



## Jefferson Joint School District 251 Early Childhood Center Peer Model Program

The Early Childhood Center (ECC) is designed to provide learning opportunities for students with disabilities by focusing on age-appropriate functional skills such as positive social emotional skills, acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

The Peer Model Program at the ECC encourages typically developing children to act as peer models for the students with disabilities by modeling age-appropriate skills. The program is beneficial to all students to learn in a positive, structured, language rich environment.

### **Peer Model Acceptance Criteria:**

Peer models must exhibit the following skills:

- **Positive Social-Emotional Skills:** relating to adults and children, following rules, concepts such as expressing emotions and feelings, expectations and social interactions and social play, etc.
- **Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy):** thinking, reasoning, problem solving, counting, letter recognition, clear and understandable speech, etc.
- **Use of Appropriate Behaviors to meet their needs:** able to feed, dress and toilet independently, follow routines, etc.

Should a peer model not exhibit these skills after having been accepted, they may be dismissed from the program. If peer model behaviors are such that they cause threat to other students or staff, it may be a cause for *immediate* dismissal.

### **Peer models must also meet the following criteria:**

- Be 3 years old by September 1st of the school year in which they will attend the 3-yearold session or be 4 years old by September 1st of the school year in which they will attend the 4-year-old session.
- Children who are age 5 by September 1<sup>st</sup> of that school year are not eligible to attend the Early Childhood Center program and are encouraged to enroll in kindergarten.
- Have regular attendance.
- Provide transportation to and from the program. Transportation is not provided by the school district and is the parent/guardian responsibility.

## **Peer Model Information:**

### Availability:

- For the 2026-2027 school year, there are \_\_\_\_\_ peer model spots in each 3-year-old section and \_\_\_\_\_ peer model spots in each 4-year-old section.
- Placement is not guaranteed and is not guaranteed from one year to the next and families must apply each school year to continue being accepted into the program.
- Peers may participate in one session a year for a maximum of two years.

### Fees:

Fees are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month starting September 1 until May 1. Monthly tuition is a fixed rate averaged over the Early Childhood Center school calendar year. Payment of fees must be timely. If fees are not paid within 10 days of the due date, the child may be dismissed from the program. Monthly tuition is nonrefundable regardless of the peer models attendance.

- 3-year-old session fees are \$65.00 a month for a total of \$585 for the school year.
- 4-year-old session fees are \$130.00 a month for a total of \$1170 for the school year.
- Employees who work for the school district will be eligible for a discounted rate.

### Placement:

- Priority placement will be determined by the following criteria:
- All students wishing to participate in the Peer Model Program must apply during the January of the current school year to be considered for placement for the following school year.
  - If a student is a returning Peer Model, they must have a positive recommendation from their Preschool teacher at the Early Childhood Center to be considered for continued enrollment.
- The Peer Model Program Application Window will open January 1<sup>st</sup> and close January 31<sup>st</sup> of each school year. The application portal will remain open following the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, but late applications will only be considered if sufficient spots are available.
- All applications will be timestamped, with students being ranked in priority groups based on the time they applied for enrollment.
  - Priority groups will be the following, listed in priority order:
    - Children of full-time employees
    - Returning Peer Models with a positive staff recommendation
    - Students who reside within the district's boundaries
- Following the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, the ECC staff will convene to review the Peer Model Applications.
  - Should the number of applicants exceed the number of available positions, placement will be determined by lottery and will follow the above priority

placement criteria. Parents/guardians will be notified if their student is placed into a lottery by February 10<sup>th</sup>.

- Following the review of the applications, all Peer Model Applications that will be considered for the coming school year will be notified that the student is invited to a “screening day” around mid-February. Parents/guardians must schedule their student’s screening appointment. **Failure to provide a student for a screening appointment will result in the dismissal of the student application from consideration for the following school year.**
- All Peer Model Applicants will be notified by **February 28<sup>th</sup>** via email if their student is selected to participate in the program for the following school year.
  - If a Peer Model Applicant is not accepted for the following school year, they will be placed on a “waiting list”, organized by timestamp, where they will wait for a possible future available spot within the program.

#### Enrollment:

If selected, the child must enroll in Jefferson School District and provide the following documentation prior to the first day of attendance.

- Birth Certificate or Proof of Birth
- Immunization Records
- Evidence of Residency Within the District Proof of Residence Address Verification (Utility Bill, Rental or Purchase Agreement).

#### Schedule:

Students in the 3-year-old session will attend on either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday from 9:30-11:45 or 12:30-2:45.\* Students in the 4-year-old sessions will attend Monday through Thursday from 9:30-11:45 or 12:30-2:45.\*

ECC staff will assign classroom assignments based primarily on student need and teacher availability. Peer Model Applicants will be notified of classroom placement **by the end of the current school year**. If the assigned classroom/session is difficult for your student to attend, please contact the ECC administration to determine options moving forward.

\* Times/Days are subject to change.

Click here to access the application: [Early Childhood Center Peer Model Application – Fill out form](#)