

*P*arent Handbook

FOR PREMIER CHILD CARE CENTERS

PILL HILL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

8802 South Stony Island Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60617
Phone: 773.221.6800

NEAR THE PIER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

540 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611
Phone: 312.527.ABCD(2223)

WEST AUSTIN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

4920 West Madison Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60644
Phone: 773.261.ABCD(2223)

HEGEWISCH / EAST SIDE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

13338 S. Brandon Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60633
Phone: 773.646.ABCD(2223)

PARENT HANDBOOK FOR THE PREMIER CHILD CARE CENTERS

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FORMS (See center director for copies)

Signature Page(s) One for each Custodial Parent and/or Legal Guardian

Mission Statement

Policy No. 1

The Premier Child Care Centers' aim is to provide high-quality childcare for children ages 6 weeks through 12 years of age. It is our principle goal to produce highly esteemed students who grow into life-long learners. Through a caring, nurturing, safe environment, the staff at The Premier Child Care Centers meet the cognitive, physical, social and emotional needs of the children making the preschool experience a positive introduction to formal education. Programming encourages exploration and discovery, with interactive development choices. Through age-appropriate curriculum and developmentally appropriate practices, children at The Premier Child Care Centers are active participants in the learning process. It is the intention of the teaching staff to develop the whole child, and impart a college bound mentality in the preschool mind.

“Developing Preschoolers into Pre-scholars”

Welcome

Policy No. 2

Welcome to The Premier Child Care Centers. Choosing a day care facility to entrust the education and development of your child is one of many first crucial decisions parents will make. Issues such as safety, sanitation, nutrition, socialization and academics are all components that influence a parent's final choice.

The fact that you have weighed these factors and chosen to enroll your child at one of the Premier Child Care Centers is perceived as your vote of confidence in our staff and our curriculum. Rest assured that we will not take your trust in us for granted. Each day we promise to allow your children the freedom to explore their environment. Each day we promise to give them our very best energy and effort. Each day we promise to do everything within our professional power to make your child look forward to returning and exploring the next day.

Should you have any comments or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Center's Director. We look forward to servicing you and your family's needs. We also invite you to visit our website at: thepremierchildcare.com.

Program Philosophy

Policy No. 3

The Premier Child Care Centers have operated high quality childcare facilities in the Chicago area since 1985. Pill Hill Development Center launched the chain. In 1997, Near the Pier Development Center became the second location catering to downtown clientele. Lakeview Development Center opened in 2002 servicing children on the far North Side. The year 2011 welcomes the two newest links, Hegewisch/East Side Development Center and Just Us Development Center in Justice, Illinois.

The Premier Child Care Centers have become a staple in the communities we serve by producing children who are academically sound and filled with social grace. It is our belief that children can absorb and retain any materials presented to them in an age appropriate manner. That's why, the academic program at The Premier Child Care Centers have been acclaimed for preparing students by mastering concepts, facing challenges and reaching beyond the normal scope of preschool learning.

There is a distinction between children in a Premier Child Care Center and children who attend other pre-schools. That distinction separates and defines the essence of what serves as the equation for our philosophy for education:

Exposure + Experience = Excellence

Licensing Information

Policy No. 4

4.1 All child care centers in the City of Chicago are licensed and monitored by the City of Chicago Day Care Center Licensing Department and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS.) Routine visits are made by both agencies. The City of Chicago monitors the physical plant of the facility. The State of Illinois monitors the programming of the facility and the physical plant. A City task force annually inspects facilities for license renewal. Included in the task force are experts from plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning, city nurse, building department, and the department of health. The combination of these municipalities ensures that compliances are maintained.

Both agencies mandate the immunization of all children including school-age children in a child care facility. For this primary reason, we require all physicals be up-to-date before matriculation and renewed on the anniversary date of the current physical. Any student not in compliance, or not exempt, will not be allowed into the center until the immunization record or the exempt form is on file.

4.2 The Premier Child Care Centers are highly competitive, highly respected magnet childcare facilities. At the current time, we are not seeking accreditation by any outside agencies.

Enrollment

Policy No. 5

Enrollment at a Premier Child Care Center is open to children from 6 weeks through 12 years. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability, and without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy or disability.

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child in The Premier Child Care Center of their choice by completing the Enrollment Application and paying the application or registration fee which is NON-REFUNDABLE and cannot be applied to the first month's tuition. Enrollment online is available on our website: thepremierchildcare.com.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed contract (updated annually and in the summer session), registration fee, immunization records (or exempt form), birth certificate, dental form, dietary alert, signed Parent Handbook receipt, and all other forms specific to enrollment.

The enrollment application and fee agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration.

The Premier Child Care Centers reserve the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

Continued enrollment at a Premier Child Care Center is contingent upon the parents providing, and keeping current, emergency contact persons and the families adherence to the policies and procedures of the center as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition, etc.

Parents are required to notify center immediately, should there be a change in any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dismissed from the program and forfeiture of any payments. Updated information is imperative in cases of emergency.

If a child is dismissed from the center, the Center Director will work with the family to find alternate child care. Working with families includes, but is not limited to, providing a list of child care providers, assisting in the instruction on changing subsidy paperwork and sending reference descriptions of special needs.

Tuition

Policy No. 6

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a contract agreement prior to, or at the time of enrolling their child in one of The Premier Child Care Center. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed. A second copy of billing information and/or correspondence, will require a \$1.00 per page copying fee.

6.1 PAYMENT SCHEDULE: Payments are due on the first Monday of every month. If payment is not received by the end of the business day on the first Thursday of the month, a late fee of \$50.00 will be added to tuition on the morning of the fifth business day (Friday.) Children will not be admitted into the center Friday morning or until tuition is paid in full, including all late fees.

LATE PAYMENTS: Parents with fee arrangements are susceptible to an additional late fee of \$50.00 if the arrangements are breached. Should arrangements have more than one due date, the grace period on the first due date will not extend to the second due date. All monies are due on the subsequent due dates with no grace period on any subsequent payments on the same bill, during the same month.

FORMS OF PAYMENT

Check, money order, or credit/debit cards (Master Card and Visa) are acceptable forms of payment. Receipts will be given for ALL payments, tuition or otherwise. All parents are required to receive a computer-generated receipt and should file them for future reference. If a receipt is not issued at the time of payment, it should be reported to our Central Office at 773-378-1396. Payments must be handed directly to the Front Desk Coordinator or the Director. Your cancelled check cannot serve as your only receipt for payments. A computer generated receipt must accompany any/all forms of payment. If you do not have a receipt, should a discrepancy arise, the disputed amount will be due.

RETURNED CHECK FEES

There will be a \$40.00 fee charged for any check returned by the bank. Returned checks will be re-deposited a second time in accordance with bank policy. However, the returned check fee will apply. If the check clears when re-deposited, no further fees will be due. If the check does not clear on the second time, the principle amount will then be added to the account. Parents will be responsible for re-issuing a second form of payment. A returned check cannot be paid with another check even from another account nor a family members' account. If two checks are returned on the same account, all future tuition payments must be made by certified funds. This will be for the duration of the child's enrollment.

Tuition DOES NOT include fees for field trips, extra curricular or core curricular fees such as workbooks, school supplies, readers, graduation fees, registration fees, other fees, school pictures, year books, etc.

Other fees

Other fees may include but are not limited, workbooks (4&5 year olds), diapers, bibs, sip cups, field trips, property damage.

Confidentiality

Policy No. 7

Within The Premier Child Care Centers, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of the center who “need to know” in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as The Premier Child Care Centers strive to protect everyone’s right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of anyone associated with The Premier Child Care Centers.

Outside of The Premier Child Care Centers, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given expressed written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of The Premier Child Care Centers, the person(s) with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

Any parent who violates the confidentiality policy will not be permitted on agency property thereafter. Refer to the policy regarding “Parents Right to Immediate Access” for additional information regarding dismissal of a child when a parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting). You may be curious or concerned about the other child. However, you are discouraged from discussing sensitive information about any other child with anyone. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child’s privacy. Employees of The Premier Child Care Centers are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about these children with anyone outside of their family.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect

Policy No. 8

Under the Child Protective Services Act, Mandated Reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of The Premier Child Care Centers are considered Mandated Reporters under this law. The employees of The Premier Child Care Centers are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under this Act, Mandated Reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at The Premier Child Care Centers take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As Mandated Reporters, the staff of The Premier Child Care Centers cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.” Employees making false reports resulting from a dispute with a family, if proven, will be discharged.

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals, including drinks for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation
- Failure to pick-up a child after center is closed

Parent Code Of Conduct

Policy No. 9

The Premier Child Care Centers require the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect at all times. One of the goals of the center is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of the center but, it is also the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the center. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on agency property thereafter. Please refer to the "Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access" for additional information regarding disenrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

9.1 SWEARING/CURSING:

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on agency property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward any member of the staff. Parents are also encouraged to express their anger in letter form.

9.2 THREATENING EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN, OTHER PARENTS OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PREMIER CHILD CARE CENTER:

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, the Centers cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the agency will not assume the risk of a second chance. PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.

9.3 PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN AT THE PREMIER CHILD CARE CENTER:

The Premier Child Care Centers do not necessarily support nor condone corporal punishment of children. Such acts are not permitted on child care facility grounds. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing this may cause undue embarrassment and/or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teachers and seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, (for the purpose of correction or discipline), a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner. It is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concerns to the classroom teacher and/or Center Director. While we agree that it "takes a village to raise a child." It only takes one to destroy a child.

Parent Code Of Conduct

Futhermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss another child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or Director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or Director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Center's Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our agency have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center. Should a conference be necessary, it will be scheduled with all proper parties as soon as all parties agree.

9.4 SMOKING:

For the health of all The Premier Child Care Center employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on school grounds, and in the parking lot of the centers. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering school, not on school grounds.

9.5 VIOLATIONS OF THE SAFETY POLICY:

Parents are required to follow all safety procedures at all times. These procedures are designed not as mere inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children and associates of The Premier Child Care Centers entrance procedures. We all like to be polite. However, we need to be careful to not allow unauthorized individuals into the center. Holding the door open for the person following you may, in fact, be polite, however that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Centers' Director.

9.6 CONFRONTATIONAL INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYEES, OTHER PARENTS OR ASSOCIATES OF THE PREMIER CHILD CARE CENTERS:

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of The Premier Child Care Centers, or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate and are strictly prohibited.

9.7 VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY:

The Premier Child Care Centers take very seriously, the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the agency. Parents must understand the implications of their responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families and employees associated with The Premier Child Care Centers. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

Parent's Right To Immediate Access

Policy No. 10

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are at The Premier Child Care Center, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) The Premier Child Care Centers must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with The Premier Child Care Centers, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, The Premier Child Care Centers suggest that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. Our staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the Center Director, and are allowed in the child care facility only at the discretion of the Center's Director. An employee of the center will accompany visitors at all times, throughout the center to ensure the safety of the center.

The Premier Child Care Center will dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering agency property. Due to the "Parent's Right to Immediate Access Policy", as well as state and federal regulations, The Premier Child Care Centers cannot have a child at the agency when the child's parent is prohibited access. The Premier Child Care Centers will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the parent agrees to stay out of the center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and will not be entertained.

Dismissal

Policy No. 11

The Premier Child Care Centers reserve the right to dismiss any child at any time, with just cause. Families will be assisted in the transition process when enrollment is terminated. The transition time should not exceed two weeks.

Parents will be refunded any advance tuition within thirty days of the dismissal. An agency check will be mailed to the address indicated in the child's file. Any past due balances must be paid within 30 days of the dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the address indicated in the child's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30-day period will be referred to the agency's legal counsel for collections.

The Center's Director or designee will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to leave agency property in a calm and respectful manner, immediately. The Premier Child Care Center will request assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings upon dismissal.

A dismissed child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the center Director if they wish to return to agency property following a dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center's Director and are not a "right" of the dismissed child or parent.

Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with the agency by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law by The Premier Child Care Centers' legal team.

Withdraw

Policy 12

Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. The parents and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to reenter agency property without prior permission of the Center's Director. A withdrawn child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Center's Director if they wish to return to agency property following the last day of enrollment at The Premier Child Care Centers. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center's Director.

Parents who wish to change their child's days or times of enrollment must submit a written request two weeks in advance of the proposed schedule change. Schedule changes are subject to a \$30.00 change fee. Should a schedule change be approved, parents must be consistent on the days they have chosen. This allows the center to plan and maintain proper ratios. Parents who have changed their enrollment without notifying the center will be charged retroactively, reflecting the date of the unauthorized change, for any applicable fees. The Center Director is the only person who has the authority to approve a schedule change. Teachers and Assistant Teachers must refer parents to the Director for such approval.

The Center Director will notify the parents in writing if the new schedule is available. A schedule change will not be considered to be final until a new contract agreement is signed. If the schedule change requires an additional fee, the change will also be contingent upon payment of those fees. If the requested schedule is not available, parents may choose to continue with the current schedule until such time as the requested schedule becomes available, or may choose to withdraw their child from the program. The date the Center Director receives the schedule change will be the date used to toll the two weeks' notice required for withdrawal.

Students absent for two consecutive weeks without communicating with the center, will result in an automatic withdrawal. Parents must reapply if they choose to return. All applicable fees will be required during the re-entry process.

Court Orders Effecting Enrolled Children

Policy No. 13

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) The Premier Child Care Centers must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with The Premier Child Care Centers' administration, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, the center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, the center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of The Premier Child Care Centers cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. The center's staff will report any violations of these orders to the court. A written letter from one parent requesting restrictions on the other parent is not acceptable and will not be recognized as an enforceable document to restrict access.

Arrival Procedures

Policy No. 14

Upon arrival to The Premier Child Care Centers, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into care on the sign-in sheet located at the front desk. Afterwards, parents are required to wash their children's hands in order to reduce the spread of infectious diseases. Children are required to be escorted by their parent, or the adult dropping them off, to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times while in the child care facility. Parents are required to help children put away their outerwear and get settled for the day.

The Premier Child Care Centers discourage parents from "sneaking out" of the center. Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their parent(s) to leave. We believe it is best for parents to tell the anxious child upon arrival that after all of the child's things are put away, the parent will kiss, hug and say goodbye to the child. This will prepare the child for their departure. The employee present in the classroom will comfort and assist the child through the anxious time. Parents are asked to leave after saying goodbye. The longer the parent of an anxious child drags out the departure, the more anxiety the child is likely to feel. The professional employees of the centers are available to discuss other options if the child does not settle into the arrival routine after a reasonable period of time, usually two weeks.

At arrival, parents are required to follow the "Medication Policy" (Policy # 26) if a child must receive medication during the course of the day.

Parents are required to notify the child's teacher or Center's Director of any special instructions or needs for the child's day. The parent must present the special instructions in the form of a letter and verbally discuss them with either the classroom teacher or Center's Director. These special instructions include but are not limited to: early pick-up, alternative pick-up person, health issues over the previous night which need to be observed and/or any general issues of concern which the child care providers should be aware to best meet the needs of your child throughout the day.

14.1 NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

Parents are required to inform the center by 9:00 a.m. if a child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. This will enable the center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day. Parents who fail, on 5 occasions in one school calendar year, to give proper notice of an absence could result in the child being dismissed from the program.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the Center's Director not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need-to-know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Center's Director, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. The center will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. Parents are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based, whatsoever, on your decision to share, or not to share, the reason for your child's absence from school.

Parents who know in advance that a child will be late, are required to notify the center by 8:30 a.m. so as to maintain the appropriate number of employees to ensure ratios are met when the child arrives to school.

Arrival Procedures

14.2 AGENCY'S RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION

The Premier Child Care Centers reserve the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with just cause.

The Premier Child Care Centers strive to maintain an ample list of substitutes in anticipation of staff absences, however, there are times when substitutes are not available and classrooms need to be closed to maintain compliance with licensing regulations. Refusals will be based on a "first come first served" basis when seeking to maintain appropriate staff to child ratios and/or when closing classrooms. Calling in advance to report late arrivals serves as a good safeguard to avoid being refused admission.

Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

- 1. Lack of staff to maintain appropriate staff-to-child ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations.*
- 2. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.*
- 3. Staff deems the child too ill to attend.*
- 4. Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at the Premier Child Care Centers, if the child were to be present at the center.*
- 5. Parents' failure to maintain accurate, up-to-date records.*
- 6. Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.*
- 7. Unexcuse late arrival (see Center Director for specific arrival guidelines).*
- 8. Outstanding unpaid balances.*

Pick Up Procedures

Policy No. 15

Parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care on the sign-out sheet located at the front desk. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on agency premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child, and are required to directly exit the building once they have signed their child out of care.

Parents must take home all papers in the child's cubby or school bag each day.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parents" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you or another authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day. A live chat conference is available on our website: thepremierchildcare.com.

15.1 LATE PICK-UP

Full time students should be picked up at the close of the day. Check with the center to verify closing times. Late is considered 1 minute after closing for full-time students. Part-time students should be picked up at 12:30 p.m. and are considered late at 12:31. All measurements of time are to be in accordance with The Premier Child Care Center's clock located in the front area or on the computer at the front desk.

Late fees are \$20.00 for every 10 minutes late or any fraction thereof. Late fees are due the evening when fees are incurred or the following morning before leaving your child. Parents who call as a courtesy are appreciated however, it does not waive the late pick-up fee nor will the late fee be reduced. Parents or parents' designee, will be asked to sign an acknowledgment of late fee form indicating the time and the charges incurred. This form will go in the permanent file of the child, and will be faxed to our Central Office. Fees will be added to the account immediately. Center staff will wait on the premises for 1 hour past closing. Staff will begin calling parents one minute after closing. Alternate contact numbers will be called twice during the hour. If no one has picked up the child/children during that time, staff will call authorities and the child/children can be picked up at the local area police station. (All attempts will be exhausted before the decision is reached to call authorities).

A child's services will be terminated should the child be picked up late on three occasions in one school year regardless of the reasons for the late pick-up. (except in excused cases.) It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or emergency/alternate pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time each day.

15.2 PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS/ALCOHOL AT PICK-UP

The staff of The Premier Child Care Centers will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear, to the staff of The Premier Child Care Centers, to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the agency from denying a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent is, or appears to be impaired. However, The Premier Child Care Centers staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police and Child Protective Services.

Pick Up Procedures

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick up a child, and appears to the staff of The Premier Child Care Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff of The Premier Child Care Center will contact the child's parents, local police and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

15.3 EMERGENCY/ALTERNATE PICK-UP FORMS

At enrollment, parents will be presented with an Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form. Parents are encouraged to include on this form any and all persons who may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from The Premier Child Care Center. In an emergency situation the child's parents will be called first. If they can not be reached, staff will call the people listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list. Failure of the parent to make such arrangements will result in dismissal from the program. If parents cannot be reached, staff will continue to call names on the emergency pick-up form.

Parents do not need to be listed on the Emergency Contact Form. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents (in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick up their child.

Parents will be asked to determine which persons (if any) on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form have the right to act "In loco parentis." In loco parentis status affords the pick up person the right to discuss confidential information about the child's day including but not limited to, incident/accident reports, and behavior issues. In the absence of this designation the people on the Emergency/Alternate Pick Up Form are only afforded the right to pick up the child. Staff is not permitted to discuss the child's day with them.

The persons on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up form will be required to provide a government issued photo ID, passport and government issued photo ID prior to the agency releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule. In the event that no ID is available, the persons picking up the child will be required to provide an agreed upon password. If there has not been a password established, children will not be released and late fees could apply.

All changes and/or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form. Changes should be made immediately as circumstances change in the family.

The Premier Child Care Centers reserve the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Emergency/Alternate Contact Form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to inform each person on the Emergency/alternate form of the policies/procedures contained herein. Additionally, alternate persons are required to adhere to the code of conduct policy.

Transportation

Policy No. 16

Transportation is available at most of the centers, provided there is enough demand for transportation. Weekly rates for transportation are available at the individual centers and can be obtained at the front desk upon request. It is required that a Transportation Application be filled out at the time transportation is requested unless it is a one time trip. One time trips are considered one time when it is not routine. Transportation forms are to be updated annually should any information change.

Anytime transportation needs are changed, a new application must be filled out. Transportation changes are subject to approval depending on availability and time constraints in the regular route. When transportation is not used, or a holiday falls during the week, transportation rates will be prorated. Transportation will not be provided if payment is not submitted.

When transportation is requested and the parent has made alternate arrangements without notifying The Premier Child Care Centers staff, a \$10.00 charge will be added to your account to offset the attempted trip cost. Transportation charges are subject to an increase without notification depending on the rise of gas prices.

Should the transportation engineer be late picking up students, for an emergency reason, the pick-up school will be contacted immediately to ensure that students are not left unattended, cold, or afraid due to the drivers late arrival. Alternate emergency procedures will go into affect. Premier staff will be in constant contact with the pick-up school and the parents. A written account of the situation will be issued explaining the details concerning the cause for the emergency.

School Calendar

Policy No. 17

School Calendars are distributed at the beginning of every month. They should be posted on the refrigerator and referred to as needed. Copies are available throughout the month. Please contact the Front Desk Coordinators. Calendars/Schedules can also be accessed on our website: thepremierchildcare.com.

Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather Information

Policy No. 18

In the events of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parents will be notified of the closing by mass e-mail, network television (WGN-TV, ABC, NBC, CBS), phone chain, message on school voice mails, and posted on the website at:
thepremierchildcare.com

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick-up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick-up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or the emergency contact person, of the pick up location should the children need to be evacuated from the child care center. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.

Should the center need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closures of less than ten school days. If the closure extends beyond ten school days, parents will have their tuition REDUCED/PRO-RATED per diem, then credited toward the next months tuition. If the child withdraws, or is terminated for any reason, and enrollment does not extend to the next month, no refund will be due.

Curriculum Information

19 Curriculum Components

The Premier Child Care Centers are noted for providing a challenging curriculum that promotes academic excellence through individual achievement. From infants to school-agers, our students are distinguished by their competency and confidence.

Incorporated into the fundamental principles of safety, comfort and quality care are enrichment programs that ensure students will exceed the developmental milestones of their peers. Moreover, our co-curricular activities give children a well-rounded, liberal educational experience. Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Pre-fit, computer classes, music classes and martial arts are our featured extra-curricular activities that vary among centers. Children are exposed to at two least two languages classes. Many graduates continue their language studies and reach fluency.

“Your Baby Can Read,” enhances the infant/toddler program and keeps parents in amazement of how advanced their infants/toddlers become shortly after enrollment. The infant/toddler program also includes Tummy Time, Infant Yoga, literacy promotion through classical music in Spanish, French, and of course English.

In addition to the core concept learning of alphabets, shapes, numbers, colors and nursery rhymes, our two through five year olds enjoy the “Imagine It” curriculum. “Imagine It” is an interactive, hands-on literacy and math basil that delights and intrigues children with its bright illustrations, 3-D puppets, and planned activities that bring learning to life.

Learning is not just done in the classrooms at Premier Child Care Centers. The discovery process “takes it to the streets.” Daily outdoor activities (weather permitting) include: nature walks, playground play, trike trails, rock collecting, leaf bagging, snow play, and fossil finds. Children are allowed to experience the world around them and drink in its natural wonders daily.

Combining the best pieces of child developmentalist like Piaget, Montessori, Erickson, Kohlberg and Maslow, gives our curriculum an edge that allows us to proudly say that we “Develop Preschoolers into Pre-scholars.”

Curriculum Information

Policy No. 19

19:1 A daily schedule is provided as an overview of what a typical day entails in the classroom. For more specific activities and thematic curriculum, inquire in the individual classroom with the classroom teacher.

Daily Schedule

6:00 a.m./6:30 a.m.	Arrival & Informal inspection of students Parent assisted hand washing Parent sign-in students at front desk “My Choice” Self-selected activities in open areas
8:00 a.m.	Clean-up, washroom, hand-washing preparation for breakfast
8:30 a.m.	Breakfast, washroom, hand/face washing
9:00 a.m.	Circle time (songs, finger play) Creative workshop (art, science, water play, texture table activities, building blocks, dramatic play, academic center)
10:30 a.m.	Clean-up & Curiosity Shop
10:45 a.m.	Small group activities/outdoor play, puppet play, discovery center, academic arts
11:15 a.m.	Lunch preparation: washroom, hand/face washing, table setting
11:30 a.m.	Meals & Music (Lunch)
12:00 p.m.	Washroom & Sleepy House (nap), brushing
2:00 p.m.	Washroom & prepare for afternoon snack
2:30 p.m.	“I Am What I Eat” -Snack time
3:00 p.m.	Washroom, hand/face washing, fountain time
3:30 p.m.	Story-time, thematic learning, exercise, center play, art activities
4:30 p.m.	“Making Muscles” Large motor skills activities
5:00 p.m.	Table games, table-top toys, coloring, self-help
5:30 p.m.	Circle games, tie shoes, wipe faces, prepare for departure
6:00pm/6:30pm	<u>Departure</u>

Curriculum Information

19.2 CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Children are assigned to classrooms according to their ages or developmental stages. Upon enrollment, your child's teacher will be introduced to you along with his/her assistant teacher. We encourage you to establish a good working relationship with your child's teaching staff. This will help foster a comfort zone for your child in the center. There is a possibility that your child could be moved from one classroom to another in the case that your child's academic or social skills level is more or less advanced than your child's original classroom assignment dictates. In the case of a classroom change, parents will be notified in writing of the date the expected move will take place and the reason for the move. A one week transition period allows children time to adjust to their new environment.

19.3 RATIOS

See staff for child / teacher ratios or refer to the Department of Children and Family Service website.

19.4 NAP/REST TIME

Nap time is a requirement of the State of Illinois under the supervision of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS.) DCFS mandates that all children in a child care facility have a rest period of two hours. Though children are not required to sleep, they are required to rest. This rest period is designed to ensure that proper rest is maintained in accordance with their age level and to promote proper growth and development.

EDUCATIONAL/PERSONAL CARE SUPPLIES NEEDED

It is required that students bring and maintain a complete change of clothes that is in keeping with the seasons. Clothes must be replenished immediately after they are depleted. The clothes must have the child's full name marked with a laundry marker. Initials are not acceptable as initials tend to duplicate themselves in a setting with large numbers of children. Each student must have a t-shirt/sweatshirt with the school logo to be worn on all school sponsored trips. T-Shirts are purchased at the center. Head Start teachers may require students to bring toothbrushes. These toothbrushes should be marked with the child's full name and replaced accordingly to ensure proper hygiene is maintained. The four and five year old levels are required to purchase workbooks and readers. The list of the books are issued upon enrollment. All workbook and reader fees are due the second week of September. Kindergartners are required to have and maintain the following items throughout the academic year.

*Pencil case
Two No. 2 pencils
Pencil sharpener
Two folders
Ruler
Book bag
Blunt Scissors
Box of tissue*

Curriculum Information

19.6 BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Enrolled students may celebrate their birthdays and special occasions at the center with a one week advanced notice. Parents are to inform the front desk coordinator and the classroom teacher of the intended day of the celebration and the number of anticipated guests not enrolled (or associated) with the center. Parents are responsible for bringing all necessary supplies and materials for the celebration. Supplies include but are not limited to: flatware, cups, plates, garbage bags, knives, candles, matches, party bags. People coming to the celebration must be made aware of the centers policies and must adhere to said policies when they are on the premises. All guests must sign the guest book upon arrival and departure.

19.7 PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES/COMMUNICATION

Parents may request a conference with a teacher at any point during the school year with a two day advance notice. Parent conferences are held in the office with the Director/Assistant Director present. All conferences will be documented and kept in the child's permanent record. Web conferences are available upon request on our website: thepremierchildcare.com.

19.8 GRADUATION

Graduation celebrations are held in June of each year. At the beginning of May, children begin rehearsal for the upcoming graduation. Parents are required to rehearse with their children at home. Speaking parts will be sent home in order for parents to assist children with their parts. A graduation fee is due in March. This fee is determined and distributed in February. The fee covers the rental of the graduation site, audio equipment, graduation attire, and keepsake books. Any unpaid fees (not limited to graduation fees) will forfeit your child's participation in graduation. All fees paid two weeks before graduation must be paid in cash. No exceptions.

Guidance & Discipline

Policy No. 20

Children displaying aggressive behavior will be separated from the group for a short period of time, talked to calmly and repeated the rules at eye level. Staff will redirect energy in a positive manner, or deny privileges temporarily. If at this point the child does not cooperate, he/she will be taken to the Director/Assistant Director and the parent will be contacted. For students who continue to be challenged, a day will be scheduled with the parents so they may observe the child interacting with classmates and staff. This will give the parents a chance to see how better to handle discipline in a combined effort between the center and the home. In extreme cases, a discipline contract will be formulated where the behavior is monitored both at home and at school then communicated by both. The purpose of this method is to modify behavior in a more balanced manner.

Unacceptable forms of punishment include spanking, humiliation and deprivation of food or rest.

Any child who after attempts have been made to meet their individual needs, demonstrates an inability to benefit from the type of care offered by the facility and who is a detriment to the group, will be discharged from the center. In all instances, when the school decides that it is in the best interest of all involved to terminate enrollment, the parents' planning needs will be considered. Referrals and recommendations will be made available along with a two week period for parents to find alternate care.

Toys From Home

Policy No. 21

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, loss, and the spread of disease, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing the policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

If the parents fail repeatedly to enforce this policy with their children, the staff will call the parents and require that they come to the school and remove the toy.

Children in classrooms with nap/rest time are permitted to include with their bedding supplies, one plush/non-musical toy with which to nap/rest. This toy is to be placed with the bedding supplies and use of it will only be allowed at nap/rest time. This is allowed for as long as the child needs it to be comfortable.

All toys brought in for use as part of the curriculum, and/or for nap/rest time will be inspected by The Premier Child Care Centers' staff for safety and appropriateness, and may be prohibited at the sole discretion of the center.

Dress Code

Policy No. 22

22.1 CHILDREN

Clothing:

Children are engaged in various activities during the course of the day. Some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing.

Parents are prohibited from dressing children in overalls, or clothing with difficult closures. These types of clothing present particular challenges for children in relation to toileting and developing self-help skills.

Coats, hats, gloves, scarves and winter boots must be provided in the winter months. Teachers will change the children into their winter boots when they go outdoors.

Children are not permitted to wear open toed and/or open backed shoes. The most appropriate complete type of shoe for participation in school activities is a rubber-soled, sneaker/tennis shoe.

Children ages 3 through 5 are required to have one seasonably and size-appropriate complete change of clothing at the center at all times. Children under 3 years of age are required to have two seasonably and size appropriate, complete changes of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes, shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. Teachers will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change or as supplies are depleted. Parents are expected to replenish clothes the next day.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes: coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots. The Premier Child Care Centers are not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing. All clothes should be placed in the child's cubby by the parent even if the child is in a different area upon arrival to the center.

Jewelry/Accessories:

Children are not permitted to wear jewelry of any kind. It is a safety hazard for your child as well as the other children enrolled in the program. In addition, The Premier Child Care Center will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables. It is the parents' responsibility to enforce this policy with their children. Should a child come to school wearing any jewelry, parents may be required to take it with them, or to return to the school to remove the jewelry if it is discovered after the parent leaves. Repeated violations (more than 3 violations per school year) of this policy are considered to be violations of safety policies and could result in dismissal from the program.

Hair beads, barrettes, bobby pins, etc. are not to be worn by children. These accessories are considered to be safety hazards. When choosing accessories for your children, be mindful of the potential safety issues they present not only for your child, but also for the older and younger children attending the centers

Dress Code

Policy No. 22

22.2 PARENTS

Clothing:

Parents are required to be dressed in appropriate clothing while at the center or while involved in any center sponsored events. Inappropriate clothing would include revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn (in inappropriate places), and/or see through articles of clothing. Anything with suggestive or vulgar language is prohibited.

Parents wearing high heels, work boots, or shoes with wet/dirty soles, will be required to remove their shoes prior to entering any classroom with children under 2 1/2 years of age. This will reduce the risk of injury to a child on the floor and will help to maintain a clean floor. Parents can simply leave their shoes outside the classroom door prior to entering the classroom. All shoes must be removed before entering an infant room or areas where infants play.

Jewelry:

While volunteering in the classroom or at any Premier Child Care Center sponsored event, parents are not permitted to wear any loose or dangling jewelry and/or accessories as per the children's/staff's dress code policy outlined above. Parents will be restricted from volunteering if they are not in compliance with this policy. These items are attractive for young children and can become lodged in their nose/mouth. This can become potentially harmful or fatal.

Field Trips

No. 23

Premier Child Care Centers frequently supplement the curriculum with field trips. Parents are required to give written permission for their child to attend each field trip. Notification of a field trip will be sent home in advance of the trip, with all pertinent trip information, including destination, date, time, reason for trip, cost, and mode of transportation. Accompanying the notification paper, teachers will include a permission slip that must be filled out completely and accurately. Trip costs must be paid in advance in order for your child to attend. Field trips are monthly during the academic year with the exception of a few months. Field trips are weekly during the summer months. One trip per week is encouraged during the summer months. Other trips are optional. All summer trips should be chosen and paid the Friday before the week of the upcoming trips. If a trip is not paid for the week before, we will assume the child is not attending. This process allows for better planning in terms of transportation and supervision. On trip venues that require the center to purchase pre-paid tickets, there will not be refunds under any circumstances.

If parents wish to attend the trip with their child, they should discuss attending with the classroom teacher. Parents are required to pay for themselves prior to the field trip. The center provides all required supervision for all field trips, but always invites and welcomes parents to attend. Children love it when parents participate on trips.

Parents will not be permitted to transport any child, other than their own, on a center sponsored trip, in their own vehicles.

If your child is not scheduled to attend on the day of a field trip, and you wish your child to participate in the trip, please discuss this with your site Director and the Front Desk Coordinator at least three days prior to the date of the trip. Your child will be permitted to attend if required ratios can be maintained with his/her addition to the class. An additional day fee, as well as the cost of the trip and signed permission slip will be due prior to the trip. Another option is to switch the regularly scheduled day, with a trip day, to avoid the additional fee.

Parent Participation/Volunteers

Policy No. 24

Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. There are many different ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the child care center. Parents may volunteer to attend trips, read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. Teachers will post any volunteer opportunities in their classrooms. Parents not interested in volunteering directly in the classroom may donate items, do maintenance work, or assist in the front office. These volunteer opportunities are posted in the main office area on the parent bulletin board.

Any parent who volunteers in the classroom on a regular basis will be required to pay for and secure all criminal background checks, as required by our licensing regulations. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom or on field trips.

Parents with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangements) as per the court order. For example, if a parent is afforded custody on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, that parent will only be able to volunteer on those days. Parents with visitation only (sole/exclusive custody arrangements) will only be permitted to volunteer with the expressed written permission of the custodial parent.

The Premier Child Care Center Director or designee, reserves the right to schedule volunteer assignments. The center does not guarantee the volunteering parents will be assigned to locations where their child is present.

Head Start parents are encouraged to attend monthly parent meetings held onsite. Additionally, Head Start sponsors off-site programs, workshops and events designed specifically for parents. Parent delegates are encouraged to promote the parent club that advises and participates in all school sponsored events relating to Head Start. More information can be obtained by the Head Start staff and the coordinator.

Health and Safety

Policy No. 25

25.1 PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the center's office prior to the child's first day of attendance. All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file. This is per our licensing regulations. If you have chosen not to have your child immunized, please ask the Centers' Director for an Immunization Waiver Form. Immunizations may be waived for religious reasons only. Please discuss this with the Centers' Director to determine whether you have the right to be enrolled and not have your child immunized. Parents are required to have a waiver on file in place of an immunization record, so that the center can maintain compliance .

All children are required to have a physical examination form filled out by a licensed medical professional in order to attend The Premier Child Care Centers. The Physical Examination Form, indicating the child's fitness to attend the center, must be completed and signed by a licensed health-care professional and returned to the Center's Director by the first day of attendance. Additional requirements include: birth certificate, dental records, and annual hearing and vision screening.

25.2 CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Authorization For Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies" form, detailing any allergies from which their child suffers, (at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered.) This form must be completely filled out by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and must be updated every six months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide a copy of any additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy. This form can be obtained by front desk coordinator or the site Director.

Parents must also execute a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. This form releases The Premier Child Care Centers from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the "Authorization for Emergency Care for children with Severe Allergies" form, provided the centers' staff exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein.

Health and Safety

25.3 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The Premier Child Care Center follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the standards from the Illinois Department of Health. A copy of this manual is on file with the Center's Director and is available upon request for review. Additionally, copies can be purchased, for a nominal fee, from the National Association for the Education of the Young Child (NAEYC).

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Should an emergency arise that requires medical attention, a staff member will accompany the injured/sick child to the hospital and wait until the parent arrives. The child's file (containing medical consent forms) will be on hand to ensure prompt medical attention. An injury report narrative will be prepared and made available at the center at the conclusion of the medical emergency.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. The Premier Child Care Center reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the Center Director or designee believes the child is ill and should not participate in the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever (or infectious disease) may not return to the program until they are fever/disease free, without fever reducing medication, for 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to the program the following day. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on the thermometer of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken under the arm.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea which occur three or more times in a 24 hours period. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the Center's Director. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center Director, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. The Premier Child Care Centers will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

Should a child contract an extended illness which requires an extended absence, it is suggested that the child be dis-enrolled in the center and re-enrolled when the child's health has improved enough to return to school. Should the child's space become unavailable in the interim of the dis-enrollment period and the re-enrollment period, the child will be given priority status when the next available space opens.

Health and Safety

25.4 BITING

The Premier Child Care Centers recognize that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 2 1/2 - year - old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bitten, or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish or harshly discipline children, rather they will redirect children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Uncooperative parents may have their child's services terminated, however all measures will be exhausted before a decision to terminate is reached.

Children older than age three, may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, (Policy # 20) as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior. Uncooperative parents may have their child's service terminated. Furthermore, children in older age groups, who bite three times in a school year will have their services terminated since, the safety of all the children in the program is of the utmost concern of The Premier Child Care Centers.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff of The Premier Child Care Centers cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party. It is recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the bite incident. The center is aware of how frustrating this behavior can become. Rest assured that the staff works diligently and professionally to stop this type of behavior. It requires a concerted effort between center and home.

25.5 DISPENSING MEDICATION

The Premier Child Care Centers will only dispense over-the-counter and/or prescription medication that is in original, labeled containers and is accompanied by a doctor's note with explicit dosage and administration instructions. The Premier Child Care Centers will only give medication to the child for whom the doctor's note is written and for whom the medication container is labeled. One doctor's note per course of treatment is required. If a child, for example, is to be given a course of antibiotics for 10 days, the doctor's note must identify the dates that the medication is to be given.

Parents are required to complete a Medication Form each day that medication is to be dispensed. Medication Forms can be found at the front desk, Medication forms, doctor's notes and medication are to be turned into the front desk coordinator or the Center Director.

The Premier Child Care Centers will dispense over-the-counter, fever reducing/pain medication (ex. Children's Tylenol, Children's Motrin) on an as-needed basis, with a doctor's note detailing the recommended reasons for administration and appropriate dosage. Parents are required to supply an unopened bottle of the fever reducing/pain medication clearly labeled with their child's name. (One note and bottle of fever reducing/pain medication is required per child.) Prior to administering fever reducing/pain medication, staff will contact a parent or person listed on emergency contact form. If a parent cannot be reached to inform them of our need to administer the medication. Staff will also inform the parent or emergency contact person if it is necessary for the child to be picked up due to illness or if fever reaches 101 degrees. Refer to the policy listed above regarding picking up ill children.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date. Once all dosages have been administered, unused portions will be discarded.

Health and Safety

25.6 FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

The Premier Child Care Center conducts monthly fire and emergency/evacuation drills. Parents, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation, parents may not sign children into or out of the program. Parents must wait until the drill is completed and children have returned to the building to sign their child out the program. Parents may feel free to wait with the child's class in the designated safe zone outside the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the Director or designee will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child.

Parents wishing to sign their child out of the program during a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation are expected to have patience with the staff as they are trying to maintain order during a hectic and potentially dangerous situation. If the center is in the midst of a fire/emergency drill, parents will be required to wait until the drill is completed and the staff and children are returned to the building to sign their child out of the program. If the center is having a real fire/emergency situation, parents will be asked to wait until the Director or designee has accounted for all staff and children and gives the staff permission to release the children. Once again, it is important for parents and staff to work together, remain calm, and cooperate with the fire/emergency personnel and center administration during these critical situations.

25.7 ALTERNATE SAFE LOCATION

Should the administration of the Premier Child Care Center or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the child care agency to be too dangerous to be occupied, the staff and children will be taken to a safe house. Check at each center to find out safe house locations. Once the children are assembled there, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick-up. As stated before, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

25.8 INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report, it will be placed in a secured envelope and put in the child's cubby or at the front desk.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day. If staff is available to provide proper coverage, a meeting can be scheduled immediately.

Should a person other than the parent or one designated to act "in loco parentis" pick-up the child, a parent or person designated to act "in loco parentis" must sign the Incident/Accident Report and return a copy to the center Director within 24 hours.

Health and Safety

25.9 FOOD POLICY

The Premier Child Care Center will provide a healthy morning breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack for all children in our care, including water, fruit juice and/or milk. A list of the daily snacks available to the children will be posted in the classroom or on the general parent board. When meals are substituted, it will be posted at the front desk.

Infant through 2 1/2 - year - old groups:

Children enrolled with special diets must have all food items prepared and labeled each day the child is in attendance. This includes formula/breast milk bottles, baby food, snacks, and juice bottles. Be sure to prepare one more bottle than you think your child will consume in a day to assure that your child won't run out. Prepared bottles must be stored in the designated refrigerator and will be warmed in a water bath prior to feeding. No bottles will be micro-waved. All bottles must be taken home by the parents each night to be washed.

Parents must provide and label all utensils and bowls necessary for feedings. Children will not be fed directly from baby food jars, nor will the staff use previously opened baby food. Staff will mix baby cereal just prior to feedings. All unused food remaining after a feeding, will be discarded.

Breast-feeding mothers are welcome to come to the center during the day to feed their child. Appropriate, private feeding locations will be made available. Please discuss your desire to come to the center to breast-feed your child with the classroom teacher.

Parents are required to complete a feeding schedule for their child on a weekly basis, or as the child's feeding requirements change. Staff will complete a daily chart for each child detailing for the parent what the child ate, when, and the quantity.

3-year and older classroom:

The Premier Child Care Center offers breakfast during the 8:00 a.m. hour, a half-hour lunch at approximately 11:30 and an afternoon snack at approximately 2:30 p.m.

All meals are family style, with the children sitting at tables, to promote good manners, eating habits and socialization skills. Staff will encourage children to eat their main entree first, followed by healthy snacks.

The Premier Child Care Centers' curriculum focuses on developing healthy, well-balanced eating habits. Therefore a full, healthy lunch for children is provided each day they are in attendance. Lunches service each of the food groups and includes milk or juice. Milk is required by each child unless a doctor's note verifies the intolerance of milk. The Premier Child Care Center will provide water for children who wish to drink it with lunch in addition to the milk. Snack food items are healthy, such as fruit, vegetables and the like. Junk foods are kept at a minimum at the center.

All food items must be labeled with your child's name. The Premier Child Care Centers do not permit children to share or exchange food items. This policy is in place to prevent severe and sometimes fatal reactions in children with allergies to certain foods. Parents are not allowed to give other children (not their own) food or candy for the same reason stated above, either in the center nor on field trips.

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note, of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instruction for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. Please refer to the Health and Safety Policies contained herein for further information.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions. (e.g. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat-free/gluten-free diets)

The Premier Child Care Center never uses food as a punishment. Children will never be denied participation in lunch or snack time for behavior reasons.

Food can be used by teachers as a reward for good behavior and/or for classroom lessons. Any food given as a reward will be placed in the child's cubby/school bag to be enjoyed at home.

Health and Safety

25.10 PEANUT FREE CENTER

Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions to peanuts and products containing peanuts in some children, The Premier Child Care Center prohibits peanuts and/or foods containing peanut products on The Development Center property, and/or at center sponsored events. These peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. An allergic child can have a reaction from simply smelling peanuts on someone's breath, or touching peanut oil residue left on a counter top.

Parents are responsible for providing foods that are peanut and peanut product free for their child's lunch and/or snack on special occasions. We have included for your reference a list of acceptable food items that are peanut, and peanut-product free. However, this is only a partial listing of foods. There are many acceptable food items that are peanut, and peanut-product free in stores. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts or peanut products have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts." For example, plain chocolate M&M's have this statement on the label

Due to the possibility of cross-contamination, (this occurs when one food is prepared with items previously used to prepare foods with peanuts, or peanut products), The Premier Child Care Center does not allow homemade snacks at the center. While the center understands that parents enjoy providing homemade snacks for birthdays and holidays, we must be mindful of the safety of all children enrolled at the center.

PEANUT FREE FOOD IDEAS

Carrot Sticks	Oreos
Celery	Chips Ahoy (Large Cookies)
Peppers	Teddy Grahams
Broccoli	Shortbread
Applesauce	Rice Krispy Treats (Original Flavor)
Grapes	Fruit By the Foot
Oranges	Fruit Gushers
Apples	Nutri Grain Fruit Bars
Bananas	Full Size Ritz Crackers (Not Ritz Bits)
Melon	Chicken Salad
Raisins	Dried Fruit
Plain Cheerios	Cashews
Pistachios	Yogurt
Cheese	Lunch Meat
Cream Cheese	Jelly (Not contaminated by peanut butter)
Tuna Fish	Egg Salad
Pretzels	Potato Chips (Not Fried in Peanut Oil)
Goldfish Crackers	Graham Crackers
Popcorn	Jell-O
Pizza	Popsicles

This list is only meant as a guide. Please read the labels of all food brought to the center to be sure that it does not contain peanuts and/or peanut products.

Peanuts are not from the nut family. They are a legume. This is why cashews and pistachios (and other items in the nut family) are permitted.

Health and Safety

25.11 FIREARMS AND WEAPONS

At no time is any unauthorized person permitted to carry any type of firearm, ammunitions and/or weapon on agency property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Should a child threaten any other child or staff member with the word firearm, it will not be taken lightly by the administration. The child will be immediately expelled from the program.

Staff Employment By Client's Policy

Policy No. 26

The staff of The Premier Child Care Center is prohibited from being employed by any client (current or former). Parents are prohibited from soliciting any staff member for the purpose of employment. Parents who employ staff will have their services terminated and no returns will be granted. Staff who become employed by current or former clients of The Premier Child Care Centers, will have their employment with the center terminated. No other center within the organization nor any franchisee can hire the terminated employee.

Employment refers to any relationship outside of the agency's services which involves an employee of The Premier Child Care Center or a Market Staff affiliate, or interacting with a current or former client of The Premier Child Care Center. Such relationships include but are not limited to, baby-sitting, house-sitting, mother's helper, nanny services, and carpooling regardless of whether or not those services are voluntary or paid.

The Premier Child Care Centers

I/We, _____,
the parent (s)/legal guardian (s) of _____,
acknowledge that I/We have received a copy of The Premier Child Care Center's Parent Handbook and have
been given the opportunity to read the manual and ask questions about and understands the policies contained
therein. Furthermore, I/We agree to abide by the policies set forth in the manual.

I/We understand that the policies described in the Parent Handbook are not conditions of enrollment, and the
language does not create a contract between The Premier Child Care Centers and the parents. The Premier
Child Care Center reserves the right to alter, amend, or otherwise modify these guidelines, in its sole discretion,
without prior notice.

I/We acknowledge that this Parent Handbook is the property of The Premier Child Care Center and must be
returned to the center when the aforementioned child is no longer enrolled at the center. Any duplication, in
full or in part, is prohibited.

Initial _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent)

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent)

Print Name: _____

Hours of Operation

**Pill Hill Development Center
6:00am - 6:30pm**

**Near The Pier Development Center
6:30am - 6:00pm**

**Lake View Development Center
6:30am- 6:00pm**

**West Austin Development Center
6:30am- 6:00pm**

**Hegewisch / East Side Development Center
6:30am - 6:30pm**

**Just Us Development Center
6:30am - 6:30pm**

Holiday Closing Schedule

New Years Day (1)

Martin Luther King Jr. Day (1)

Presidents Day (1)

In-Service (2 days in March)

Good Friday (1)

Memorial Day (1)

Fourth of July (1)

Labor Day (1)

Columbus Day (1)

Thanksgiving and the Day following Thanksgiving (2)

Christmas (5 days)