to discuss the problem behavior. The staff and parents will collaborate on the development of strategies to resolve the problem behavior. During this process, the teacher will keep the Site Director and child's parents informed of progress in resolving the behavior problem. Teachers will provide information to the parents in written form with copies kept in the child's file. If a child's behavior results in an injury to another child or staff member, the child's parents will be notified as soon as possible and written documentation of the incident will be provided to the parents and placed in the child's file.

If the staff feel they need further assistance in resolving the behavior problem, the program may, with parental permission, request the assistance of an outside consultant. If the center staff believe the problem may be a result of a special need, the program may, with parental permission, refer the child for evaluation. If parental permission is refused and the problem behavior continues, the continued enrollment of the child will be reconsidered as described below.

If the results of an outside evaluation suggest the need for accommodations for special needs, the program will provide these or other appropriate accommodations as long as they are not an undue hardship to the program as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

If the above steps fail to resolve the behavior problem, the program may ask parents to obtain care for the child at another center. The program will provide the parents four weeks' notice, except where such

notice is not reasonable because of safety concerns, and will try to assist parents in obtaining alternative care.

Written documentation of the above steps will be provided to the parents and placed in the child's file.

### **Biting**

Biting is developmentally appropriate for infants and toddlers. Children bite for many reasons including teething, lack of communication skills in toddlers, and exploration with infants since taste is one of the best-developed senses. Biting with infants and toddlers is addressed through prevention. Prevention techniques such as teethers, frozen wet washcloths, varying snack textures, and using sign language as well as words to facilitate communication are effective strategies. These strategies, in addition to ensuring the child who bites is always with a teacher, helps eliminate biting.

For a child older than age two who is biting the key is to determine why the child is biting and address those issues. Often, an older child who bites does not have the communication and/or social skills to interact in appropriate ways with others. Focused teaching of communication and social skills such as visual cue cards depicting typical wants and needs in a classroom setting (eating, drinking, potty, outside, etc.) and emotions cards so children can let others know how they are feeling prevents biting. In addition, having a primary caregiver with whom the child who is biting feels safe, and a quiet area where a child can go when overwhelmed, helps prevent biting.

At the Early Learning Centers we strive to provide children with environments where everyone feels safe, happy, included, and respected. In order to maintain these standards the following policies apply when biting occurs:

Parents who have a child that bites will be notified via telephone as soon as possible after the biting incident.

The Director or the Behavioral Health Specialist will meet with the teacher regarding the biting incident to determine the next steps for intervention and prevention.

If a child bites twice in one day a documentation log will begin immediately, noting the date, time, and circumstances of the bites. The log will be reviewed at the end of the day by the Director or Behavioral Health Specialist to determine the next steps for intervention and prevention.

Parents who have a child that bites two or more times in a day will be called letting them know if their child bites again, they will need to be picked up until further evaluation of the circumstances and environment can be evaluated. The child must be picked up within an hour of the phone notification of the bite. A child who is not picked up within one hour will not be allowed to return to school the following day.

A conference with the parents of the child who is biting will be scheduled within 24 hours of the biting incident. A detailed plan to prevent biting will be developed at the conference and implemented at home and at school. The plan will be reviewed for effectiveness weekly for four weeks. The plan may include referrals for further evaluation from outside agencies.

If the child does not show significant improvement by the end of the four weeks, the Director has the right to terminate enrollment.

Written documentation of the above steps will be provided to the parents and placed in the child’s file.

**Outdoor Play**













Outdoor play is critical for young children. Many of the developmental tasks that children must attain – exploring, risk-taking, fine and gross motor development, and social skills – can be most effectively learned through outdoor play. Outdoor play is enjoyed all year long at ELCs regardless of the weather.

**50 degrees and above:** Children can make the choice to wear a jacket.

**45-50 degrees:** Children must wear a long sleeve shirt and bring coats outside (children’s choice to wear coats).

**30-40 degrees:** Children must wear a winter jacket, hat, and mittens or gloves.

**Below 30 degrees and snowy:** Children must wear a full set of snow gear which is a winter jacket, snow pants, hat, mittens or gloves, and boots.

Morning Temperature	On Top	On Bottom	And...
60 degrees or warmer			
45-60 degrees			
35 – 45 degrees (2 layers)			 Fall or winter coat & a hat
Below 35 degrees (2 layers) 			 Warm coat, hat & gloves

Children of all ages go outside regardless of the weather. Children who are walking (typically 9 months and up) need to be brought to school with close-toed shoes every day.

**Animals in the Classroom**

Animals may be kept in classrooms to provide learning opportunities for children.

- All pets shall be cared for as recommended by the regulatory health agency (Washoe County District Health Department).
- If a child with known allergies to animals is enrolled, animals may not be kept in the same classroom as the child.

Reptiles, cats, dogs, ferrets, turtles, and birds of the parrot family are not allowed as pets in any classroom. These types of animals may visit for brief periods of time as part of the curriculum and will be closely supervised. Visiting animals must be current on all appropriate immunizations. Permission from the Executive Director must be given prior to the animal coming to any Early Learning Center location.

Wild, dangerous, or exotic animals are not allowed in any ELC classroom.

Certified Service animals are welcome.

### **Infant Classroom Health and Safety Practices**

#### **Shoes**

When entering infant rooms, (Tumbleweeds) adults are asked to remove or cover their street shoes. Removing shoes decreases the amount of dirt and debris that is tracked in and helps prevent injury should an adult step on a child's fingers or toes.

#### **Bathing**

Children are not routinely bathed at the sites. However, children who have been involved in extremely messy play or who have soiled themselves outside the diaper area may be bathed. A mild liquid soap formulated for babies will be used unless parents have instructed staff otherwise. Soiled clothing will be wrapped in a plastic bag and placed in the child's cubby for laundering at home.

#### **Safe Sleep Policy**

Infant room staff will assure that infants who have not reached 18 months of age are always placed on their backs for sleep.

- Infants who are able to turn over from front to back and back to front will be placed on their backs for sleep but may then choose their own sleeping positions (usually age six months or later).
- Positioning devices that restrict the infant's movement in the crib will not be used.
- Infants are not swaddled. Only sleep sacks may be used.
- All infants will sleep in cribs. Car seats, swings, and infant seats are not designed for safe sleep.

ELC cribs meet the requirements of Washoe County HSA Child Care Licensing regulations. Safety checks of cribs are conducted each week to assure that crib frames:

- Are solid and mattress supports are secure;
- Have no loose, missing, or broken hardware;
- Have no cracked or peeling paint;
- Have no splinters or rough edges;

- Have drop-side latches work properly and that latches securely hold the sides of the crib with raise;
- Hold the mattress snugly in the crib frame and is covered with a tightly fitted sheet;
- Have no bumper pads, pillows, soft toys, fleece cushions, or thick blankets inside the crib; and
- Have no items strung from one side of the crib to the other.

### **Rest Time**

- All children at ELC for more than 5 hours per day must take a rest period.
- Each child has his/her own cot that has been labeled on both ends with his/her name.
- Parents provide the child's nap sheet and blanket each Monday, which must be sent home each Friday to be washed.
- Parents are asked to put their child's sheet and blanket in a black bag labeled with the child's name for the week.
- Pillows and stuffed animals are not allowed during rest. This is to reduce the chances of lice spreading.
- Sleeping bags are not allowed for nap time.

### **Transitions**

ELC staff understand the transitions to new classroom environments can be stressful for young children. Therefore, transitions are carefully planned for children and families.

Children between the ages of birth and two-years-old are moved to the next classroom when parents and teachers decide together when the child(ren) are developmentally ready.

Children between two and three years of age remain in their kindergarten age cohort and are moved to new classrooms in August of each year to coincide with Washoe County School District requirements.

### **Diapering**

According to Washoe County Childcare Licensing, children must be changed at least every two hours. Even if their diaper is dry, proper diapering procedures must be followed and a new diaper must be put on the child.

Any child in a diapering class must have a current Daily Diaper Log posted with his/her name on it. The log must show that the child was changed when he/she arrived and at least every two hours after. Diaper changes are recorded through the Brightwheel app and sent to parents at the end of the day.

Parents provide diapers. ELCs provide wipes. If a child is allergic to the wipes provided by the ELC, parents must supply the wipes for their child(ren) and have a note from the physician.

### **Toilet Learning**

Children between 24 and 30 months are encouraged to start learning to use the toilet independently. A child who is three years of age and older must be fully potty trained to attend the ELCs.

Readiness signs include:

- Interest in watching other people toilet;
- Ability to stay dry for two or more hours;
- Waking up from nap with a dry diaper;
- Pooping on a predictable schedule;
- Letting adults know when diapers are wet or dirty;

- Ability to follow basic directions, understands the words “pee” and “poop;”
- Verbally lets adults know when needing to pee or poop; and
- Ability to pull pants up and down independently; and
- Ability to get up and down from the toilet independently.

When the signs for toilet readiness are present, staff will make it convenient for the child to use the toilet and provide help as needed. Potty chairs are not used at ELCs. Parents will be asked to support toilet learning by dressing the child in loose fitting clothing that the child and teacher can easily remove. Teachers are available and helpful with toilet learning however, teachers do not hover or push children to the toilet independently. Teachers will never force a child to remain on the toilet or punish a child for wetting or soiling clothing.

Diapers and Pull-ups are **not** used during the toilet learning process.

### **Developmental Screening Tools**

Developmental screening tools are designed to inform teachers, parents, and administrators if children are developing as expected. Data gathered through developmental screens drive curriculum, impact teaching methods, and help make decisions about the need for further developmental evaluations. ELCs use three tools for developmental screening, 1) Ages and Stages Questionnaires, 2) Ages and Stages Questionnaires-Social Emotional, and 3) Brigance. Each screening tool covers development from birth through age 5.

Ages and Stages Questionnaires: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 42, 48, and 60 months.

Ages and Stages Questionnaires-Social Emotional: 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36, 42, 48, 54, 60 months.

Brigance: August, May. (Pre-k is done August, January, May.)

Results are reviewed by Lead Teachers. Results on any developmental screen that fall outside of the range for typical development are brought to the attention of the Site Program Quality Team Member. The Program Quality Team Member and the Site Director review the results and make decisions about further steps for evaluation.

### **Referrals**

Parents who have concerns about a child’s development may meet with the teacher, or Site Director. Screening results may raise a concern about a child’s development that may indicate further evaluation is needed. If there is a need for further evaluation, program staff will meet with parents to discuss possible referrals for appropriate evaluation and services.

## **Health, Safety and Nutrition**



### **Hand Washing**

Hand washing is the most effective way to reduce disease and the spread of germs. The importance of frequent hand washing by adults and children cannot be over-emphasized. Children's hygiene habits will be encouraged and guided by teachers while at the site. Children's hands and faces will be washed as needed.

Parents and children are required to wash their hands when arriving in the classroom. Hand washing procedures are posted in each classroom.

### **Cleaning and Sanitizing**

Staff protect themselves and the children by conducting good cleaning and sanitizing procedures on a routine basis. These procedures of infection control are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms from both recognized and unrecognized sources of infection. Household chlorine bleach mixed with water in accordance with Washoe County District Health Department recommendations is the sanitation agent used at all ELC sites to help reduce disease and the spread of germs.

### **Immunizations**

State law requires that children must be up to date on immunizations in order to attend child care. Should a child become past due for immunizations, the child will be excluded from care until proof of immunizations has been provided to the ELC or documentation that an appointment has been made to catch up. Family must follow through with the appointment or the child can not attend until after immunizations have been done.

Children without proper immunizations will not be enrolled in ELC sites. No exemptions of any kind are accepted.

### **Inclusion and Exclusion of Sick Children**

The following guidelines from Washoe County HSA Child Care Licensing and Washoe County District Health Department determine when children must be excluded from care:

- Fever over:      Oral – 101.0 degrees                      Axillary – 100.0 degrees
- Infectious Rhinitis, i.e., colored nasal discharge or nasal congestion associated with a cough or fever.
- Vomiting, regardless of the reason.
- Conjunctivitis – Pink eye or thick discolored drainage from the eye.
- Cough associated with a respiratory infection.
- Skin rash and/or skin eruptions of unknown origin.
- Parasites such as nits, lice, crabs, etc.
- Diarrhea – change in consistency, frequency, color, or odor of stool that is uncontainable.
- Children's allergies that result in a runny nose or red eyes must be documented in writing by the child's physician.

Parents will be notified immediately if children become ill at school. Parents must pick up the sick child within 1 hour of notification. Late pick up fees will apply if child(ren) are not picked within one hour. Children who exhibit any of the above symptoms may not return to care until symptom free for 48 hours.

### **Medication Administration**

Prescription medication is only administered by designated ELC staff. Parents should provide medication in its original container with the child's name and dosage to the Site Director or Assistant Director only. Over-the-counter medication is not administered at school unless accompanied by a written request from the physician and written permission from the parents. A form for medication administration may be obtained from the Site Director or Assistant Director. The medication administration form must be on file prior to any medications being administered at school.

Medication should not be left in children's backpacks or diaper bags. Teachers may not accept any medications from parents.

Topical over-the-counter creams or ointments do not require a note from the physician and may be administered with parent permission and a current medication administration form completed by the parent.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

All staff are trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect. All staff are mandated by Nevada Revised Statutes to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the child protective services agency or law enforcement. Washoe County HSA Child Care Licensing regulations require staff in early care and education settings to report suspected abuse or neglect within one hour.

### **Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs**

Smoking is prohibited in all ELC buildings or on any ELC property at any time. The use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol is prohibited at all ELC sites.

### **Child Nutrition**

Group meals are not just times for children to eat but also important social events. Young children are in the process of developing lifelong attitudes toward food and the experience of eating. Children feel competent when they are allowed to decide what, when, and how much to eat. In a relaxed setting, children form positive attitudes about eating and learn vital skills.

ELCs participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks provide a variety of foods that broaden children's food experiences. Children are encouraged but not forced to eat or taste food.

Children and teachers eat meals and snacks family style, with the exception of infants and very young children who require adults to feed them. Toddlers are encouraged to hold and drink from a cup, to use a spoon, and to use their fingers for self-feeding. Sufficient time is allowed for each child to eat with extra assistance and time provided for slow eaters to ensure an enjoyable eating experience.

Mealtimes with children are not a time to worry about mess. Exploring food is often as important as eating. Children should be encouraged to use utensils when developmentally appropriate.

ELCs follow meal pattern guidelines from the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Menus are posted at each site and through the Brightwheel app.

Whole milk is provided until age two, after which low fat (1%) milk is served. Drinking water is readily available and offered to children throughout the day.

### **Food Allergies**

BGCTM provides all meals for the ELCs and makes an efforts to accommodate allergies. Each child with an allergy shall have:

- Written instructions regarding the child's allergic condition and steps that need to be taken to avoid that food or substance;
- Written description of specific symptoms that would indicate an allergic reaction; and
- A detailed treatment plan to be implemented in the event of an allergic reaction, including the names, doses, and methods of administration of any medications.
- With parent's permission, children's food allergies are posted prominently in the classroom and/or wherever food is prepared and served.
- Staff will notify parents of any suspected allergic reactions, the ingestion of the problem food, or contact with the problem food, even if a reaction did not occur.

Parents who have children with food allergies are asked the following:

- Obtain a copy of the scheduled menus for home reference.
- Carefully determine the items your child is able to safely eat.
- Ask for assistance regarding specific ingredients.

Milk substitutes may be provided for documented milk allergies only. Water is served at all snacks and meals.

All ELC sites are peanut free. Product labels for items sent from home must be checked for ingredients to ensure peanuts in any form are not an ingredient.

Medically based diets or other dietary requirements must be discussed and approved by the Site Director and Executive Director prior to enrollment to determine if accommodations can be made by the ELC.

If new allergies arise while attending the ELCs, a meeting must be set to discuss them.

ELCs eat family style which means the older classrooms serve themselves and they all eat together. Precautions are made so that children are eating off their own plate.

### **Infant-Toddler Nutrition**

Infants are fed on demand, and toddlers move toward regular meal times unless otherwise instructed in writing by the child's parent and/or health care provider. Demand feeding meets the infant's nutritional and emotional needs and provides an immediate response to the infant, which helps ensure trust and feelings of security. Information regarding a child's feeding is recorded othrough the Brightwheel app.

### **Breast Fed Children**

Breast feeding is encouraged and supported by ELC staff. Mothers who breastfeed are encouraged to come and breast feed in the child's classroom at any time during the day. If expressed breast milk is provided for staff to feed the baby, the following procedures are followed:

- The breast milk is stored in ready-to-feed sanitary containers and must be labeled with the infant’s name and date.
- Breast milk should be placed in the refrigerator or freezer immediately upon arrival.
- Refrigerated breast milk must be used within 48 hours.
- Frozen breast milk must be used within 3 months.
- Expressed breast milk must be discarded if it has been unrefrigerated for an hour or more, or if it is in a bottle that has been fed to the infant over a period that exceeds an hour from the beginning of the feeding.
- Frozen breast milk should be thawed in the refrigerator or under cold running water.

**Bottle Feeding**

Bottles must be labeled with the child’s name, date prepared, time, number of ounces, and labeled if it is breastmilk or formula.

Children will be held when being bottle fed.

Propping bottles is prohibited.

ELCs provide all types of Parent’s Choice formula.

If another brand of formula is desired, the formula must be provided by the parents

**Infant Feeding Guidelines**

	<b>Food Components</b>	<b>0-5 mo.</b>	<b>6-11 mo.</b>
<b>breakfast</b>	iron Fortified Formula or Breastmilk	4-6 fluid oz.	6-8 fluid oz.
	Infant Cereal or meat, or fish, or poultry, or whole egg or cooked dry beans or cooked dry peas or cheese or cottage cheese or yogurt or combination of above		0-4 tbsp. 0-4 tbsp. 0-4 tbsp. 0- 2oz 0-4oz ½ cup
	Fruit or vegetable or both		0-2 tbsp.
<b>Lunch</b>	Iron Fortified Formula or Breastmilk	4-6 fluid oz.	6-8 fluid oz.

	Infant Cereal or meat, or fish, or poultry, or whole egg or cooked dry beans or cooked dry peas or cheese or cottage cheese or yogurt or combination of above		0-4 tbsp. 0-4 tbsp. 0-4 tbsp. 0- 2oz 0-4oz ½ cup
	Fruit or vegetable or both		0-2 tbsp.
Snack	Iron Fortified Formula or Breastmilk	4-6 fluid oz.	2-4 fluid oz.
	<u>Grain</u> slice of bread crackers Infant cereal or ready to eat breakfast cereal		1-1/2 slice bread crackers 0-4 tbsp. 0-
	Fruit or vegetable or both		0-2 tbsp.

**School Closings and or Community Emergencies**

In cases of weather ELC sites will close only when authorized by the ELC Executive Director. Closure notifications will be sent through the Brightwheel app.

ELC sites DO NOT follow closures issued by Washoe County School District.

Site administrators will contact parents of closures via Brightwheel, phone calls, texts, emails, and voice messages from the Site.

**Minor Injuries and Accidents**

In case of minor injury staff will perform routine hygienic measures such as washing wounds and applying bandages. An Accident Report Form will be used to document minor injuries. Parents will receive an incident report through Brightwheel, paper copies are no longer given.

**Medical Emergencies**

In case of a medical emergency:

- First aid will be administered (all staff are trained in First Aid and CPR)
- 911 will be called if necessary
- The parent or emergency contact will be notified as soon as practical.

- A staff member will accompany a child who must be transported to a medical facility if the parent is not on scene.
- All actions will be documented on the Accident Report form.
- Parents are responsible for all costs incurred for treatment of an injury or illness occurring at the site. ELCs have insurance that can be utilized to cover expenses not covered by the parent's insurance.

### **Allergies and Chronic Medical Conditions**

Any child with an allergy or medical condition will have:

- Written instructions regarding the child's allergic/medical condition and steps that need to be taken to avoid that food or substance;
- Written descriptions of specific symptoms that would indicate an allergic reaction;
- A detailed treatment plan to be implemented in the event of any allergic reactions, including the names, doses, methods of administration of any medications.
- Treatment plans are kept in individual classrooms.

**Questions about Policies and Procedures can be addressed with the Site Director.**

**Employer Identification Number: 880142068**

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