

8/10/21



WELA

Parent Handbook

Fairfax
Hominy
Pawhuska
Skiatook

**Providing excellence in education while
revitalizing Osage culture and language.**

2021-2022

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CONTACT INFORMATION

WELA Center Managers

Fairfax WELA	918-642-5434 918-287-5242
Fairfax Wrap-Around	918-642-5505
Pawhuska WELA Teresa Yandell, Center Manager teresa.yandell@osagenation-nsn.gov	918-287-5495
Pawhuska Wrap-Around	918-287-9712
Skiatook WELA Alicia Sanchez, Center Manager arsanchez@osagenation-nsn.gov	918-287-5488 918-287-5694
Hominy WELA Victoria Looney, Center Manager victoria.looney@osagenation-nsn.gov	918-287-5658

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to contact our office, Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m. (CST).

Osage Nation WELA Administrative Offices

Tara McKinney, Director
tara.mckinney@osagenation-nsn.gov
Office: 918-287-5322

Jennifer Holding, Program Coordinator
jholding@osagenation-nsn.gov
Office: 918-287-5377

HOURS OF OPERATION & LOCATION

Classes are year around and on an academic calendar

Pawhuska WELA

216 W. 15th St.

Pawhuska, OK 74056

7:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Pawhuska Wrap-Around

WELA Gym

216 W. 15th St.

3:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Hominy WELA

100. North Price

Hominy, OK 74035

7:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Fairfax WELA

401 S. 8th

Fairfax, OK 74637

7:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Fairfax Wrap-Around

1000 W. McKinley

Fairfax, OK 74637

Monday-Thursday 3:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

Friday 7:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Skiatook WELA

1801 W. Oak

Skiatook, OK 74070

7:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.

INTRODUCTION

Vision

Osage Nation WELA envisions an innovative, successful school where early learning, Osage culture, and language are a priority. We are committed to the families we serve, providing support and opportunities to build a strong foundation for our students.

Mission

The WELA mission is to provide a superior education for our Osage students. WELA will support language revitalization, nation building, sovereignty, and enhance the lives of young students, their families, and the community.

Academic Integrity and Accreditation

WELA sites maintain a license through the Oklahoma Department of Human Services and/or the Osage Nation Child Care Services Program. These licenses ensure our sites comply with all applicable health and safety codes and that student and staff records are up-to-date and maintained.

WELA strives to inform the parents/guardians with students attending, of the policies and procedures followed by our staff as well as those that apply to our students and parents/guardians.

Program Goals

- Surround our students with positive role models while creating a nurturing and caring environment to develop the whole student.
- Maintain a highly qualified staff and a family-like atmosphere.
- Integrate Osage Language and Culture into each student's daily learning environment.

Creative Curriculum

WELA uses Creative Curriculum to exceed state academic standards for each age level of the students. All lessons are adapted to fit the needs of the students in the classrooms. In addition, daily routines will include Osage Language and Culture.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Admission to WELA is based on a combination of criteria, including Osage membership, Osage preference and Native American preference, the student's age, and classroom availability. All students enrolling or attending WELA must provide documentation for one of the following to receive Osage preference or Native American preference:

- **Osage Nation Membership number for the child enrolling, or**
- **Tribal Membership or Certified Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) for the child enrolling, if other than Osage.**

Osage Preference

- Osage preference shall be given to students from Osage households
- Parents/guardians must provide a copy of the Osage membership card for the student
- For infants under six (6) months of age not enrolled yet, the parent or guardian must furnish a copy of their Osage membership card
- An Osage family is a household with at least one legally enrolled member of the Osage Nation, Verification for each student will be required

Native American Preference

Parents/guardians must provide a copy of the student's tribal membership card or Certified Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB), or a letter from the native nation stating enrollment process has begun. While the enrollment process is taking place, a copy of the parent's CDIB or Tribal Membership number will be accepted.

Waiting List

Each year there will be a waiting list for students who applied but did not meet the criteria at the time of enrollment or if the center is at full enrollment. As enrollment slots become available, WELA staff will contact and offer the open enrollment slots, according to order of the waiting list, completed applications, and Osage preference. For families who are expecting a newborn, the baby can be placed on the waiting list with an application. When a slot becomes available, if the family is still interested in keeping the slot for the newborn baby, they will have to begin paying a monthly fee of \$200.00 to hold the slot until the baby is eligible to start attending at six weeks of age. Once the baby starts attending, they will be considered full time and regular rates will begin.

Enrollment

Enrollment process begins in May of each year for the upcoming school year beginning in August. Enrollment packets are available on the Osage Nation website, <https://www.osagenation-nsn.gov/what-we-do/wahzhazhe-early-learning-academy> or at any of the WELA locations. Students attending WELA must re-enroll at your designated site each year. In order to attend, the following information for each student must be **completed and received**. Incomplete or missing documentation will cause a delay in processing enrollment.

- Enrollment form signed by the parent/guardian
- Authorization forms signed by the parent/guardian
- Enrollment contract
- Current immunization records

- Parent/guardian contact form
- Emergency contact information
- Signed acknowledgement form for handbook signed by the parent/guardian
- Completed Child and Adult Care Food Program form
- Completed Compliance File Notification form

Accepted

- Enrollment packet and all documentation must be complete
- Parents/Guardians will be required to an orientation with the center manager or the student's teacher

Wrap-Around Care

WELA offers Wrap-Around, an extension of the day, through our after school program for students ages four (4) years old through twelve (12) years old. The Pawhuska, Hominy, and Fairfax sites offer the Wrap-Around Care. Wrap-Around provides a place for students to interact and socialize with peers, read and work on homework, learn the Osage language, and engage in outdoor activities. The available space at each site limits enrollment. Please see your designated center manager for enrollment applications and transportation information. Admission for the Wrap-Around program is the same for all students attending WELA.

ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL TIMES

WELA expects students and families to be punctual and maintain regular attendance. Classes begin promptly at 8:30 each day, and the lunch count is taken in order to prepare the appropriate amount of food for the students each day. Parents should report an absence, late arrival, or early departure to the student's teacher or center manager by 8:30 a.m. WELA has to maintain the correct student to teacher ratio; students should not be dropped off earlier than the designated drop off time for student's site. An authorized family member or adult should pick up students by the designated closing time for your student's site. Parents should park and walk their student to their designated classroom. Parents must sign their student in and out each day. Parents must list all adults' names and contact information that are allowed to pick up their student's on the Student Pick up Authorization Form, as persons permitted to drop off and pick up their student. If the authorized person is not recognized by the WELA staff, the person must present their driver's license to the staff before the student may leave the premises. WELA will keep current contact information on file to ensure the safety of each student. Also for the safety of the student, any guardianship or court-mandated documents should be on file with the center manager.

For any questions about policies and procedures for COVID-19, please refer to Osage Nation Pandemic Policy for COVID-19.

Dismissal

The student's Student Pick-Up Authorization Form has to have the individuals listed that can pick up the student. The individuals allowed to pick up the students must be 18 years of age. If anyone not on the form is to pick up the student, the parent or guardian has to notify the center prior to pick up and then the form will have to be updated in person by the parent or guardian. Any information on court orders or other areas of concern regarding the student's interaction with outside individuals will need to be provided by the parents/guardians.

Field Trips

Families will have advance notification of each field trip through teacher communication, notes sent home, or email messages. **It is not the policy of WELA staff and teachers to delay departures to accommodate late arrivals.** When traveling, students will always be in seat belts or car seats, depending on the age of the children attending the field trip. Teachers and staff will be equipped with a first aid kit, a cell phone, and parent contact information for each student. If a student arrives after their class has left, parents may be required to make alternate arrangements for care that day, or join the class field trip on their own.

DHS Subsidy and Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Cards

Department of Human Services (DHS) subsidy clients must swipe their EBT card in order to check in/check out. If a client fails to swipe the EBT card, DHS *cannot* backtrack billing beyond ten days; therefore, the responsibility of payment will fall solely upon the parent/guardian and the center manager will set up payment arrangements.

Late Arrival

Your student will be learning so much every single day therefore, it is important they arrive on time. If you know your student is going to be late, please contact the center by 8:30 a.m. It is important for the center to know the student count for each day so the appropriate teacher to student ratios are met and the correct quantity of food is prepared for meals.

Late Pick Up

For every one (1) minute a student remains at WELA/Wrap-Around after closing, the parent/guardian will be charged \$5.00 per student per one (1) minute. This late charge must be paid before the student is allowed to return to WELA. Five (5) minutes past closing, WELA staff will call the parent/guardian. If there is no answer, the staff will then call the first person on the Student Pick-Up Authorization Form to pick up the student. If there is still no answer, the staff will continue to contact the other individuals on the list until someone answers. WELA staff will attempt again to contact the parent/guardian at fifteen (15) minutes past the closing time. If no one has been reached at thirty (30) minutes past closing, the staff member is required to call the local police department or Osage Nation Police Department, the Department of Human Services or the Osage Nation Social Services Department depending on the jurisdiction of the student.

- If a parent/guardian has three late pick-ups within a thirty (30) day period, their student will be placed on suspension for one week. If the parent/guardian continues to be late for pick up, their student may lose their enrollment status.

ATTENDANCE and EXPULSION POLICY

WELA strives to provide Osage students with a premier education that includes Osage Language revitalization, Osage Culture, community and family, health, and academics. Unlike a day care facility, WELA sites are early childhood education academies that work to prepare our students for their future academic career. Regular daily attendance is imperative. Parents/guardians must notify the center manager if their student will be absent for more than ten (10) days consecutively due to a family situation such as vacations, visiting family or a family crisis, etc. Absences that are no call / no show for ten (10) consecutive days will result in the student being dropped from the program.

Attendance

Class begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. each day. It is important your student arrive on time each day to receive the most out of the educational learning experiences. Each day your student will interact with peers to develop social and interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking skills. **If your student is ill or will not be at WELA, we request that you contact the center manager before 8:30 a.m.**

Parents/guardians must pay for all days that a student is not in attendance; this ensures the student does not lose their enrollment status. The Osage Nation will adjust monthly balances for days WELA is closed.

Expulsion

WELA takes the education of students very seriously. Reasons that could hinder a student's enrollment status includes but are not limited to the following circumstances:

- Failure to pay
- Routinely late picking up a student
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of student to adjust to the facility after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Our inability to meet the student's needs
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- Extended absence of a student
- Bringing weapons to school
- If a student threatens another student or teacher
- If a student puts others in danger

BELONGINGS and ITEMS FROM HOME

Belongings That Stay at Home

All outside food and drinks, electronics, toys and personal items such as phones, tablets, laptops, jewelry, money, watches, cards, etc. must remain at home, unless otherwise stated by the teacher for a special sharing time or classroom activity. A schedule of activities is planned for each day, electronics, toys and other personal items brought from home are a distraction to this schedule. The WELA is not responsible for electronics, toys, or personal items brought from home. If a student does bring any outside food or drinks, electronics, toys, or personal items from home, the items will be kept in the center manager's office until the end of the day when the student is picked up.

The WELA prohibits any weapons, including guns, knives, or other type of weapon (toy or real). Any student bringing any type of weapon will be sent home immediately and be subject to loss of enrollment status.

BITING

Biting

It is the policy of WELA to provide a safe learning environment to our students but also to promote healthy behaviors. For this reason, the behavior of biting is serious. WELA staff will work to eliminate this behavior among our students through communication and redirection.

Biting is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors to understand and prevent. It occurs without warning, is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the parent/guardian, and the caregivers involved. For most toddlers, the biting stage will pass with age. Most times, toddlers do this as a way to get what they want from another toddler. They are in the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. For other students, biting may become a persistent problem and could stem from reasons such as teething, frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, a change in their environment, or protection.

No matter what the cause, biting causes ill feelings toward all involved. It does help, however, to be aware of a potential problem before it happens and to have a plan of action in place.

Steps of Discipline

- WELA staff will remove the biter from the area immediately and calmly. WELA staff will tell the student that biting hurts and it is not okay to bite
- To calm the situation, the biter will be removed from the current play area and redirected into another play area. In addition, statements will be communicated to the student such as, "I know you want the truck, but we cannot bite to take the truck away"
- An accident/injury report will be completed by WELA staff, and the parents/guardians of both students will be notified and given a copy of the report on the same day of the incident
- Parents will receive notification of all incidents
- WELA will send students home if they bite twice in a day. If the first biting incident is severe, the student will be sent home at the discretion of the center manager. If the biting continues, the student will have a behavior plan created, which could include a modified school day. If the student continues to bite excessively the WELA will make a referral to CREOKS Behavior Health Services, an outside provider, who provides a wide range of services to our program

For the Injured Student

- The student will be separated from the biter and comforted by the staff
- First Aid will be administered immediately, as necessary
- WELA staff will complete accident/injury report, and the parents/guardians of the biter and injured student will be notified and given a copy of the report
- Parents will receive notification of all incidents

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Custodial and Non-Custodial Parental Rights

All parents/guardians are welcome at the WELA and the staff of the WELA will remain neutral in any custody disputes. In the event of a custody case, the WELA cannot deny a parent/guardian access to their student unless there is an active restraining order, court order, or court ordered visitation schedule on file at the center. The appropriate written instruction for who is allowed to pick up the student, such as a court order, will have to be filed with the WELA center manager. In the absence of a court order, both parents have the right to view the student's records, receive progress reports, visit the student at the WELA, and participate in parent teacher conferences. Contact from the WELA staff to parents will be made primarily through the custodial parent.

Family Communication

Building strong partnerships between families and staff members is a goal of WELA. Parents are the most important teacher in a student's life, and building strong, supportive, and respectful relationships are key to the success of the school and family connection. We strive to make the transition between home and school smooth and positive for the students we serve. To support this goal, teachers and staff will communicate through notes sent home, email messages, and phone calls to keep parents up-to-date on events and class information. WELA staff will send daily notes home with each infant student at the end of the day so parents will know daily napping, diapering, and feeding events. Older students will receive daily and/or weekly notes.

Parents are encouraged to keep teachers notified if there will be a change in their student's daily routine, such as a doctor's appointment or a change in the pick-up schedule. Parents should let teachers know if their students will be leaving early so they can help prepare and have the student ready on time.

The WELA staff like to promote strong parent and teacher partnerships along with open communication. Any information concerning the students will be confidential. Parents/guardians are encouraged to let WELA staff know if the student has a change in routine at home, any major transitions, or other information that would be helpful about the student. If there is any situation or injury from home that may affect the student, please inform your student's teacher.

Daily Schedule and Reports

The WELA staff will keep the parents/guardians fully informed of their student's progress, activities, achievements, challenges, and behaviors. For this reason, parents/guardians with students in the infant and toddler classrooms will receive daily notes regarding their student's eating schedule, diaper changes, nap times and activities, and information highlighting the week's activities and events. Parents/guardians with students in the Pre-K classrooms will receive daily reports regarding behavior, understanding of new concepts, participation in class activities, etc.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Mandatory parent teacher conferences will be scheduled three times per year, conference times will be made to accommodate the parent/guardian's schedule. Any parent/guardian may request a conference with a teacher anytime during the week to discuss attendance,

behavior, or progress. Information and sign-up sheets will go home with the students the week before the conferences.

DISCIPLINE

Behavioral Expectations

WELA teachers and staff are committed to the education that develops the whole student. We work daily to help students become increasingly more self-managing and socially responsible as independent and responsible learners. Our goal is to help each student learn how to express their feelings and emotions in a positive, acceptable way, and to enhance each student's ability to develop interpersonal relationships with teachers and peers. WELA teachers and staff model respect and strive to build positive character by targeting positive-growth.

Discipline in Early Childhood

- Positive, clear, specific expectations given by teachers
- Reinforcing positive behavior when it happens through praise, high-fives, hugs, pats on the back, etc.

Misbehavior in Early Childhood

Misbehavior shall be handled by:

- Redirecting the student to an appropriate activity or area, or a positive alternative
- Using natural and logical consequences
- Helping the student talk through the situation by "using their words" to problem solve
- Allowing the student time and space to regroup, under close supervision

Serious Misbehavior Consequences

More serious or frequent misbehavior shall be managed by:

- Spending a short time being separated from others to calm and regroup
- Explaining to the student how to cooperate in the future
- Developing a behavior chart to encourage positive behavior and choices through reinforcement
- Communicating with parents to find a solution to improve behaviors
- If the student is putting others in danger, the parents/guardians will be notified to pick up the student immediately and the student could be expelled or suspended depending on the severity of the situation
- All incidents shall be documented on an Incident/Accident Report form and placed in the student's file, parents/guardians will be notified, and a copy of the incident report will be sent home
- After three (3) incident reports there will be a parent teacher conference with the center manager and the teacher to develop a behavioral plan for the student. The WELA staff will consult with the contracted professionals from CREOKS to determine if the student needs a referral for a screening with CREOKS. If a referral is needed, it will be given to the parent/guardian and it is then the parent/guardian's responsibility to follow up on the referral. If the parent/guardian refuses the referral for a screening and/or counseling and incidents continue to occur, the student may be suspended or expelled from WELA

- At the discretion of the center manager, depending on the severity of an incident a parent teacher conference can be scheduled immediately

DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided to people with disabilities. The law covers children with disabilities seeking reasonable accommodations in a child care setting, as well as the parents/guardians served. The WELA will conduct an individualized assessment of the particular needs of a student and their family. A conference will be conducted with the parents/guardians, the student's teacher, the center manager, and the contracted professional from CREOKS to identify reasonable accommodations and how to safely integrate the student into the program, given the student's capabilities, and to give the family full access to and participation in our program to the extent feasible. Any information regarding a student, a student's family, or other matters discussed with WELA staff will be held in the strictest confidence.

FEES and PAYMENT POLICY

The fees of WELA support the quality of education and learning experiences for each enrolled student.

Fees and Payments

- Payments are accepted at WELA locations and are due by the *10th of each month.*
- Payments must be received by the WELA on or before the 10th of each month. An account will be considered past due if not paid by the 10th of the month. If the account is not paid by the 10th of the month, the student cannot return until the balance is paid in full. Accounts for which no payment has been made in over thirty (30) days will be sent to the Osage Nation Attorney General for collection and the student will be dismissed. In the event that an account has to be sent to the Osage Nation Attorney General for collection, the WELA is entitled to be reimbursed by the parent/guardian for any attorney's fees and costs incurred in the collection of any unpaid balance.
- Accounts for which no payment has been made in over thirty (30) days will be sent to the Osage Nation Attorney General for collection.

WELA Fees		
Age of Student	Daily Fee	Credit if participating in Language or Culture Class
Infant - 4 yrs. old	\$20	\$50 credit up to \$200 per student per month

Wrap Around Fees		
Tribal Membership / Age of Student	Estimated Monthly Wrap Around Fee	Daily Fee
Osage / 5years to 12 years	\$200.00	\$10
Non-Osage / 5 years to 12 years	\$300.00	\$15

Payment Options and Aid

WELA accepts DHS Child Care Subsidy and Osage Nation Child Care Subsidy. The WELA will make every attempt to aid those students wishing to attend our sites to be able to do so by providing resources for financial assistance.

Language and Cultural Class Fee Waiver

Among the goals of the Principal Chief are the expression and retention of Osage Language and Culture. To support this goal, the WELA is offering a Language and Culture Class Fee Waiver.

- One (1) Language or Cultural Class Fee Waiver of \$50 per class up to a \$200 credit per month, per student can be earned by attending Osage Language or Cultural class.
 - Participants must be the mother, father, or legal guardian of a student enrolled in WELA.
 - Only (1) Language or Cultural Class Fee Waiver of up to \$200 may be applied *to each student* per month.
 - Language or Cultural class fee waivers may not be applied towards wrap around fees.
 - If both parents attend the same class, they will receive two (2) credits. Each parent must turn in a signed Language or Culture Log.
- To receive a Language or Cultural Class Fee Waiver, individuals must arrive no later than fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start time to receive the instructor's signature on their language log. If the arrival time is later than fifteen (15) minutes, credit will not be received for that class to apply towards the fee waiver. Individuals leaving class fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled end time will not receive credit for that class towards the fee waiver.
- Parents/guardians opting for the Language or Cultural Class waiver must have a Language/Cultural Class Fee Waiver Log signed by the authorized instructor. The log will have to be signed for each class in order for the waiver to be applied to the monthly fee for each student. Parents/guardians are responsible for submitting their signed log to their student's center manager on the first (1st) business day of the month. No late Fee Waiver Logs will be accepted.

The center managers will provide Language/Cultural Class Fee Waiver Logs.

HEALTH and MEDICATION

When a student's absent due to illness, the parent/guardian must notify the WELA **no later than 8:30a.m.** on the day of the absence; this will allow the WELA staff to take any precautions necessary to protect the other students should the illness be contagious.

Fever, Diarrhea, and Vomiting

Students should only attend WELA when they are well and fever-free. Students will be sent home when their temperature is 100.4 degrees or greater, or if a student shows changes in behavior or symptoms that indicate illness, such as lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, or severe coughing. If a student has diarrhea two (2) times in a school day or runny/watery stools with increased or abnormal frequency, parents will be notified and the student should be picked up within thirty minutes. Students can return in twenty-four (24) hours if they have remained free of fever (lower than 100.4 degrees), diarrhea, and vomiting. When the student returns, if they continue to have the same symptoms, they will be sent home again and cannot return without a doctor's note.

Contagious Illness and Rashes

Any contagious illness, such as head lice, measles, chicken pox, fifth disease, hand foot and mouth, yellowish skin or eyes, eye discharge that includes thick mucus or pus draining from the eye, any open sores, or any other infestation or rash must be reported to the WELA immediately. Exposure notices will be sent to parents/guardians when their student is exposed to a contagious disease. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. If a student is showing any signs of a contagious illness or rash while at school, the parent/guardian will be notified to pick up the student immediately a precaution to the other students. The student will have to have a doctor's note in order to return to the WELA. If the student still has any type of open sores, the sores need to be fully covered with bandages.

For any questions about policies and procedures for COVID-19, please refer to Osage Nation Pandemic Policy for COVID-19.

Medication

It is the preference of WELA for medicine to be dispensed at home. If necessary, WELA staff will only administer medication to a student if the parent/guardian provides WELA with a doctor's note (for over the counter medication) or a current prescription for the student containing dosage instructions.

Over the counter medication must be administered to the student when that medication is provided by the parent/guardian in the original container and labeled with the student's full name. Over the counter medication must be accompanied by a doctor's note indicating dosage (if different from package directions) and length of time the student will need to take the medication. All medication will be inaccessible to students and locked in the main office of each site. Each dose administered is recorded on an individual medication log by staff, which will be made available to parents/guardians upon request.

The parent/guardian is required to fill out a separate form for each medication that is to be administered indicating the proper dosage and time to administer the medication. Medication is returned to the parent/guardian when it is out-of-date or if the students has withdrawn from WELA. WELA staff will only administer a nebulizer, if the parent provides a prescription for the student.

IMMUNIZATIONS

WELA center managers will determine that the students' immunizations are up-to-date according to the requirements in the schedule of well-child care by the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program for the State of Oklahoma. Immunization requirements incorporate the latest recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

Families whose religious or personal beliefs or health restrictions conflict with the immunization requirement must obtain a certificate of exemption from the Oklahoma Department of Health prior to the student's first day of school. Forms for the certificate of exemption can be found at the following site.

https://www.ok.gov/health2/documents/IMM_School_ODH_216a_Certificate_of_Exemption.pdf

Without an approved exemption, parents/guardians wishing not to immunize their student will not be able to attend WELA.

INFANT and TODDLER NEEDS

Infant and Toddler Needs

WELA believes in creating nurturing and comfortable environments for the students we serve. The teachers and staff create learning environments that keep students alert and engaged throughout the day in order to allow them to take full advantage of their learning opportunities. In addition, the teachers and staff are responsible for the needs of each student and to support the development of each student.

Infant Safe Sleep

Naps are encouraged during the day to help the students recharge and refocus. The academies follow the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) guidelines and requirements for Infant Safe Sleep Environments.

- Infants (0 to 11 months of age) sleep directly on a tight fitting sheet covering the mattress.
- Infants birth through three (3) months of age may be swaddled with an infant-sized, thin fabric, such as a receiving blanket, only when requested and documented by a parent, permission is maintained, and the infant is not mobile enough to move the fabric over his or her face.
- Infants (0 to 11 months of age) are placed on their backs for sleeping.

MILESTONES and ASSESSMENTS

Students will have a pre-assessment when they enroll and when they enter a new age-level classroom. The students will also have a post-assessment when they reach an age for the next class or display mastery in one or higher age levels to determine the student is ready to advance. Both pre and post assessments will be administered by the WELA staff and the data obtained through the assessments will be used to guide instruction and to determine areas of mastery, as well as areas that need additional support. Early learning development is such an exciting time, and being able to support students as they develop a strong foundation for learning is the goal. The teachers understand students learn and develop at different rates, and each student will be supported at their own levels cognitively, socially, and emotionally. The WELA staff will use the assessment tools and checklists associated with Creative Curriculum as well as through daily observation. All assessments will be in the students' files and will be available to parents/guardians.

Class Placement

WELA strives to provide learning environments and classrooms that maximize each student's opportunities for success. Through the assessments and data gathered for each student, WELA teachers will be able to determine student placement based on the student's age and physical, emotional, cognitive, and social maturity.

Infants

Infants will have daily exposure to the Osage language and curriculum content provided through the program. Milestones for infant development will be recorded and shared with parents.

Toddlers, 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds

Student assessments are based on the objectives identified through the Creative Curriculum Program. The objectives are listed below.

- Social-Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Language Development
- Cognitive Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- Social Studies
- The Arts
- Osage Language

Toilet Training

The WELA will support and encourage students and their families in meeting many of the milestones in the life of a young student, including toilet training. Toilet training is a huge milestone for your student, and we want to make it a positive experience for all. Please tell your student's teacher when you begin toilet training so that we may assist your student by reinforcing the efforts at WELA. Please send extra clothes for occasional accidents.

WELA staff will work with parents/guardians to develop a toilet training plan for each student so that efforts at home and school align.

We strongly encourage parents/guardians who want their student enrolled or transitioned to a pre-kindergarten classroom to have their student toilet trained prior to moving forward.

LICE AT PRESCHOOL

The WELA staff are required to check for lice on a regular basis. If a student has nits or lice, the parent/guardian will be contacted and required to pick up the student immediately.

Parents/guardians are required to pick up the student within 30 minutes of being contacted. A student may not return to WELA for a 24-hour incubation period, and until they are lice and nit free. Parents/guardians will be given information about medicated treatments and assistance from the Osage Nation Public Health Nurse (918-287-5482).

Upon returning to WELA, the student will have to pass an inspection for lice and/or nits prior to being allowed to enter his/her classroom.

If the problem persists because the parent or guardian refuses to cooperate with the prescribed treatment, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services and/or Osage Nation Social Services will be notified.

All students will receive an exposure notice when a lice incident has occurred in his/her classroom.

NUTRITION

Breakfast, Lunch and Snacks

WELA will provide breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack for all enrolled students ages 1-12 years.

The meals prepared are well balanced and healthy, including portion sizes and daily nutritional needs.

- **Infants**
Parents must provide formula, breastmilk, or baby food for infants until they are ready to eat table food. Infants will be included in the Osage prayers during mealtimes
- **All other students**
Meals are served as family-style, with students learning and reciting Osage Prayers
The students will eat at tables with their classmates and teachers in their classrooms
- **Food Allergies**
Parents/guardians who have students with food/drink allergies must provide documentation from a doctor saying what the allergy is and what can be served in place of the food/drink that causes the allergy. The WELA staff will also need instructions on what to do in case of an allergic reaction.

RATIOS and GROUP SIZES

The goal of WELA is to provide teacher to student interaction that best promotes learning and supports our young students. The physical size of each classroom is also a factor in determining the optimal number of students in each group setting. WELA will work to provide a higher staff/student ratio, as funds are available for each age group. At a minimum, the following teacher to student ratio is appropriate according to licensing standards of a childcare center:

Single Age Classroom	Teacher to Student Ratio	Maximum Class size
Infants (up to 12 months)	1:4	8
1 year olds	1:6	12
2 year olds	1:8	16
3 year olds	1:12	24
4 year olds	1:15	30
5 year olds and older	1:20	40

Mixed Age Classroom	Teacher to Student Ratio	Maximum Class size
Infants, 1-year-olds, and 2-year-olds only	1:6 No more than two infants per teaching personnel	12
Infants and older	1:8 No more than two under 2 years of age per teaching personnel	16
1-year-old and older	1:8 No more than two 1-year-olds per teaching personnel	16
2 year olds and older	1:12 No more than four 2-year-olds per teaching personnel	24
3 year olds and older	1:15 No more than six 3-year-olds per teaching personnel	30
4 year olds and older	1:18 No more than eight 4-year-olds per teaching personnel	36
5-year-olds and older (and older mixed-age groups)	1:20	40

***The ratio and maximum group size for the age of the youngest student in the class is used for other mixed-age classrooms. ***

RIGHT TO REPORT

Right to Report

WELA staff is required by Osage law to report any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities. Osage Nation Social Services Department (ONSS) and Oklahoma Department of Human Services will be called to investigate and substantiate the claim.

- Osage Nation Social Services Department: 918-287-5335
- Osage Nation Child Care Hotline: 918-287-5696
- Oklahoma Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 800-522-3511

A copy of the report shall immediately be sent to the Osage Nation Social Services Department, Osage Nation Child Care Compliance Officer, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, as well as to the Osage Nation Attorney General, and the Osage Nation Police Department.

WELA center manager is responsible for creating and disseminating the reports to all agencies named above.

Grievance

If the claim of child abuse and/or neglect is made against WELA or one of its staff members, parents/guardians should report the child abuse and neglect to Osage Nation Social Services Department (ONSS), the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS), and the Osage Nation Child Care Compliance Officer.

- Complaints shall be in writing using the approved form
- Center Manager shall schedule and mediate a meeting between staff and parent/guardian
- If a resolution cannot be reached, center manager will forward the original complaint as well as a narrative of his/her attempt to resolve the conflict through mediation to the WELA director. The director shall make a final decision regarding resolution

Grievance forms are available at each WELA site and on the Osage Nation website.

SUPPLIES

Individual Supplies

WELA provides developmentally appropriate classrooms and environments that promote the success of each student. In our endeavours to keep students comfortable, healthy, and clean during the transition between home and pre-school, parents/guardians are responsible for supplying necessary items for their student. Staff members will keep an open line of communication between the parent/guardian if their student needs any of the following supplies.

- Bottles
- Formula/breastmilk
- Baby food
- Diapers
- Baby wipes
- Bibs
- Complete change of clothing

WELA will maintain a supply of emergency diapers and wipes; however, if a student uses any emergency supplies, the student's parent/guardian will be responsible for replacement of those supplies.

Extra Clothes

Parents/guardians should send their student to WELA in comfortable, washable, and weather appropriate play clothes. All students need an extra set of clothes to be kept at WELA with each item labeled with the student's name. Please provide extra of the following items.

- Socks
- Underwear
- Shirt
- Pants
- If possible, an extra pair of shoes

Parents are encouraged to check their student's cubby periodically to ensure their student's clothes fit and are weather appropriate.

TOBACCO FREE/DRUG FREE ZONE

The Drug Free Policy for the staff of the WELA supersedes the Drug Free Policy contained within the Osage Nation Employee Handbook. When it comes to the care and education of our Osage youth, drug/alcohol use cannot, and will not, be tolerated.

WELA staff are expected to report for work and remain at work in a condition, which enables them to perform their duties and tasks free from the effects of drugs or alcohol.

The following are prohibited and will result in termination from WELA:

- possession of illegal drugs or controlled substances
- use of illegal drugs or controlled substances
- sale of illegal drugs or controlled substances
- purchase of illegal drugs or controlled substances
- distribution of illegal drugs or controlled substances
- being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- misusing prescription drugs on the Osage Nation's premises or in the conduct of related work off-site

It is the responsibility of all supervisors to enforce this Drug Free Workplace Policy. Failure to enforce this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees suspected of being impaired or under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be escorted from the work site to a safe and secure area by center manager. The supervisor shall immediately document the incident and initiate Reasonable Suspicion Testing.

TRANSPORTATION

Each vehicle used for providing transportation services shall be insured and equipped with all of the following.

- Communication system to call for assistance in case of emergency
- Safety equipment for use in an emergency, including a charged fire extinguisher properly mounted near the driver's seat and a sign indicating its location
- First aid kit and a sign indicating the location of such equipment
- Seat belt cutter for use in an emergency evacuation and a sign indicating its location

WELA staff will only provide transportation services in WELA buses or allowable alternate vehicles. All vehicles are equipped for height-and-weight appropriate safety restraint systems and have reverse beepers.

For each transportation vehicle there is at least one bus monitor on board at all times. If necessary, an additional monitor will be added, for example, if needed to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.

When transportation is provided, drivers and monitors will use sign-in sheets to track children as they board the bus and leave the bus each time. The drivers and monitors will perform checks, headcounts, and seat inspections at each stop and at the beginning and end of each trip.

WELA CLOSINGS

It is the policy of WELA to work with parents and guardians to ensure that our students are safe while in our care, both inside and outside the classroom. For this reason, the Osage Nation will close WELA sites when driving conditions are unsafe. If the weather deteriorates after students arrive at WELA, parents will be notified to pick up their students. If the Osage Nation closes, all WELA sites will close too.

Parents and families will be asked to subscribe to Osage Alerts to receive notices of WELA closings. This system will send notifications by phone call, email, or text message if the Osage Nation is closing some of its sites due to hazardous conditions. In order to receive notifications from the Osage Alerts system, please go to the Emergency Management web page on the Osage Nation website (https://osagetribe.regroup.com/networks/osagetribe/osage_group_embed_login_register) and register for emergency alerts and updates.

Other factors out of our control that may cause WELA to close at a moment's notice, include, but are not limited to severe weather, utility problems, construction, widespread illness, etc.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, the undersigned, acknowledge I have received and read the Parent Handbook and will adhere to the policies set forth in the Parent Handbook.

I have had the opportunity to clarify any questions, concerning the expectations and services described in this handbook.

I understand the WELA Parent Handbook is not a contract and the policies contained herein may be changed without notice at the sole discretion of WELA, and the WELA retains the right to interpret and apply the stated policies, as it deems appropriate.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please sign and return to Center Manager