

# Scholars' Academy

268 Capuchin Way  
Orange, New Jersey 07050  
Phone (973) 677-4000 Ext. 1801  
[www.orange.k12.nj.us](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us)



Student/Parent  
Preschool Handbook

Mrs. Karen Machuca  
Principal

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**“GOOD TO GREAT”**

Revised: 8/17/21

## **Vision**

“The Orange Public School District commits to provide a safe and caring environment where each student is expected to grow and succeed. We pledge to prepare all students with equitable opportunities for college and career readiness, leading to lifelong learning and responsible citizenship in a competitive global community.”

## ***Orange Public Schools Mission Statement***

- The Orange Public School District in collaboration with all stakeholders is responsible for promoting the academic, social, emotional and personal success of all students.
- With a commitment to academic excellence, the District provides teachers, families, and administrators the tools needed for all students to reach their full potential.
- The District serves all students in our school, acknowledging their unique backgrounds, cultural perspectives and learning styles.
- The District recognizes that curiosity, discipline, integrity, responsibility and respect are necessary for success.
- The Orange School District cultivates a community of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners where students take ownership of the learning process, achieve high standards of excellence, and focus on academics.

**“Good to Great!”**



Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the Scholars' Academy family! The Scholars' Academy staff is committed to providing children with a safe and stimulating learning environment that will enable them to excel academically and socially.

This handbook contains basic policies and procedures necessary to maintain a school climate conducive to teaching and learning.

It is the responsibility of all families to read this handbook, follow the guidelines, and keep it available for future reference. Our policies and procedures are designed to ensure that children have a positive educational experience at Scholars' Academy.

You will also see that we use the **lighthouse** as a symbol for Scholars' Academy as we believe that all students shine brightly as we all work together to navigate the seas of education!

Please follow us on Social Media:

Facebook--Orange Public Schools

Twitter--SAcademy268 #GoodtoGreat #GoScholarsNJ

Wanting the Best for Your Child,

Mrs. Machuca  
Principal

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# **PROGRAM DESIGN: PRESCHOOL**

**PROGRAM DESIGN:** The State of New Jersey supports full day/full year education for all three and four year old children in specific school districts. The Orange Township Public Schools offers a FREE six hour educational program in our district's public schools as well as the neighborhood childcare facilities. Before and aftercare services are available as well, however, there are associated costs, please see page 11 (Before & Aftercare) for additional information. This mixed delivery system allows families greater flexibility in choosing the school/center that works best for the family. However, placement at the schools/centers is on a first come first basis. Every effort is made to place your child at your school of choice. If there is no space at the school of your choice at the time of registration, we will work diligently to place your child at a school/center of your second choice. Your child will then be placed on a transfer waiting list for the first choice school and you will be notified as to when space becomes available.

- Transportation – There is no transportation provided; however, preschoolers identified as preschool disabled are eligible for transportation services provided by the district's Department of Special Services.
- Potty Training – Your child does not need to be potty trained to begin school. Teachers will work with families to assist with this process. If your child is not yet potty trained, you must provide at least three clean complete changes of clothing at all times. You must also provide the diapers and wipes needed.
- Uniforms – They are optional in district preschool classrooms. Some of our private providers do require uniforms. If your child attends a site that requires uniforms, you will receive information about what your child should wear to school from the Director. Refer to additional information regarding clothing in this handbook.

**SUPPORT STAFF:** Besides the instructional staff, the preschool department has support staff to assist with the implementation of the program. The support staff includes:

Fiscal Specialist – is responsible for monitoring each contracting private provider and/or Head Start agency for compliance with the preschool program contract; track and report teacher certification information; 8 monitor expenses and review quarterly expenditure reports and provide financial management assistance to contracting private providers and Head Start in developing and monitoring their annual budgets.

Teacher Coaches – they work directly with the instructional staff and they model, coach, informally observe using structured observation instruments and provide feedback to teachers to assist with the implementation of the comprehensive curriculum and the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialists (PIRS) – they work directly with the instructional staff to deliver preschool age-appropriate services designed to decrease referrals to special education and to maximize general education classroom teachers' ability to support all students. They visit classrooms to observe, model, provide feedback and make recommendations about appropriate strategies, classroom modifications and the selection of adaptive materials to address the needs of children with challenging behaviors or potential learning difficulties.

Social Workers and School Counselors– they collaborate with all relevant preschool instructional staff, administrators and support personnel to support the school district family services program. They also coordinate resources for families, review child needs, and provide parent involvement programs to help parents learn how to support their child’s learning.

Community Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) – this person is responsible for coordinating the Preschool through Grade 3 Early Childhood Advisory Council which reviews the implementation of the preschool program and supports transition as children move from preschool through grade three.

Nurse – are responsible for the basic health services for all enrolled preschool children. These services include but are not limited to: vision, hearing, dental, height and weight screenings, maintenance of records pertaining to immunizations, physical examinations and other records. They also provide family education and communication that are designed to meet the health and social service needs of the children.

**ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES:** children must be 3 years old or 4 years old by October 1st of the current school year and all families must reside in the city of Orange. Preschool registration is held throughout the school year. Please call the Orange Early Childhood Center for dates and times: 973-677-4000 ext. 1904, 1918 or 1903. The following is required at the time of registration:

- A current lease, mortgage statement, deed, water bill, tax bill.
- Two additional proof of residency: i.e. utility bill, bank statement, cable bill, current driver’s license, or current car insurance card, or current car registration, current pay stub, medical insurance bill, and state benefit statement or public assistance document.
- Birth certificate (original)
- Child's immunization record

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **“Home Page” and Updated Contact Communication:**

Consistent communication enables all members of the school community to stay updated with the educational journey of students. All staff members have a website for communication and updates about their classroom. Please visit <http://www.orange.k12.nj.us/domain/1625> for the announcements, calendar updates, and a wealth of information to assist with your child(ren)’s education. Please ensure that your email and phone numbers are up-to-date! It is extremely important that phone numbers are updated, and are valid numbers. Phone blasts and emails are used to provide information to parents.

**Should a phone number change, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the new numbers to the office and to the Homeroom teacher as well. Emergency phone numbers must be provided for all students.** Parents are required to sign up for ClassDojo as well for school communication!

### **School Information:**

**Address:** 268 Capuchin Way Orange, NJ 07050



**Phone number:** 973-677-4000 Ext. 1801 Main Office

**Fax:** 973-678-6956

**HOURS OF OPERATION:** The preschool program hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Monday through Friday. However, the classroom doors will open at 8:15 a.m. in order for the children to begin breakfast and be ready to begin their day at 8:30 a.m.

Early dismissal is promptly at 12:30 p.m. Please note on early dismissal days, no lunch is served; only breakfast. Reminder notices will be sent home in a timely manner, phone blasts, posts on the website and ClassDojo, and posted notices within the building and in the classrooms when there is an early dismissal day.

**District and School Calendars:** The district calendar is available on the district website at [www.orange.k12.nj.us](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us). Our school calendars will be published monthly and provided to all students as well as available on our school website. It is important that our parents and students keep both posted in a safe area and reference them on a regular basis to ensure you are aware of school events and closings. **Parents are expected to sign up for ClassDojo as this is another daily communication we use to keep parents informed. Specific information about how to join Scholars' Academy will be distributed from the classroom teachers.**

 <b>Orange Township Public School District – 2021-2022 Calendar</b> Gerald Fitzhugh II, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools Revised 07132021																																																																																														
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The calendar includes 188 contractual certificated staff days and 183 contractual contact student days. There are 3 snow days or emergency closing days built into this calendar. Should the District use more than 3 emergency closing days the days will be used at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools

OEA Day 12:30 Dismiss Students △ Parent Conf Prek-7 12:30pm Dismissal Parent Conf. GC 12 12:30pm Dismissal District 12:30 pm Dismissal

<b>SCHOOL</b> OHS 8:05 am OFA 8:05 am STEM 8:20 am Elementary 8:15 am Twilight Program 2:00 pm	<b>STAFF</b> 8:05 am 8:05 am 8:20 am 8:15 am 2:00 pm	<b>SCHOOL HOURS</b> <b>STUDENTS</b> 8:20 am – 3:25 pm 8:20 am – 3:15 pm 8:20 am – 3:30 pm 8:30 am – 3:20 pm 2:30 pm – 8:00 pm	ZERO period & College Block will be 7:30 am – 8:15 am ZERO period & College Block will be 7:30 am – 8:15 am
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**Orange Township Public School District  
2021-2022  
Interim & Marking Period Report Card  
Grade Posting Window Schedule  
as of August 2, 2022**

<b>Reporting Period</b>	<b>Marking Period End Date</b>	<b>Posting Window Opened</b>	<b>Posting Window Closed</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
<i>Interim Report Card 1</i>	<i>Thursday 10/7/21</i>	<i>Thursday 9/30/21</i>	<i>Wednesday 10/13/21 4:00pm</i>	<i>Thursday 10/14/21 End of Day</i>
<b>MP1 Report Card</b>	<b>Friday 11/12/21</b>	<b>Friday 11/5/21</b>	<b>Friday 11/19/21 4:00pm</b>	<b>Conferences</b> <b>(PreK-7) 11/22/21 5:30-7:30</b> <b>(8-12) 11/23/21 5:30-7:30</b>
<i>Interim Report Card 2</i>	<i>Thursday 12/16/21</i>	<i>Tuesday 12/7/21</i>	<i>Wednesday 12/22/21 4:00pm</i>	<i>Thursday 12/23/21 End of Day</i>
<b>MP2 Report Card</b>	<b>Thursday 1/27/22</b>	<b>Thursday 1/20/22</b>	<b>Friday 2/4/22 4:00pm</b>	<b>Conferences</b> <b>(PreK-7) 2/7/22 5:30-7:30</b> <b>(PreK-7) 2/8/22 1:15-4:00</b> <b>(8-12) 2/9/22 1:15-4:00</b> <b>(8-12) 2/10/22 5:30-7:30</b>
<i>Interim Report Card 3</i>	<i>Tuesday 3/8/22</i>	<i>Monday 2/28/22</i>	<i>Wednesday 3/15/22 4:00pm</i>	<i>Thursday 3/16/22 End of Day</i>
<b>MP3 Report Card</b>	<b>Monday 4/11/22</b>	<b>Monday 4/4/22</b>	<b>Wednesday 4/13/22 4:00pm</b>	<b>Thursday 4/14/22 End of Day</b>
<i>Interim Report Card 4</i>	<i>Friday 5/20/22</i>	<i>Wednesday 5/11/22</i>	<i>Thursday 5/26/22 4:00pm</i>	<i>Friday 5/27/22 End of Day</i>
<b>MP4 Report Card</b>	<b>Wednesday 6/22/22</b>	<b>Wednesday 6/15/22</b>	<b>Thursday 6/23/22 3:00pm</b>	<b>Friday 6/24/22 12:30 PM</b>

**\*Dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools\***

**ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE:** Arrival and departure are busy times during a school day; therefore, parents are asked to walk their children to their classroom and sign them in each day.

Upon arrival it is very important to follow the morning classroom routine every day. This provides your child with a sense of security. The school must be able to contact you at all times. At the time you sign in, please provide a working phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency. If there are any changes to your address and phone numbers please notify the school social worker or counselor immediately. Also please keep teachers informed about your child's health, mood, eating habits, family situation, or anything you think might affect your child's behavior at school. When it is time for the person dropping the child off to go, tell the child you are leaving, and say, "Good-bye". If your child is having difficulty separating, signal a teacher for assistance. Feel free to call us later if your child is upset when you leave, and we will let you know how he or she is doing.

Departing the school is very important. Children will only be released to parents and authorized individuals whom the parents have included on their emergency pick up cards. Parents are encouraged to include on their emergency cards the full names of all individuals that will be allowed to pick up their child. No phone calls will be accepted from parents informing us that someone that is not on the emergency card will be picking up the child. All individuals picking up children must have a picture ID available to show the teacher if it's their first time picking up the child (the name on the emergency

card must match the name of the ID). Please note that we are not allowed to release the children to anyone who is not on the authorized pick up list or anyone under 12 years of age.

## **REMEMBER!**

### **Drop-Off and Pick Up Procedures**

- All children must be accompanied by an adult to their classroom.
- The adult will sign the child into the classroom.
- For pick up, the adult **MUST** be an approved pick up person on the Authorized form by the parent.
- All adults need to have a valid photo ID for pick up and the name must match the name on file given by the parent.
- If all elements are not verified, the child will **NOT** be allowed to leave until the parent or guardian picks up the child.

**ATTENDANCE & TARDINESS:** In order for children to obtain the full benefits of the program and reach their greatest potential, it is important for them to engage in the learning process whether virtual or face to face. If our child is absent, please call the school. If your child is absent more than three consecutive days due to illness, you must provide the school with a note from the doctor. Attendance is equally important during virtual learning. Please be sure that you and your child engage in all activities during the virtual learning schedule. If your child cannot participate on a given day, please inform your child's teacher right away. If we do not hear from you or if you do not engage in the learning process during virtual learning for three consecutive days, our social workers will reach out to you to ensure the health and safety of your family. We will work with you to help you find resources needed for better engagement with virtual learning.

Please ensure that your child arrives at school on time each day and that they are picked up on time each day. Your child is late 15 minutes after the start of the school day. If your child is excessively absent or late, a meeting will be required with the school social worker and principal.

**WEATHER SCHOOL CLOSINGS:** Announcements of school closings or delayed openings will be broadcast through the district's automated phone system, as well as your local TV stations and on the district's website: [www.orange.k12.nj.us](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us). It is important that your phone number remains current and that you answer the call whenever it is made. **Again, updated contact phone numbers are essential.** A message will be posted via ClassDojo and other social media outlets such as Facebook or Twitter.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** All information gathered about a child is kept confidential. Records are kept in a secure area with limited access except by authorized personnel.

- Information obtained and collected by the program will be shared with other staff only on a "need to know" basis.
- Practicum students are not included in discussions of children and assessment/screening results unless the information is relevant to the practicum experience.

- Parents and guardians may ask to view screening and assessment results through asking the classroom teacher.
- All information compiled during screenings and assessments will be used to promote the healthy developmental growth of the child.
- No information shall be shared with an outside agency without the written consent from the parent or legal guardian.

**BEFORE AND AFTERCARE:** Norjenes Day Care Center offers before and aftercare services for in district preschoolers only. Childcare vouchers are accepted. Please contact the Executive Director for more details regarding hours and availability.

Contact Information:

Norma Adams, Executive Director  
 95 South Essex Avenue  
 Orange, NJ 07050  
 973-677-4299

In addition, the district is working with the YMCA to assist with providing childcare as well. The YMCA will provide families with payment information.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY NURSES:** The Orange Board of Education employs a full time nurse to care for the needs of the students' immediate health concerns. The school nurse is responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date health records including immunizations, physicals and emergency information on every student. In addition, the nurse is responsible for taking the height and weight of the students as well as the following screenings: hearing, vision, blood pressure and dental. The nurse is also responsible for demonstrating proper hand-washing and tooth brushing techniques as well. In addition, the nurse will monitor students with any Covid-19 symptoms and ensure that proper PPE is administered to staff and students. The nurse information:

Linda Vicci, RN, BSN  
 973-677-4000 Ext. 1806

**IMMUNIZATIONS & ANNUAL PHYSICALS:** It is mandated by the State of New Jersey that the school have complete immunizations on record for every student in preschool. The nurse will do an immunization review upon registration and early in the school year to ensure our records are up-to-date. If your child requires further immunizations, the nurse will send a letter home with the specific vaccines needed. If your child is not current with his/her immunizations, the school may be forced to exclude your child from school until he/she is current. Students must also have a Universal Child Health Record filled out by a pediatrician which is based on their annual physical examination.

As of September 2008 the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services has mandated additional vaccines for children in preschool:

- Influenza Vaccine: This is for children 6-59 months attending any child-care center or preschool facility on or after September 1, 2008. They must receive at least one dose of influenza vaccine between September 1 and December 31 of each year.

- Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV): Every child 12-59 months of age attending a child care center on or after September 1, 2008 must receive at least one dose of PCV on or after their first birthday.

**MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION:** if your child is sick and needs to take medications, we hope that the medications can be given at home, either before or after school. However, in the event that your child needs medication during the school day, our policy is that you must have your doctor fill out a “Permission to Give Medication in Childcare” form before our nurses can administer the medication. We ask that you give at least one dose to your child at home to ensure that there are no allergic reactions or side effects. Please note that even if the medication is over the counter medication, we will need a form filled out by the doctor. These forms are located in your child’s school/center. In order for medication to be administered in school, it must be in the original prescription bottle and clearly labeled with the following: child’s name, name of medication, dosage, the date it was prescribed, times to be given, the child's name and doctor’s name. We can only give medication to the specific child the prescription was intended for. If your child has asthma, they may be in school as long as we have the proper Asthma Action Plan filled out by the doctor and have the proper medication to administer if needed. Every school/center has a nebulizer if needed. You would need to provide a mask, tubing and medication in a clearly labeled prescription box.

**INCIDENTS & ACCIDENTS:** If the child is injured during the day, the preschool nurse will be called to examine the child. The nurse will care for the child and contact the parent as needed. If we cannot contact a parent, we will call the emergency contact. The emergency contact must be someone who will be available in case of mild illness, to provide temporary care for a sick child, and has transportation to the school/enter. A report will be completed and given to the parent or person picking up the child. In case of a medical emergency beyond that of the preschool nurse, 9-1-1 will be called immediately and an ambulance will take your child to the nearest hospital if necessary. The school will need a signed permission form for staff to act in your absence in case of an emergency. You will be contacted immediately and will meet your child at the school or the hospital. A preschool nurse or staff member will accompany your child to hospital. A report will be completed and given to the parent in this case as well.

**ILLNESS & EXCLUSION:** Should your child become ill, please take precautions to ensure that we do not spread the illness to others in the school/center. Once your child is symptom-free, or has a doctor’s note stating the diagnosis, length of recovery time and the date, the child may return to school. Children who have been diagnosed with the following or have related symptoms prior to a diagnosis may not come to school:

- A runny nose with a discharge that is green, the child should be taken to the doctor to rule out infection
- Ringworm which is a fungus causing a small, round, itchy, red, flaky patch that is highly contagious. If the doctor diagnoses your child with ringworm, he/she may return to school with the appropriate doctor’s note 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Lice which are also very contagious, they are small insects that attach eggs called nits to the hair shaft. Students will be excluded until they have treatment, examined before returning to class and parents should bring in the empty box of medicated shampoo used for lice treatment to show school nurse/teacher.

- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): If a child is diagnosed by the doctor with pink eye, they must remain home for 24 hrs after the first treatment of antibiotic eye drops so they are no longer contagious.
- Bed Bugs: If your child has many bedbug bites on their arms and legs, the school nurse will call to see if there is a known problem at home and will help by calling our district exterminator to test the classroom as well as the home. The exterminator along with the Department of Health can then help notify the landlord of necessary treatments.
- Chicken Pox
- Whooping Cough
- Measles
- Scabies
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Scarlet Fever
- Diarrhea: more than 2 loose stools, child will be sent home and cannot return for 24 hrs.
- Vomiting: Child will be sent home and must remain home for 24 hours after vomiting stops.
- Fever over 100 degrees: child will be sent home and must remain home until they are fever free without medication for 24 hours.

#### **ADMISSION/EXCLUSION DUE TO SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS (COVID-19)**

- Children who are obviously ill with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green-runny nose, puss/oozing eyes, disease or condition (i.e.- ringworm, head lice, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, fever over 100 degrees, etc.) will not be admitted to the program. It is a danger to other children and staff members at our school. If families have any doubts about their child's health, they must call 973-677-4000 ext. 1906 to speak with the school nurse. If children appear to be sick or have any of the above symptoms while at school, the school nurse will notify the family immediately, and it is necessary that the child be picked up within one hour of notification.
- The child will be permitted to return when his/her temperature is normal for 24 hours without aid of fever-reducing medication. Children must have any prescribed medication, such as antibiotics, in his/her system for at least 24 hours before returning. In the event that a child is sent home with one of the above health concerns, he/she will not be permitted back to school without a doctor's note. The doctor's note must be written on their letterhead and read that the child can return to school because what they have is no longer contagious.
- Permission for a child to be administered medicine in the school must be approved by the physician and completing a medication form. Medications for maintenance will be administered throughout the day as required. The medication must be given to the school nurse in its original bottle, which contains the pharmacist's directions. The medication log must be signed by the parent at this time and will be kept on file. Children will be given their medication according to the prescription specifications only.
- If a child is showing COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) OR if a family member was in close contact with someone testing positive for COVID- 19, we will ask the family to keep the child home for a minimum of 14 days.

- We ask that all family members and staff inform us of any potential exposure immediately. A potential exposure means being in close contact (within 6 feet) of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID- 19 for at least 10 minutes. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic. If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a child or an adult who has been present in the childcare center, we will inform the Superintendent and follow district process and procedures while informing our parents.
- We will safely and respectfully isolate children who show symptoms related to COVID-19 in our established isolated space (near the nurse’s office). Students will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
- Students and employees may be asked to leave or not come into school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19, based on CDC guidance, that is not otherwise explained:
  - A fever of 100° F or greater
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

### **HYGIENE MEASURES AND PROCEDURES (COVID-19)**

There will be signs for social distancing and proper handwashing throughout the building.

Scholars Academy staff will routinely clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, tables, etc.) before/after use (in the classrooms and offices). Cleaning procedures include two stages: cleaning, which removes dirt and germs from surfaces, and disinfecting, which kills germs on surfaces that remain after cleaning.

Scholars Academy staff will ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection supplies, including storing products securely away from children, and ensuring appropriate ventilation so students and staff are not exposed to toxins or fumes.

1. **Handwashing:** As soon as students arrive to the classroom, they will wash their hands properly. Hands will also be washed throughout the day and more frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer will be used when soap and water is not available. Sanitizing stations are located throughout our school.

2. Sanitizing/Disinfecting: All hard surfaces will be wiped down throughout the day, before and after use as well as at the end of each day. Any toys that go into a child’s mouth will be put into the disinfecting process as usual. All surfaces and toys will be sprayed at the end of the day. All sensory bins, soft toys, pillows, dress-up clothes will be put away during this phase of opening.
3. Mask wearing: children will be expected to wear a mask when they enter/exit the building, when using the bathroom (only classrooms that do not have a bathroom), while walking in the hallways, on the playground and when they cannot practice social distancing. While in their own classroom – they may remove the mask and place it in their personal book bag. Staff are expected to wear a face covering throughout the day (with breaks) unless health reasons prohibit the wearing of a face covering. The district will purchase a face shield for all staff.
4. Plexiglas shields: shields will be provided for secretaries and security guards. Each student in the district will have a trifold type desk shield.
5. Social distancing: Each class is considered a “family.” Each “family” will socially distance from other “families” to assure safety. Children will not need to wear a mask when they are in their “home” (classroom). Classes will not intermix and will be with the same teachers as much as possible. Also, children are prohibited from wearing a mask during naptime.
6. Potty Training: A school district with a state funded preschool program cannot mandate that preschool students be potty trained prior to program enrollment (this includes preschool contracted providers and Head Start). The only requirements for enrollment in a state funded preschool program are age and residency within the school district. Eligible children cannot be denied enrollment into the preschool program, nor can they be removed from the program due to the lack of potty-training skills. Teachers and support staff will utilize all safety precautions when changing children. Due to the pandemic, extra precaution will be taken as teachers will be provided with a face shield, disposal gloves, and disposal gowns to protect their clothing. Children must wear a mask while being changed (see page 21). Teachers will dispose of the gloves and gowns after changing each child and will wash their hands properly and thoroughly.

### **SCHOOL CLEANING PRACTICES (COVID-19)**

Our school will adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise. Scholars Academy has a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfecting, especially of frequently touched surfaces and objects.

- Examples of frequently touched areas in schools:
  - Classroom desks and chairs
  - Classroom sink handles
  - Countertops
  - Lunchroom tables and chairs
  - Door handles and push plates
  - Handrails
  - Kitchens and bathrooms

- o Light switches
- o Handles on equipment (e.g. athletic equipment)
- o Buttons on vending machines and elevators
- o Shared telephones
- o Shared desktops
- o Shared computer keyboards and mice
- o Drinking fountains
- o School bus seats and windows
- o Sign in/out materials (e.g. pens, paper)

Bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily and between use as much as possible.

- Regarding bathrooms:
  - o Scholars Academy will avoid crowds in the bathrooms by limiting the number of students who can enter at a time.
  - o Scholars Academy has open trash cans to avoid children touching the lids

Scholars Academy has a process and schedule for the routine cleaning and disinfecting of furniture.

- Classrooms have EPA-registered disposable wipes for teachers and staff to wipe down commonly used surfaces before use (e.g., keyboards, tables, etc.)

The Scholars Academy building will be cleaned and disinfected after a person has been identified as COVID-19 positive.

**ALLERGY PROCEDURES:** When children are diagnosed with an allergy or there is a known allergy at the time of enrollment the parent must notify the school with a written doctor's statement. This would include food or other allergies (such as bee stings). If there is a doctor's plan for the care of the child due to the allergy, this must be given to the school and must have the doctor's signature. A Food Allergy Action Plan should be completed by the doctor. If, for any reason, your child cannot eat a certain food, please provide a written notice from your physician and discuss this issue with your child's teacher and school nurse. If your child is prescribed an Epi-Pen for the specific allergy, you must provide the school nurse with one to keep in the classroom with the proper prescription label and proper documentation filled out.

**NUTRITION & WELLNESS:** The preschool centers/schools provide breakfast, lunch and a snack each day. The State of New Jersey requires each family to complete the lunch form which will be given out the first day of school. Please make sure that you inform the teacher and nurse of any allergies specific to food. In keeping with the Orange Board of Education District Wellness Policy, we encourage healthy foods and we want the children to make healthy food choices. Therefore, please do not send your child to school with candy, soda, sugar drinks, gum, etc. Instead opt for fresh fruit or vegetables, 100% fruit juice, water, low fat 13 cheese, rice cakes, yogurt, etc. **Due to many children with food allergies, especially peanuts, we ask that you also avoid sending in anything with nuts.**



**PERSONAL BELONGINGS:** Bedding will be sent home on the last day of each week, and it is **mandatory** that bedding be laundered before returning the next week. Bedding will be stored in large plastic bags for health and safety reasons. All items must be labeled with your child's name on it.

**SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:**

- Emergency phone numbers are clearly posted by all phones.
- The parent/guardian provides, in writing, the names and phone numbers of persons to contact if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.
- In case of an emergency, a faculty/staff member may go with the child to the emergency room and remain until a parent/guardian arrives.
- Nurse/Staff will report in writing any injuries that may occur while the child is in school.
- Nurse/Staff will notify the parent/guardian of any injury requiring first aid treatment.
- Fire drills and safety drills are practiced once each month.
- Emergency evacuation plans are posted in each room.
- The school nurse is CPR and First Aid trained. Each year, training in CPR and first aid are made available to staff at no cost to the individual. Classroom teachers and paraprofessionals are required to have the training.
- Each classroom will have a first aid kit and a fanny pack (portable first aid kit). The fanny pack is to be taken with the class whenever leaving the room for outdoor play or taking a "field trip". It will contain the following items: CPR Mask, gloves, antiseptic wipes, and alcohol wipes, antibiotic ointment, band aids, gauze pads, Kleenex, paper towels, germ-x, a class roster with emergency information as well as any specific medications the student may require (i.e. asthma inhalers, epipens, etc.).
- Children are supervised at all times and appropriate child: staff ratios are maintained.
- Teachers move throughout the play yard to ensure adequate and appropriate supervision.
- The playground is monitored closely for safety and improvements.
- Medicines are stored out of children's reach and administered only with written permission of parent/guardian.
- Individuals who serve food wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- Cleaning supplies are stored out of children's reach.
- Teachers/Nurses complete documentation for accidents, incidents, and health-related situations. Parents receive copies of accident/incident forms.
- Universal precautions for blood-related accidents and incidents are followed.
- Latex "free" gloves are available in each room for emergencies.
- Toys are checked frequently and broken toys are discarded.
- Teacher-child ratio is adjusted for field trips to ensure that there is a higher ratio of adults to children. • On field trips children must stay where teachers can see them at all times and vice versa. \*For safety reasons, no field trips will occur for the 2020-2021 school year\*
- Health and safety information is incorporated into the curriculum and taught to the children on a regular basis.
- Anti-bullying and character education are built into the preschool curriculum.

**CHILD ABUSE:** Mandated Reporting – As professionals in contact with young children and their families, we are required by law to report children who may be abused or neglected. According to the law, public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors; as well as day care/child 14 care workers, are mandated reporters. Thus, it is our policy to report any and all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect immediately by telephone and to follow up in writing within 24 hours the same information as reported by telephone.

**GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE:** One of our goals is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be self-directed, exhibit self-control, and become problem-solvers. A philosophy based on providing a positive, supportive environment that focuses on prevention and the teaching of appropriate behavior guides the staff in their interactions with children. The use of corporal punishment is forbidden in our schools/centers.

**SMOKING & CELL PHONES:** Smoking is not permitted on or near school grounds and cell phones should be used only as needed due to supervision of children.

**INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF:**

- ★ All preschool teachers are NJ Licensed Teachers holding a Bachelor's Degree and a NJ PreschoolGrade 3 Teacher's Certificate. Relief Teachers hold the same credentials as the teachers. They travel from classroom to classroom throughout the school day and cover the classrooms when the teachers are on their planning time which occurs each day for 45 minutes. Relief teachers assume all responsibilities as a teacher when she/he is in the classroom.
- ★ All preschool paraprofessionals must have at least 48 college credits or have passed the NJ Paraprofessional Exam.

**THE CLASSROOM:** Class size is limited to 15 children with a certified classroom teacher and paraprofessional. The district uses a mixed age delivery and inclusive approach. Preschoolers have a 6 ½ hour day from 8:30 am - 3:20 pm, breakfast, lunch, snack and a rest period of an hour included.

**INCLUSION:** Inclusive education teaches all children teamwork and how to relate and function together with others with different abilities. Students learn to value diversity, see the ability of others to contribute, and inclusion also gives children a sense of unity. Preschool Inclusion teachers work in the classroom to provide special education services to children with disabilities. They collaborate with and provide strategies to the regular education teachers to ensure the children's individual goals are being met. They provide extra support and change the curriculum in order for children with disabilities to function in a general education setting. The Inclusive Teaching Model is where the Early Childhood teacher implements classroom activities and lesson plans from the district curriculum and plans with the inclusion teacher for adaptations and modifications for children with special needs. All related services such as Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy or Physical Therapy are strongly encouraged to occur in the child's classroom.

# **THE CURRICULUM: PRESCHOOL**

**THE CURRICULUM:** The Orange Early Childhood department which includes Scholars Academy uses one of the approved curriculums from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). **High Scope** is a research based curriculum that began in Michigan over 40 years ago. It is a curriculum focused on Key Developmental Indicators, which are fundamental developmental capabilities. The indicators focus on all areas of child development. Teachers utilize both the KDI's which are aligned with the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning State Standards and the Common Core to develop lesson plans. Every lesson is structured around Math, Science and Reading. This curriculum also provides a daily routine schedule which enables the child in that he/she can visually see and follow each step throughout the day. Children "learn by doing," often working with hands on materials and carrying out projects of their choice. The adults working with the children see themselves more as facilitators or partners rather than managers or supervisors. They help the child to learn at the level he/she is most comfortable and always looking for opportunities to challenge the child. In a High/Scope classroom the five ingredients of active learning are present: materials, manipulation, choice, child language, and adult scaffolding which are instrumental for teachers in meeting the needs of all children. The Early Childhood Program uses the High/Scope Growing Readers Early Literacy Curriculum for its focused approach to literacy instruction and the High/Scope Numbers Plus Curriculum for mathematics.

**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING:** Social-emotional skills help children to persist on challenging tasks, to effectively seek help when they need it and to be thoughtful in their actions. Additionally, a developmentally appropriate preschool with a focus on social and emotional learning will assist children with developing a positive attitude toward school, positive social behavior, higher academic performance, decrease in emotional issues, and challenging behaviors. Children need to be taught social and emotional skills and to have opportunities to practice these skills in much the same way that they learn how to read and solve math problems. These efforts come with a big payoff, as strong social emotional skills can help children in a wide variety of social and academic settings for years to come.

There are five core skills that are widely recognized as critical social-emotional skills:

- Self-awareness – the ability to recognize your emotions and understand the links between emotions, thoughts and behaviors.
- Self-management – the ability to regulate emotions, thoughts and behaviors.
- Social awareness – the ability to take other's perspectives and demonstrate empathy.
- Relationship – the ability to build and maintain healthy relationships.
- Responsible decision making – the ability to make good choices about your behavior and interactions with others.

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT (PBS):** PBS provides a process to understand and resolve the problem behavior of individuals or children that is based on values and empirical research. It offers an approach to develop an understanding of why the child engages in problem behavior and strategies to prevent the occurrence of problem behavior while teaching the child new skills. Positive behavior support offers a holistic approach that considers all factors that have an impact on a child and the child's behavior. It can be used to address problem behaviors that range from aggression, tantrums, and property destruction to social withdrawal.

**The Pyramid Model** - The Pyramid Model builds upon a tiered public health approach to providing universal supports to all children to promote wellness, targeted services to those who need more support, and intensive services to those who need them.

### **Tiers of the Pyramid Model**

Tier 1: Universal Promotion – strategies are used for all children

Tier 2: Secondary Prevention practices that are targeted social and emotional strategy to prevent problems

Tier 3: Tertiary intervention comprised of practices related to individualized intensive interventions

SEL will be integrated into our delivery of instruction daily and throughout the school year. To help children problem solve, teachers will use solution cards, social stories, books, the High Scope conflict resolution steps, and Tucker Turtle.

**ASSESSMENT:** The Child Observation Record (COR) is the performance-based assessment model for all district and community preschool classrooms. The Preschool COR assessment is based on six child development categories that represent broad domains of child development: I. Initiative II. Social Relations III. Creative Representation IV. Movement and Music V. Language and Literacy VI. Mathematics and Science. The teaching staff spend a few minutes each day writing brief notes that describe what children say & do and how they behave in various situations. The COR is completed in the course of everyday activities, and is a true reflection on what the children can do. Therefore, the assessment is seamlessly integrated with teaching and planning. Teachers compile and analyze the notes to provide a comprehensive portrait of each child's developmental gains as well as the progress of the group as a whole. The information gained will assist teachers with planning appropriate activities/lessons for the children. Child progress is shared with parents twice per year.

In Class Assessment – teachers will observe and collect anecdotal notes as much as possible when children are in school.

**THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:** According to the High/Scope Curriculum, “young children need space to use materials, explore, create, and solve problems; space to spread out, move around, talk freely about what they are doing; space to work alone and with others; space to store their

belongings and display their inventions; and space for adults to join them in support of their intentions and interests.” Therefore, the classrooms are divided into well-defined and labeled interest areas with simple names: sand & water area, block area, house area, toy area, art area, book and writing area, music & movement area, computer area, etc.

**THE DAILY ROUTINE:** Establishing a routine helps provide children with a consistent schedule of events for the day. It also helps adults organize their time to ensure challenging learning experiences. Elements of the High/Scope daily routine include:

- Greeting Time (children are greeted and welcomed)
- Morning Message (message are written on the board using a combination of pictures and words)
- Small Group Time (the class breaks up into two small groups)
- Large Group Time (the children are all together)
- Planning Time (children be given the opportunity to plan what they will do for work time)
- Work Time (children will work on their plans in the different interest areas and teachers will observe, support and assist the children as they work, explore, inquire, create, etc.)
- Recall Time (children share their work time experiences)
- Meal Time(s) (children and teachers eat all meals and snack family style in the classrooms at the tables)
- Outside Time (children will go outside everyday weather permitting)
- The daily routine used in our preschool programs allows for one hour of rest time per day. Due to the modified schedule, naps will occur at home instead of school.

<b>Time</b>	<b>SAMPLE CLASS SCHEDULE</b>
8:15-8:45	Breakfast & Bathroom
8:45-8:55	Morning Message
8:55-9:15	Large Group (ELA, Math, Sc, SS)
9:15-9:35	Small Group (ELA, Math, Sc, SS)
9:35-9:40	Planning Time
9:40-10:40	Work Time
10:40-10:55	Clean Up & Recall
10:50-11:00	Bathroom
11:00-11:30	Lunch
11:30-12:30	Rest
12:30-1:30	Gross Motor
1:35-1:45	Bathroom
1:45-1:55	Snack
1:55-2:05	Read Aloud
2:05-3:05	Work Time
3:10-3:20	Clean Up and Handwashing

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**FIELD TRIPS:** Preschool programs can be enriched through the inclusion of carefully planned field trips. Field trips provide children with a level of understanding that adds to the realism of their play and enriches their overall learning. Field Trips are:

- Educational
- Appropriate for all ages
- Supports the goals of the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards and the High Scope Curriculum's Key Developmental Indicators
- Teachers plan pre and post activities to support children's learning

**CLOTHING:** Active indoor and outdoor play is a regular part of our school day. Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for running, climbing, and other vigorous activity, and that is appropriate for the weather. Because the children work with paint, clay and other fun materials, they should wear clothes that can be laundered easily.

- For the safety of all of our students, we ask that children wear sneakers or other rubber soled shoes. Flip-flops, sandals and dress shoes are dangerous for running, jumping and climbing.
- A complete change of clothes is essential. Please label all clothing with your child's name. The extra set of clothing will be stored at school. We ask that each student have a small container (i.e. shoe box) filled with a complete change of clothing (shirt, pants/skirt, T-shirt, underwear, socks). It is not unusual for preschoolers to occasionally soil their clothing due to illness or accident. Please check your child's extra clothing box periodically to be sure that the content still fits and are season appropriate. All clothing must be labeled. If your child is not yet toilet trained, you must provide at least three clean complete changes of clothing at all times. You must also provide the diapers and wipes needed.
- One of the most important skills Preschoolers learn is to manage their own clothing. Please try to dress your child in clothing he can manage on his own. Please label your child's jackets and coats with his or her first and last name. Sometimes items look very similar and it is difficult for a child to distinguish his or her coat from that of a classmate.

**TOYS FROM HOME:** We ask that our Preschoolers please do not bring toys from home into the classroom. While we understand that young children often are excited to bring in special toys from home, we do not want their precious treasures to be misplaced or accidentally broken. Each classroom is full of toys and materials for our children to use on a daily basis. If, by chance, a child does bring a home toy to school, she/he will be asked to keep it safely in her cubby until the end of the day. In the event that your child borrows a toy from school, please have them return it the next day.

**CELEBRATIONS:** The celebration of birthdays and other special events will be celebrated in developmentally appropriate ways for preschoolers. It is important to take into account the many different perspectives on holidays and what they mean to the communities, families and children that we serve in our schools. Guided by the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, celebrations are educational as well as fun.

- Birthdays - School birthday celebrations can be fun, academic, and still leave children beaming with birthday delight! Parents should check with the teacher to create a celebration that fits in with the school day while making your child feel special. The school and the teachers will make each child feel valued and special on his/her birthday and to keep to everyone safe, outside food and party favors must be approved in advance via the school nurse and the building principal.
- End Of Year - Our end of the year celebrations are meaningful times for our children and families. It is important to celebrate children's accomplishments. This time also brings closure to our children's time together as many move to kindergarten.
- Please check with your child's teachers for other types of celebrations that may occur in your child's classroom throughout the school year.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**: Statistics show that the earlier family members get involved in a young child's educational experience, the greater the educational success of the child. Families and culture are celebrated in our school. Family involvement and connectedness is an integral piece of what makes our program strong. All parent meetings will be held in a hybrid setting: in person and/or virtually.

**FAMILY/TEACHER CONFERENCES**: The district holds at least two family/teacher conferences per year. The purposes of such conferences are to involve the family in the progress of their child as well as discuss any concerns the family or teacher may have. The conferences are scheduled during convenient times for families to attend. If you have difficulty scheduling a time conference time, please speak with your child's teacher and make alternative plans to meet. Do not pass up the opportunity to meet with your child's teacher. **Family/Parent teacher conferences will be available in a hybrid setting of either in person or virtually to accommodate families.**

**MONTHLY FAMILY EVENTS**: Family events are held at the school approximately each month to give families an opportunity to come together to learn and share information with one another. These events are usually related to the curriculum, financial information, health, community resources, etc. and will be held within a hybrid setting: virtual and/or in person.

**FAMILY VOLUNTEERS**: Because of the health and safety concerns posed by the current pandemic, volunteering in the school or classroom is prohibited. However, there are other ways to volunteer. Volunteering is a great way to model positive social interactions and to demonstrate a genuine interest in your child's education. Possible volunteering opportunities include but are not limited to:

- assisting with activities/lessons at home
- reading stories virtually to class
- sharing your favorite family snacks virtually
- collecting materials and supplies for your child to use at home such as, acorns, tops, leaves, dress-up clothes, dramatic play props, carpentry materials, etc.
- Attending or planning parent workshops (virtually)
- Participating in various school committees (virtually)

Please check with your child's teacher and sign up to become a volunteer.

**COMPLETING AND RETURNING FORMS**: Throughout the school year there will be forms sent home for you to complete and return to the school. It is important for you to complete the forms and send them back. Some of the forms that you will complete are as follows: Family update (this is sent home twice per year), Community Needs Assessment, Mid Year and End of the Year Parent Surveys, Kindergarten Transition Survey, health screening follow up forms, etc. Completing and returning forms is a form of volunteering; however, the information on the forms allows us to assess the delivery of services that we provide as well as maintaining a quality preschool program.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL**: The Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) was established to give all those who are interested in the educational success of the children in the Orange Township Public Schools an avenue to learn and share information and experiences that are beneficial to the children. The council is composed of school personnel, families, and community stakeholders. The council meets to discuss the needs of the program, challenges and successes of our preschool children. We encourage our families who want to have their voices heard to inform your child's teacher or social worker that you are interested in participating in the council.

**PREK-3 TRANSITION COMMITTEE**: The formation of the preschool-kindergarten transition committee came as a result of the Early Childhood Program and the district's elementary schools recognizing the importance of providing our preschoolers entering kindergarten with a seamless transition. This committee is composed of representatives of all the elementary schools, staff from the Early Childhood department, community stakeholders and parents. The events that will be planned will enhance the communication among all grade levels. The goal will be to strengthen the connection between home, school, and the community. If you are interested in participating in this committee, please speak with your child's teacher or the school's counselor.



# **ADDENDUM FOR EMERGENCY CLOSURE**

*The Governor is the only person who can close schools as part of an Emergency Health Issue. If the Governor establishes an emergency school closure, the Orange School District wants everyone to be in readiness. The information is in the district’s plan on the website. Below are the expectations and plan for Scholars Academy.*

**Schedule:** If the Governor issues the emergency closing of schools, the Orange School District will implement a 5 Day Synchronous Schedule. See below. Classes will be held virtually using either GoogleMeet or Zoom online platforms. Instructional supplies will be provided to students as needed. In addition, if a student is in need of an electronic device, please contact the Principal Machuca for availability of a PreK tablet.

<b>Time</b>	<b>5 Day Synchronous Schedule--PRE-K</b>
8:30-9:00	Breakfast time preparation/set up for the start of the school day (be sure that all technology is charged up and that materials and supplies for the day are ready in advance)
9:00-10:00	Greeting Time – live instruction Message Time – live instruction Read Aloud – live instruction (story, discussion, questions)
10:00-11:00	Outside Time/Work Time (flexibility) – children work independently on assigned tasks, engage in hands on activities, creative arts, and/or they can develop their large muscles by going outside or to the park to run, jump, play ball, ride a trike, etc.
11:00-12:00	Large Group Time: music and movement, songs, nursery rhymes, dance, etc. Small Group Time (teacher and para will break up into two small groups)
12:00-1:30	Teacher and student lunch Teacher prep
1:30-3:00	Office Hours--One on one instruction and small group instruction with teacher. Outside Time/Work Time (flexibility) – children work independently on assigned tasks, engage in hands on activities, participate in creative arts, and/or they can develop their large muscles by going outside or to the park to run, jump, skip, play ball, ride a trike, etc.

**Virtual Assessment** – if there is an emergency closure, the teachers will use google classroom to observe children and take anecdotal notes while children perform learning tasks in front of the teacher in each of the identified COR indicators.

**Attendance**-- Attendance will be recorded on a daily basis within the virtual classroom and the expectation is that

- students attend virtual class for the duration of the lesson,
- have their materials ready,
- be in a room that is conducive to learning with minimal disruptions and distractions
- have their cameras on for the duration of the lesson

**Communication**--Daily communication will continue via ClassDojo, phone blasts, district website, school website, and social media handles such as Twitter and Facebook. It is expected that parents check in within these areas of communication to stay informed about school and district happenings and community supports.