



OPTIONS *for*
LEARNING

UNLOCKING THE PROMISE
OF EVERY CHILD

SCHOOL-AGE PROGRAMS
PARENT
HANDBOOK

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MISSION STATEMENT, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission

Options for Learning is a leader in preparing children and supporting families for life success through innovative, quality child development programs.

Vision

All children will achieve their full potential.

Values

- Respect, integrity, accountability;
- Professionalism;
- Advocacy;
- Right to access quality education;
- A great place for children and employees to work, learn, and succeed;
- Personal rapport between staff and families;
- Serving a culturally and economically diverse community;
- Innovative and creative contributions to our field.

School-age Programs Mission Statement

The mission of Options for Learning's School-age Programs is to provide comprehensive services to school-age children, youth, and their families. Our programs focus on supporting each child to develop to his or her full potential. The programs foster the development of leadership skills that encourage students to become lifelong learners. Children learn in a safe environment that provides meaningful and engaging learning opportunities that support their instructional day. Through partnerships with schools, families, and the community, a quality enrichment program is offered.

WELCOME

We are pleased you have considered Options for Learning's School-age Programs to provide the child care you seek, and we trust that through collaboration, we will provide a quality program for your child.

The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize parents, staff, district personnel, and community members of the goals, objectives, curriculum, and policies of the School-age Programs. Please take the time to review this handbook carefully and save it for reference. Open lines of communication between parents, school, and Options for Learning personnel are essential. We value and appreciate your input and welcome your comments and suggestions. We look forward to working together to provide your child with valuable and enjoyable learning experiences.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS, CITIES, AND SCHOOLS SERVED

Alhambra Unified School District: Cities — Alhambra, Monterey Park

Sites: Baldwin, Brightwood, Emery Park, Granada, Marguerita, Monterey Highlands, Northrup, Ramona, Repetto

East Whittier City School District: City — East Whittier

Sites: La Colima, Laurel, Leffingwell, Mulberry, Ocean View, Orchard Dale, Scott

Little Lake City School District: Santa Fe Springs

Site: Lakeview

Lowell-Joint School District: Cities — La Habra, Whittier

Sites: Jordan, Macy, Meadow Green, Olita

Rowland Unified School District: Cities — La Puente, Rowland Heights, Walnut, and West Covina

Sites: Blandford, Giano, Hollingworth, Hurley, Jellick, Killian, Northam, Oswald, Rorimer, Rowland Elementary, Shelyn, Telesis, Villacorta, Ybarra, Yorbita

San Gabriel Unified School District: City — San Gabriel

Sites: Coolidge, Jefferson, McKinley, Roosevelt, Washington, Wilson

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Parent handbook policies and procedures acknowledgment

Enrolled parents must sign an acknowledgment confirming receipt of this handbook at the time of enrollment, and as it is updated, to ensure they have the most current program information. If clarification is needed on any information in this handbook, please contact the program for assistance.

Services offered

To support the success of school-age children in our programs, families have two programs to choose from for enrollment:

- A year-round, before- and after-school program that provides services to students in transitional kindergarten through age 12;
- The After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program offers after-school services to children in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Year-round, before- and after-school program service hours

The year-round, before- and after-school program operates from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. However, the service hours provided to a family on school days and non-school days will depend on each family's need for services, considering the start and dismissal time of the school, vacation breaks, and non-observed holidays.

ASES program service hours

The ASES program operates every day that the school is in session from school dismissal time until 6 p.m., providing 15 hours of care per week. Services may be offered on non-class days as funding allows.

Program closures: holidays and staff development days

The program is closed 16 days during the year: Labor Day, Veterans Day (staff training), Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas week (five days), New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and two additional days for staff development trainings each year (dates TBD). Parents will be given advance notice of the specific staff development training dates so they are able to make alternative child care arrangements.

Mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect

Options for Learning takes priority in ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of all children and families served. Under California law, child care providers are mandated to report all known or suspected cases of child abuse. Child abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, and/or neglect.

Community Care Licensing and the California Department of Social Services

Not applicable to ASES program

The year-round, before- and after-school program sites are reviewed by Community Care Licensing (CCL) to ensure the health and safety of children in care. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Child Care and Development Division (CCDD) governs our subsidized program. We are required to adopt policies and procedures to ensure program compliance according to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, in the Education Code.

California Department of Education

Not applicable to the year-round, before- and after-school program

The After School Education and Safety (ASES) program and the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELO-P) are governed by the California Department of Education. Options for Learning is a community-based organization working in partnership with Rowland and San Gabriel Unified School Districts to provide after school services. To comply with the ASES and ELO-P funding, policies are in place to meet program requirements.

Confidentiality and access to records

A family's personal information is held in strict confidence. However, it is important to note that Community Care Licensing (CCL) and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) have the authority to observe and interview children and to inspect and review

children's records without prior consent. In addition, we are required to share and release general information to the child's respective school in relation to the child's enrollment in our programs for emergencies and confirmation of attendance at their schools. Options for Learning may also request from the school district general information and verification of a child's enrollment with the district.

Parents have unlimited access to their children, including written documentation concerning their children. Enrolling parents may request to review or obtain copies of written records provided the program is given a minimum of 72 hours after the request is made to allow the staff sufficient time to gather the information.

CHILDREN REPORTING TO THE PROGRAM

Children receiving morning care must report to their school (when dismissed from the program) and report back to the program immediately after school. Site staff are responsible for dropping off and picking up kindergarten and transitional kindergarten (TK) children at their respective classrooms.

Parents are asked to be diligent about informing the site staff when their child will not attend the program (e.g., picked up early from school, attending a special activity, etc.) to ensure that the program is aware of each child's whereabouts.

Late pick-up

Late pick-up may jeopardize a child's enrollment. Staff will remain with a student if the parent is late, but multiple incidents may result in disenrollment of services, as repeated late pick-ups negatively impact the program. Staff will track late pick-ups and inform parents if their child's enrollment is in jeopardy. The education supervisor and enrollment specialist will also follow up to discuss the importance of picking up a student on time.

If a student is not picked up by the end of the day and staff have not been able to reach a parent or other authorized persons listed on the student's emergency card within a reasonable time, staff may have to contact law enforcement to take responsibility for the child.

ASES early release policy

Students are highly encouraged to participate as much as possible in the program, with the understanding that attendance will be based on parental choice and family need. However, for students to receive the maximum benefits from academic support, enrichment activities, leadership opportunities, and other program offerings, early release days should be kept to a minimum. An early release reason must be indicated by the parent/guardian on the child's electronic sign-in sheets upon pick-up, or the reason may be provided to the site staff for each day a student leaves prior to 5:45 p.m. Acceptable reasons for an early release schedule include:

- Participation in athletic programs and team sports;
- Other programs or activity (Girl/Boy Scouts, tutoring, etc.);
- Family emergency;
- Medical appointment;
- Transportation;
- Child accident/injury;
- Safety issues (daylight saving, weather conditions, power outage, etc.);
- Other – parental choice.

Reporting absences

Not applicable to ASES program

It is critical that absences be communicated with site or office staff in a timely manner to avoid the disenrollment of services. Staff document absences for children who are absent for more than two consecutive days per the reason(s) the parent provides.

SIGNING CHILDREN IN AND OUT OF THE PROGRAM

Options for Learning utilizes digital signatures for signing children in and out of the program. All enrolling parents and authorized adults will receive a unique PIN that allows access to sign their child in and out using their personal device or the program’s iPad. Site staff will follow all sign-in/out protocols when releasing the children from the program.

For any missed signatures on the children attendance records, site staff will follow up with the parent to complete the missed signature. In the event the family is no longer enrolled in the program or cannot be reached to complete a missed signature, unless notified otherwise, Options for Learning program staff will sign on behalf of the parent/authorized adult as a last resort to ensure program funding compliance.

Parent portal

Families enrolling in the program will receive an invitation link to access the parent portal, where they can access fee statements, update emergency contacts, update their PIN, upload documents for enrollment, communicate with site staff, and much more.

Drop-off and pick-up

Only the parent or an authorized adult 18 years and older may drop off the child to the program. In addition, only adults listed on the emergency contact list will be able to pick up the child from the program. Authorized individuals will be required to sign out the child using their assigned PIN. If an emergency precludes the parent from picking up the child, the parent may update the child’s emergency contact list through the parent portal and assign a PIN to the individual they are authorizing to pick up.

To ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our care, it is strictly enforced that site staff may not release a child to an adult who is not on the emergency contact list.

Unknown or unrecognized individuals will be required to show picture identification to site staff; this may include an enrolled parent. Release of a child may be denied if appropriate identification is not provided.

CHANGES TO PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents are expected to update any changes in home or work addresses and phone numbers, including home, cell, and other emergency contact phone numbers. Enrolling parents must list at least two emergency contacts on the emergency contact list. This information is crucial if a child becomes ill or injured or in the event of an emergency.

CHILD ATTENDANCE POLICY

Not applicable to the ASES program

Per regulations, families certified for subsidized child care services may receive those services for no less than 24 months. This means that a child may attend the program with the same approved schedule even if the family's need for services has changed. Due to the number of limited spaces for children in all our programs, it is important that families who are receiving services are those who will utilize the care.

Absences

Parents are asked to notify site staff if their child is going to be absent. Upon the child's return, the parent must state a reason for the absence and sign off for the absence. The following reasons qualify as excused absences for children receiving subsidized child care:

- Vacation, spending time with the family, special events, etc. (limited to 10 days per school year – July through June);
- Court-ordered visitation for time spent with a parent or relative as required by a court of law (a copy of the court order must be on file);
- Doctor/dentist appointments;
- Illness or quarantine of the child;
- Illness or quarantine of the parent;
- Family emergency – defined as an incident occurring that results in a disruption of service due to a family's inability to participate in the program or due to a state of emergency order from state or local government (e.g., injury, removal of child from home, death in the family, transportation issues, sibling illness);
- Medical leave of parent/guardian.

Abandonment of care

Options for Learning may disenroll a family on the basis of abandonment of care when there has been no communication with a parent regarding a child's absences for a total of 30 consecutive days.

CLIENT NON-ADMITTANCE AND DISENROLLMENT POLICY

Options for Learning is committed to serving the families and children in our programs. Our goal is to provide a safe and pleasant atmosphere for all individuals. Children, parents, staff, and community members are expected to demonstrate positive conduct (non-aggressive, non-threatening, non-intimidating behavior; refraining from using verbally or non-verbal abusive language or tone). We work together with families to achieve children's success in developing conflict resolution skills. Behavior that interferes with the learning and working of others or threatens the health and safety of children, staff, and/or other clients may lead to suspension or disenrollment from the program.

Circumstances that may prevent services or lead to disenrollment of services for the *family* include but are not limited to:

- The client refuses to follow legitimate instructions, directions, or program policies and procedures;
- The client has verbally threatened staff or physically assaulted staff and/or children;
- A weapon or drugs have been brought into an Options for Learning facility;
- The client has stalked and/or harassed staff, children, or other clients.

Circumstances that may lead to a *child's suspension* include but are not limited to:

- The child continuously leaves the class setting;
- The child displays physical aggression toward another student or staff member;
- The child causes mental or physical distress to another child or staff member;
- The child is suspended for part of the day from the public school where the Options for Learning program is located.

A **suspension** results when the child's behavior poses a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated without temporary removal from the program.

Circumstances that may lead to a *child's disenrollment* include but are not limited to:

- Persistent physical aggression;
- Persistent property destruction;
- Causing self-injury or injury to others;
- The child is expelled (no longer attending) from the public school where the Options for Learning program is located.

A child's **disenrollment** from the program results when the child's behavior is persistent and presents a serious safety threat that it will be deemed necessary to disenroll the child because the program has exhausted all methods to support the child.

For children ages 0-5, Options for Learning will comply with WIC Section 10491.1 and follow due process requirements identified in 5 CCR sections 18119-18122, prior to suspension or disenrollment from the program because of the child's behavior. The decision to not enroll

a child or family for care, to not admit a family, or to disenroll a family will be made by the program, and the parent will be notified in writing.

PARENT AND TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Parents who would like information on how their child is progressing in the program should speak directly to the teacher or request a conference appointment. There are two scheduled parent conferences each year (one in fall and another in spring) with site staff. Conferences at other times of the year are usually held at the request of the parents. Site staff also provide parents with a written observation document as another form of communication to relay vital information regarding their child's progress and/or behavior in addition to their daily interactions with families.

If a parent feels that there are issues that need to be resolved by the supervisor of the site staff, the parent is encouraged to call the School-age Programs office and speak to an education supervisor or administrator.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

Per the contract with the State of California, Child Care and Development Division, Options for Learning programs refrain from providing religious instruction or worship for the children enrolled in the program.

MEDIA RELEASE POLICY

Unless notified otherwise, Options for Learning is permitted to use and display photographs, images, or videos taken on program premises or at an agency event in any publications, multimedia production, display, advertisement, social media, digital media on the internet, or any other media for **promotional, informational, and training purposes only**.

Options for Learning and its agents, officers, and employees are released from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of photographs, images, or videos, including but not limited to any claims for invasion of privacy or defamation.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum for School-age Programs incorporates several essential developmental areas to ensure the quality of the program. The curriculum will be supportive of the policies and procedures of the elementary school and school district where the program is based.

- A safe, well-supervised environment will be created.
- Parents and children are encouraged to provide suggestions and feedback for the program, especially during our annual program evaluation and improvement at the end of each school year.
- Activities will be planned with an emphasis on active participation and enjoyment.

The curriculum/daily routine will offer children experiences in the following areas:

- Anti-bullying curriculum;
- Character development;
- Every Monday Matters;
- Computers;
- Construction;
- Cooking/sewing;
- Diversity awareness/multicultural;
- Drama/performing arts;
- Field trips;
- Financial literacy;
- Games/manipulatives;
- Gross motor activities;
- Harvest of the Month;
- Music and movement;
- Project-based learning;
- Reading/language arts;
- STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math);
- Social/emotional development.

The curriculum components provide a framework for children to make the best choices possible and create a safe environment for students to learn and develop positive relationships with others.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROFILES

Not applicable to the ASES program

The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) is an assessment instrument that is designed for teachers to use to reflect on the learning, development, and progress of all children enrolled in the program for 10 or more hours of care. The completed DRDP's area of development is incorporated into the activities provided to the children. Teaching staff assess each child's overall growth and development by using the DRDP. The DRDP is an observation to record individual progress toward the achievement of desired results for children.

QUALITY STANDARDS

Not applicable to the year-round, before- and after-school program

The Quality Standards serve as a quality assessment tool for a program at the programmatic, staff, and participant levels. Teaching staff use data collected from the Quality Standards assessment to create and implement lesson plans and activities in the classroom. The management team uses the tool as a guide to identify areas of

improvement.

SCHOOL-AGE CARE ENVIRONMENTAL RATING SCALE (SACERS)

Not applicable to the ASES program

The School-age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS) is designed to assess group care programs for school-age children (grade TK to age 12). An annual program improvement and evaluation process is completed to assist the program to offer quality child care services.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Options for Learning recognizes the importance of homework and study time. The program specifically plans a structured 45-minute study/homework time (one hour for ASES) each day for all children. During this study period, staff provide support and assistance to children. They help children get started on assignments, encourage them to continue working on the project, and, whenever possible, check assignments for accuracy. Site staff are usually not able to sit with each child as would a tutor, but they will provide all the assistance and help possible. At the conclusion of the homework/study time, staff continue with the daily routine for the site.

We are committed to providing a variety of activities for children and see this homework/study period as one component of the afternoon program. Most children are able to complete most or all the homework assignments during their time in the program. However, some children with more than 45 minutes of homework a night will need to complete their assignments at home. Working in a partnership with the school and parents enables the School-age Programs to be an integral part of a child's school success.

STUDENT AGREEMENT/DISCIPLINE

The program utilizes redirection to address behavior issues without the use of corporal punishment. Students and parents enrolling in the program must adhere to the behavior expectations outlined below and demonstrate positive character:

- I will come directly to the program site as soon as I am dismissed from school. I will bring all my personal belongings (homework, backpack, books, jacket, lunch box, etc.). (Transitional kindergartners and kindergartners are picked up and dropped off.)
- I will always follow the posted classroom rules.
- I will follow the Six Pillars of Character Counts (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship).
- I will take good care of the program learning materials, including manipulatives, books, games, and other supplies.
- I will ask permission to use someone else's belongings and respect their property.
- I will share and take turns.

- I will treat others with respect and kindness and use an appropriate tone of voice and body language. I will keep my hands and feet to myself, and I will be kind and not hurt others physically or with my words.
- I will help keep the environment clean, including tables, floors, walls, cubbies, restrooms, and playground.
- I understand that running takes place during outside time.
- I will remember to ask the teacher when I need to use the restroom and/or get a drink of water so that the teachers know where I am at all times.
- I will remain with the group at all times (indoor and outdoor) and will not leave without permission.

Consequences

- Verbal warning from the Options for Learning staff;
- Redirection, include limiting the use of a specific area for a reasonable amount of time;
- Use of site materials may be shortened;
- Writing or drawing about the rules I did not follow and describe how I can make better choices (What could I have done differently?);
- Suspension and/or disenrollment from the program.

SUMMER PROGRAM

During the summer months, staff provide engaging activities to reinforce and maintain skills children acquired during the year, helping to avoid the loss of learning. In addition, field trips are a part of the program. Depending on the budget, additional fees may be imposed for field trip costs.

FIELD TRIPS

Throughout the year, the programs take field trips to various locations or offer onsite extracurricular experiences. Some field trips require transporting children in buses. When the class is planning these types of trips, parents will be informed of the date, location, departure time, expected time of arrival, and for walking field trips, the route being taken. This information will be shared in the form of a posted notice. If parents choose for their child not to attend a specific field trip, they must inform the site teacher in advance so that other arrangements may be offered for that day.

The program typically offers a few field trips during the summer program. Field trips provide an opportunity for hands-on opportunities to extend the children’s learning. If funding is available, a “going to college day” may be offered for children entering the fourth grade to experience a university campus and attend college sporting events. All children must report to the designated site at the assigned time. For safety reasons, children are not allowed to be dropped off or picked up at any field trip location.

SPECIAL SUMMER CURRICULUM UNITS

During the summer, specific curriculum areas are emphasized. Each year, a different curriculum focus is offered. Staff provide hands-on activities and experiences that facilitate active learning.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Interested families wanting to enroll must contact the Intake Department to complete an inquiry. To ensure that we have accurate information on file, parents are required to update their information if it changes by calling the Intake Department at 626-699-8070.

Please note that there is no guarantee of enrollment in the program due to site capacity, eligibility status, and/or funding limitations. When space is available, an enrollment specialist will contact family to begin the enrollment process. All parents will be required to accurately complete the enrollment documentation to be considered enrolled in the program.

ASES program enrollment

Enrollment in the ASES program is based on priority. All parents enrolling in the program are required to accurately complete an ASES enrollment application and other forms each school year. Child care fees are not required for enrollment in the ASES program.

Year-round, before- and after-school program enrollment

Enrollment in the state-funded program is based on enrollment priority. Priority enrollment is given to families with a Child Protective Services (CPS) case or children who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Second priority is determined by income ranking; the family with the least income within the same rank will be enrolled first. When families have the same income, children with special needs will be given priority, then the date of application received will be considered before moving to the next rank number on the list.

Enrollment in the subsidized state-funded program is based on a family's identified eligibility and need for services and program funding availability; continued use of services is not an entitlement.

Fraud policy

Options for Learning is required to verify that all documentation provided for eligibility, income, and need purposes is reliable and factual, independently of the parent. If substantiated evidence of fraud is found that invalidates the initial certification or recertification, a Notice of Action will be issued to disenroll the family from child care services. All families have the right to the appeal due process listed on the Notice of Action or by contacting an Options for Learning representative.

Eligibility and need for services

Families enrolling in the subsidized program must meet at least one eligibility and one need requirement listed below:

Eligibility	Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child Protective Services (CPS) ■ Children identified as at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation ■ Current aid recipient ■ Income eligible ■ Homeless ■ Means-tested government program recipient [Medi-Cal, CalFresh, California Food Assistance Program (SNAP), California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), etc.] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child Protective Services (CPS) ■ Children identified as at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation ■ Employed or seeking employment ■ Engaged in vocational training or educational program ■ Parental incapacity ■ Seeking permanent housing ■ Homelessness

Vocational training and educational programs service limitations

For families whose need is vocational training, services are limited in total to six years from the initiation of services or 24 semester units or the equivalent after the attainment of a bachelor’s degree.

For families whose need is due to their attending an educational program (i.e., to attain a high school diploma, GED, or high school equivalency, enrollment in English language learner or English as a Second Language program), services are limited in total to six years from the initiation of services.

Study time is provided on an as-needed and case-by-case basis as specified in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5.

Enrollment and duration of services

Families enrolling in the program will need to provide documentation to support eligibility and need for services as specified in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5. The assigned enrollment specialist will verify the documentation provided and certify eligibility and need based on that information. *Please note: Under the federal McKenney Vento Act, if a family is experiencing homelessness, the child may be enrolled without documentation of eligibility and need; however, the required documentation must be provided within 30 days from the date the application is signed and approved by the enrollment specialist to avoid interruption of services.*

Upon establishing eligibility and need for services, a family will be considered to meet all eligibility and need requirements for not less than 24 months. However, a family that establishes eligibility based on income must report within 30 days if income exceeds the 85% threshold of the State Median Income (SMI); the family shall, at that time, be recertified to confirm ineligibility for services.

Voluntarily requesting changes

A family may, at any time within the 24-month period, voluntarily report changes to increase their child care schedule or reduce their monthly family fee by providing full supporting documentation for approval. Families requesting a reduction to their certified schedule will have to acknowledge in writing that they may retain their current certified schedule and will later have to provide additional documentation if they wish to increase the schedule again. An approval or denial of the request may take up to 10 business days after receipt of all documentation.

Recertification process

After initial enrollment in the program, families will be required to recertify their child care services, as indicated in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5. A recertification notice to the parent will be given 30 days prior to the end of the 24-month period. Parents are required to provide proof of eligibility and need for services within 50 days after the 24-month period. Failure to recertify for services by the 50th day will result in the disenrollment from the program.

Families of children who have reached 13 years of age at the time of recertification are ineligible for continued child care services. Children with exceptional needs may continue care past 13 years of age if there is documentation to extend age restrictions (i.e., an IEP and letter from a qualified professional listing the need for adult supervision).

Service contract hours

Parents are expected to bring their child to the program and abide by the approved contract hours established at the time of enrollment or recertification. The hours approved for care are indicated on the issued Notice of Action (NOA) and can also be viewed on the child's electronic attendance record when signing the child in and out.

Family fee assessment

Family fees (if applicable) are assessed based on the family size and family income determined at the time of initial certification and recertification. Fees are imposed based on the approved hours of care in a month and not attendance (includes absences). The monthly family fee applied to a family is determined based on the most current family fee schedule released by the California Department of Social Services, Child Care and Development Division.

If a family is assessed a family fee, a part-time fee is applied when the certified hours of care approved are less than 130 hours in a month, and a full-time fee is applied when the certified hours of care approved are 130 hours or more. In most cases, services provided on school days result in a monthly part-time fee; for months with non-school days (summer, winter, and spring breaks), the full-time fee is applied.

As indicated in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, families that are CalWORKs cash aid recipients and families with income less than 75% of the state median income (upon verification) shall not be charged a family fee. Children in Child Protective Services or at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation who have a written referral from a legally qualified professional requesting to exempt a family from paying a fee will not be required to provide documentation of the family's total countable income.

Delinquent fee agreement

Families are expected to keep their monthly fees current. Payments for child care services are due on the first of each month. Fees are considered delinquent after the seventh day of the month. A disenrollment Notice of Action for delinquent fees will be issued to families who become delinquent. Parents are required to make a payment or request a payment arrangement by the appeal date (indicated on the NOA) to avoid disenrollment of services. If a family receives three Notices of Action due to delinquent fees within a six-month period, the family will be disenrolled from the program.

Payments

Payments can be made at the Options for Learning office in West Covina; personal checks, cashier checks, and money orders are accepted. Credit card payments may be made online at www.OptionsForLearning.org/pay/. A receipt will be provided for payments received. A \$25 fee will be charged per personal check that is returned for insufficient funds.

Credit for fees paid to other service providers

When Options for Learning cannot meet all of a family's child care needs, and the parent is paying another provider for child care services, parents may submit proof of payment (receipts or canceled checks). A fee credit to the family account will be applied equal to the amount paid to the other provider; however, the fee credit will not be carried over beyond the family's subsequent fee billing period. Proof of payment to another provider must be received no later than the seventh day of the month, and the credit will be applied the following billing period.

Disenrollment from the program

As specified in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, families shall be disenrolled from the program when: (a) the verified income exceeds 85% of the state median income, (b) child changes residency outside of California, (c) when there is substantiated

evidence of fraud, or (d) when the family has abandoned their child care services.

No communication with the parent for 30 consecutive days is considered abandonment of care, resulting in disenrolling child care services; multiple attempts to reach the parent regarding a child's absences will be made, including a written notice sent to the parent.

In addition, families may be disenrolled for the following reasons but not limited to:

(a) failure to pay the monthly family fee, (b) family does not follow payment agreement for delinquent fees, (c) family does not recertify eligibility for ongoing services, (d) parent/child behavior and/or acts that disrupt the operation of the facility, which includes threatening staff members, intimidation tactics, acts of violence, and/or use of profanity, or (e) failure to observe program policies and procedures as indicated on the parent handbook.

Notice of Action (NOA)

A Notice of Action is issued at the time of initial certification, recertification, when a parent voluntarily reports a change in child care services, and when a child or family is disenrolling from the program. A recipient of subsidized child care services will receive a Notice of Action prior to any intended action taking place in their services.

Appeal process

All families receiving subsidized child care services have the right to appeal the intended Notice of Action (NOA). When the NOA is mailed, parents will have 19 days to appeal the notice; if the notice is given in person, families then have 14 days to appeal the notice.

If the agency receives an appeal request (call or written), the agency will respond and provide a local-level hearing within 10 days of an appeal request. Parents may refer to the backside of the Notice of Action for detailed information regarding their rights to an appeal.

Full-cost (private pay) enrollment

Private child care services

Families who are ineligible for subsidized child care services may enroll in the School-age Program privately. Families interested in full-cost (private) services are enrolled according to the date of application received and space availability. To enroll in the full-cost private pay School-age Program, parents must complete a Full-cost (PRVT) Child Care Contract for each child enrolling, complete other applicable enrollment forms, and agree to the applicable program policies addressed in this handbook.

Priority registration

Full-cost families who remain enrolled in the program through the school year receive priority enrollment for the next school year and do not have to reapply through the Intake Department. Summer services for full-cost families are optional. A notification will be sent

to full-cost parents informing them of their options for summer and fall registration.

Private contract hours

During the school year, full-cost families may bring their child to the program between the hours of 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on non-school days and receive before- and after-school services during school days.

Full-cost fees

A flat weekly fee is charged per child enrolled in the program. Families are billed in advance for the month. Fees are due on the first of the month. If paying weekly, the flat weekly rate per child is due on Mondays. Periodically, it is necessary to increase fees to operate the program. Parents will be informed in advance of any changes in child care fees.

Interruption of services

Child care services may be interrupted due to non-payment; this will require that a child be picked up from the program. Parents will be notified via email or phone call prior to any suspension of service due to past-due fees (for families enrolled through a third party, the School-age Program will notify the third-party program to provide an alternative child care provider during the suspension period). Parents will be given an opportunity to make full payment, upon approval, prior to the effective date of the suspension. Failure to make payment for services provided may result in transferring the account to a collection agency.

Third-party programs

Third-party programs provide financial assistance in the form of a voucher to low-income parents needing child care (e.g., DCFS, Pomona Unified, Childcare Aware of America, Options for Learning's Voucher Program). Families who are certified for child care services through a third-party program and elected the School-age Program as their child's provider may be enrolled in the program if there is space availability and must review, understand, and agree to the following:

- **Full-cost fees:** The School-age Program charges full-cost fees and will invoice the third-party payer accordingly. Periodically, it will be necessary to increase fees to operate the program. Third-party programs and families will be informed in advance of any changes in child care fees.
- **Co-payments (as applicable):** Families will be responsible for paying fees not covered by the third-party program. It is important that the enrolling parent discuss with the third-party program enrollment representative of any co-payments that may be due to the School-age Program. Parents may also contact the program's parent fee specialist if additional clarification is needed.
- **Third-party contract hours:** Families must adhere to the hours and days of care

approved by the third party; those hours will be reflected on the child’s sign-in sheet provided by the third-party program.

Payments: Payments can be made at the Options for Learning office in West Covina; cash, checks, cashier checks, and money orders are accepted. Credit card payments may be made online at www.OptionsForLearning.org/pay/. A receipt will be provided for payments received.

As indicated in the Full-cost (PRVT) School-year Child Care Contract, parents will be required to pay an insufficient fund fee for any returned check(s). In the event of three returned checks, parents will be required to pay for child care services by cash, money order, or cashier’s check only.

Child care credit for two weeks for full-cost families

Full-cost paying families may request two non-attendance weeks (non-incurred charges) per school year during either the district-observed Thanksgiving break, winter break (December/January), or spring break. This information is detailed in the Full-cost (PRVT) School-year Child Care Contract. Questions regarding fees should be directed to a parent fee specialist.

Full-cost private pay late pick-up fee

The School-age Programs do not operate after 6 p.m. When a site staff must stay after 6 p.m. due to a late parent, it negatively impacts the program. The office will be notified of any child in the program past 6 p.m. As indicated in the Full-cost (PRVT) School-year Child Care Contract, parents will be charged a late fee at a rate of \$5 for every 15 minutes after 6 p.m. or fraction thereof. The first late pick-up fee will be waived; thereafter, parents must pay the fees. Services may be terminated for unpaid late fees. Parents who are late three or more times in any six-month period may be dropped from the program.

TRANSITIONAL AND KINDERGARTEN CHILD CARE SERVICES

Not applicable to the ASES program

Districts may offer morning and afternoon kindergarten classes, identified as “early bird” and “late bird” sessions. Offering before- and after-school child care for each session is based on the program’s ability to have at least a required minimum number of students enrolled in each session. “Early birds” will be offered care first, then consideration for adding care for “late birds” will be determined depending on demand.

PROGRAM CONSOLIDATION

Not applicable to the ASES program

On non-school days, services provided on some site locations may change depending on the needs of the program. Children may be combined with other school sites during this time to provide child care for a full day. The selected combined sites will be shared with

parents in a timely manner.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Children with special needs may be enrolled in the program upon the collaborative planning and agreement between the family and program management. Each child's unique needs will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To support inclusion, specific adaptations and logical accommodation solutions will be examined and reasonable alternatives explored. Modifications to policies and procedures can be made if they do not fundamentally alter the nature of the program and services the program provides nor adversely affect the operation of the program. Services will be offered in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the child.

It is the practice of the program to do a prescreening for all special needs, medical conditions, and allergies that children may have to establish if the program is able to meet the needs of the child. Enrolling parents will be asked for authorization to grant permission to the inclusion supervisor to observe their child in either the child's classroom, current child care arrangement, or in the School-age Program environment. Occasionally more than one observation is necessary.

OPEN-DOOR POLICY

Open lines of communication between parents, school, and program personnel are essential. Parental input is valued and appreciated. We encourage parent participation by maintaining an open-door policy.

UNIFORM COMPLAINT POLICY

The agency has a uniform complaint policy that addresses grievances from parents of children enrolled in or applying to the agency, any other agency clients, or child care providers receiving services from the agency.

Our clients have the right to file a complaint or grievance regarding alleged unlawful discrimination or alleged violations of federal, state, or county regulations pertaining to activities or deficiencies of the program. Our agency has a Uniform Complaint Procedure for clients currently receiving or applying for service if filing a complaint or grievance. A copy may be requested from any Options for Learning office.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The School-age Programs encourages parent involvement, including becoming a member of the Parent Advisory Committee, attending parent information nights, attending site family night events, etc. Areas of interest that parents identify on surveys help the program identify our families' needs.

In addition, many parents have special talents and skills (such as playing musical instruments, cultural traditions, photography, etc.). Parents should speak to the site staff

and schedule a visit as a guest speaker if they are interested in sharing their area of specialty.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Some children are involved in extracurricular activities with their school. To ensure the safety of children, parents must complete an extracurricular form each school year (July 1 through June 30). This form provides permission for the site staff to release the child to attend the activity (typical activities include breakfast, assisting a teacher, tutoring, sports, music/dance, etc.).

INJURIES/STUDENT INSURANCE

If a child is injured while in our program, staff will assess the injury. An injury report will be provided to the parent via the parent portal. If necessary, the staff will call 911 and notify the parents immediately. Our program provides secondary insurance coverage for enrolled children who are injured while in our program or at a program-sponsored event. The secondary insurance serves solely as a supplemental coverage; this coverage is not a primary insurance. Information about this supplemental coverage can be obtained from the agency's Human Resources Department. The completion and submission of all insurance forms is the responsibility of the parents.

SUPERVISOR TEAM

Education supervisors are a vital part of our management team. They are responsible for monitoring each site's child care requirements, education, and health and safety, as indicated in the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 and Title 5 regulations. The education supervisor ensures compliance and program implementation (i.e., curriculum), and provides guidance and support to the site staff and families.

Enrollment supervisors are responsible for enrollment compliance and all related matters. Parents may request a conference with their family advocate to discuss health or social service needs for the family and child.

Parents should call the office and ask to speak to the appropriate supervisor with any specific questions or needs.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

All staff members are fingerprinted and have obtained Child Abuse Index clearance through the Department of Justice and the FBI. In addition, all staff complete a physical exam and TB test, and all teaching staff are certified in CPR and first aid.

Year-round, before- and after-school program staff

Not applicable to the ASES program

Options for Learning's center-based staff are committed to providing a quality program

in a safe, well-supervised environment. School-age teachers have completed college-level coursework and have a variety of teaching experience. Staff facilitate active learning by providing challenging and engaging activities that foster the development of each child. The goal is to encourage lifelong learning and to provide support for the child's school success. Most sites have one or more trained assistant teachers with an educational background in child development, and all have experience working with children. Our teaching teams provide a comprehensive, curriculum-rich program for the children in their care. The majority of the center-based site staff meet Title 5 (California Code of Regulations) Education Code requirements and have child development permits issued by the State of California, Commission on Teaching Credentialing.

ASES program staff

Our ASES site staff are carefully selected and trained and have a wide variety of teaching experience. Staff facilitate active learning by providing enriching and engaging activities that foster lifelong learning and support the instructional day. Staff are enrolled in college-level courses or have completed college-level courses or degrees.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS

Staff training take place four times a year and is an essential component of every program. These sessions provide quality time to train staff and provide information that enriches the overall services provided to our families. Topics include supervision, licensing requirements, safety, emergency procedures, etc.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Options for Learning is a private nonprofit, equal opportunity agency offering child care services to families regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability, or age or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

In addition, Options for Learning strives to create a harassment-free (sexual and non-sexual) environment and will take appropriate action(s) to maintain it.

ITEMS FROM HOME

The program provides materials for children to utilize in class. Parents are asked for their cooperation in not sending personal items from home unless the teacher has planned a share day or the item is part of a school project. If a child would like to bring a special item to share with the other children and staff, the parent should speak to the teacher in advance.

The program will not be responsible for toys, electronics, or other personal items that are broken or lost at the site. Items brought to the program are done so at sole discretion and

risk of the parent.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our programs align with the most current County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health's COVID-19 isolation and quarantine guidelines. Please note: If the school district follows a more stringent COVID-19 protocol, the program will adhere to those protocols. Children may not be accepted in the morning if they have a fever or otherwise demonstrate that they are too ill to participate in the program. In this case, the parent will be expected to take the child home or to make alternative arrangements for child care that day. If a child is sent home from school due to illness or suspension, the program will not accept the child. If a child becomes ill or contagious while in the program, the parent will be notified and expected to pick up the child within an hour to avoid exposing other children or staff to the condition. Staff will adhere to the program requirements regarding children with fever, lice or nits, and other contagious illnesses. Parents and the local health department will be informed of any outbreaks in the classroom as required.

MEDICATIONS/INCIDENTAL MEDICAL SERVICES

Parents and physicians requesting medication (prescribed or over the counter) to be dispensed during care hours must complete the Individual Health Plan (IHP) form. The physician section must be completed by the child's medical physician if the child requires the use of an inhaler, nebulizer, Epi-pen, glucose monitoring/testing, etc. For the safety and well-being of the child, teaching staff will not accept any child into the program if the site does not have in its possession the accurately completed Individual Health Plan form and the medicine that is to be administered during operating hours.

EMERGENCIES/LOCKDOWNS

In the event that a shelter-in-place or lockdown is ordered at one of our sites, the program will follow procedures set forth by the school district. During a shelter-in-place or lockdown situation, staff will keep children contained in the facility, and parents will be unable enter the facility. Districts typically communicate via the district website in such emergencies; Options for Learning will notify parents through the parent portal, so it is important that parents have notifications enabled. Other means may also be used to notify parents, such as email and text messaging.

The program follows an incidental medical services (IMS) plan.

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

Program sites are supplied with an emergency pack containing non-perishable items to sustain the children for approximately 72 hours. Please see the site's emergency disaster plan (LIC 610) and earthquake form on the site's parent board for information and relocation sites, as applicable.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A Parent Advisory Committee for School-age Programs is composed of one representative from each site. Members meet annually with the management team and/or program staff. Parent representatives are asked to share their ideas and goals at the individual site meetings held on scheduled family nights.

The committee helps formulate program goals and advises the administration about their ideas for program evaluation and improvement. The committee is an important part of the program's commitment to providing the best program possible for children. Parents who are interested in serving as a representative on the committee should contact the education supervisor for their site.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENT FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

As required by California State Law, employees and volunteers must submit proof of immunity to pertussis, measles, influenza, and tuberculosis prior to directly interacting with children.

Effective Sept. 1, 2016, a person may not be employed or volunteer at a child care center or family child care center unless he or she has been immunized against influenza, pertussis, and measles or qualifies for an exemption. Unless an exemption applies, each employee and volunteer shall receive an influenza vaccination each year between Aug. 1 and Dec. 1. All child care programs are required to ensure that anyone interacting with children in the program has on file proof of immunizations prior to volunteering in the program.

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS

Parents are invited to attend the parent information meetings held three or four times a year either virtually or at program sites. Topics may include nutrition, discipline techniques, or other topics of interest identified by parents through surveys. Child care is available during meetings when held in person. Parents may also request that a translator be present so they can benefit from the information presented. There is time before each meeting for parents to socialize and meet each other.

CELEBRATIONS

Options for Learning strives to be sensitive to all families in terms of holidays, birthdays, or special events. Any parent who wishes to bring a treat must first speak with the teacher to ensure items brought to the program are store-bought.

NUTRITIOUS SNACK (ASES PROGRAM)

All students receive a nutritious snack provided by the school district each afternoon. If a student feels he or she needs more than the snack provided, the student is welcome to bring snacks from home to have during the designated snack time.

If a child has allergies to a specific food or cannot eat a specific food due to a religious

conviction or dietary restriction, the district food program will substitute according to what the district has on file.

NUTRITION PROGRAM

Not applicable to the ASES program

Options for Learning participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All families are asked to complete a CACFP eligibility application (meal benefit form) each year per program requirements.

Food items provided to the children are delivered from the Options for Learning's Nutrition Center; food is served family-style unless prohibited by the County of Los Angeles Public Health Department. Breakfast and snacks offered to the children are prepared on site. The weekly menus and portion sizes are posted on the parent board so parents know what their children will be eating each day. The CACFP stipulates that food must be eaten while in the program and may NOT be taken home.

For children of families participating in the nutrition program, a daily afternoon snack will be provided on school days; on non-school days (full day or vacation day), breakfast and an afternoon snack will be offered. Parents will be required to provide a nutritiously balanced lunch, including a drink, on non-school days. Parents should be mindful that sending only snack foods for lunch is not appropriate for a developing child. The program encourages parents to provide a healthy meal.

If a parent chooses to send a child with additional snacks to supplement what is offered, it is strongly suggested that only healthy, lower-sugar snack options be provided. Due to limited space, the program cannot store food items.

ALTERNATIVE MEALS

Not applicable to the ASES program

If a child has allergies to a specific food or cannot eat a specific food due to a religious belief or dietary restriction, the parent may request alternative meals by completing a Request for an Alternative Meal form, which can be obtained from the program office. A doctor's note or a letter from the parent specifying what food the child cannot eat is required to make any food substitutions except for milk substitutions. A child will not be excluded because of a medically necessary dietary restriction.

In many cases, reasonable dietary modifications for a child with a disability are managed within the meal pattern requirements when a well-planned variety of nutritious food is available. However, the needs of a child with a disability may involve requests for accommodations that do not meet the meal pattern requirements. All meal services will be in the most integrated setting appropriate to meet the needs of the child. Staff will receive training for children with special meal requests and/or allergies.

The program will implement procedures for parents or guardians to request meal modifications for children with disabilities or to resolve grievances. Such procedures will provide a one-week advance notice to parents of children with medically necessary dietary restrictions. This notice will include daily menus with sufficient information about meal ingredients and product sourcing to ensure the parents are able to review meals to ensure safe and equal access for their child. Procedures that are in place to address requests to accommodate students with disabilities in the classroom in compliance with Section 504 or the IDEA may be used to fulfill this requirement.

Upon knowledge of a child's food allergy, the program shall:

- Notify parents and guardians of the process for requesting meal modifications to accommodate a child's disability; and
- Arrange a meeting with the child's parent(s) to develop an individualized meal plan for the child to meet his or her unique needs in an integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the child; this meeting and plan should be accordance with § 504 of the 1973 of the Rehabilitation Act.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which may be obtained online at www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling 866-632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- Fax: 202-690-7442; or

■ Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Note: The protected classes for the Child and Adult Care Food Program are race, color, national origin, age, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), and disability.

DRINKING WATER LEAD TESTING

Per Assembly Bill 2370, child care centers are required to test drinking water and cooking water for lead every five years, and Options for Learning abides by this rule. Parents and guardians will be provided with informational materials on the dangers of lead exposure on an annual basis.

HEALTHY SCHOOLS ACT – ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE PESTICIDE USE

In accordance with the Healthy Schools Act of 2000, the following is a list of pesticides that may be used at Options for Learning classroom sites or other facilities this year.

Options for Learning’s goal is to minimize the use of pesticides; we will use pesticides only when no other choice is available. When possible, we will use pesticides over the weekend; however, in emergencies, we may apply pesticides during the week. We will never apply pesticides that are not safe to use around children.

Written notification will be given to all parents/guardians and staff 72 hours prior to any pesticide application at a classroom site. In addition, a warning notification sign will be posted at a site 24 hours in advance of any pesticide application. This warning notification will remain posted for 72 hours after the application. If a product not listed below is used, written notification will be given to parents/guardians and staff at that classroom site at least 72 hours before the application indicating what pesticide is being used. Annual notification will be provided to families. Center-based staff will be notified at the beginning of each school year.

A registry must be maintained by parents/guardians and staff to receive notices 72 hours before any pesticide is applied at a site. Options for Learning will meet this requirement by placing all parents, guardians, and staff on the registry for each classroom.

A copy of Options for Learning’s Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan is available at each site, at each Options for Learning office, and on our [website](#). For more information regarding these pesticides and pesticide use reduction, please visit the Department of Pesticides Regulation’s (DPR) [website](#).

NAME OF PESTICIDE	ACTIVE INGREDIENT(S)
Tim-bor Professional	Disodium Octaborate tetrahydrate > 99%
Suspend SC Insecticide	Deltamethrin 4.75%
Maxforce FC Magnum Roach killer Bait Gel	Fipronil 0.05%
PT P.I. Pressurized Contact Insecticide	Pyrethrins 0.05% Piperonyl Butoxide 4%

	Piperonyl Butoxide, Technical 4.00%
Maxforce FC Magnum Ant killer Bait Gel	Fipronil 0.0010%
Masterline Bifenthrin 7.9 Termiticide/Insecticide	Bifenthrin 7.9%
Niban Granular Bait	Orthoboric Acid 5%
Zoecon Precor IGR Concentrate	Methoprene Isopropyl 1.2%
Zythor	Sulfuryl Fluoride 99.3% Other ingredient 0.7%
NAME OF HERBICIDE	ACTIVE INGREDIENTS(S)
Final Stop Weed and Grass Herbicide	A potent and superior blend of Citric Acid, Cinnamon Oil, Clove Oil, Soybean Oil, Rosemary Oil, Sesame Oil, Thyme Oil

If you have any questions, please contact Options for Learning at 626-699-8070 or visit our website at www.OptionsforLearning.org