

The Early Learning Community at Pacific University



503.352.1481 | www.pacificu.edu/elc

Berglund Hall | Corner of Pacific Avenue and Cedar Street



Observation Guidelines and Agreement

School Year 2014-2015

Thank you for your interest in the Early Learning Community. We welcome you and hope that you will find your observations informative, illuminating and supportive of your goals. Before you come into our classrooms, we would like to share a few key elements of our program so that you can have a better understanding of what to expect, and what we expect of you.

It is our mission to provide the highest quality early childhood educational environment, the primary function of which is to nurture the developmental needs of a diverse group of young children. Additionally, our community supports the educational needs of adult learners – students of education, teachers in the field, and practicing health professionals, in a manner that balances learning, research, and community outreach.

The ELC is organized around the principles of inclusion, active experiential learning and best pedagogical practice. We believe that children learn best in a place where they feel good about themselves, where they are allowed to explore their world, and where the learning materials match their interests and needs.

We are staffed by highly qualified teachers who recognize developmental norms, respect individual differences, and inspire a sense of wonder and a desire to learn. We work to foster collaboration between students, teachers, and families as a means of supporting all aspects of children's development.



To better understand the kinds of outcomes we seek in our work and play with the children here, we ask that you read through our school's goals. Informed by the aspirations we share for our learners, you may see more clearly the meaning in the activities of the children and the purposeful way they are engaged and guided by our teachers.

EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITY GOALS

The goal of our learning community is to nurture each child toward becoming a person who:

- Is a **caring and compassionate community member**, sensitive to the needs of others and increasingly capable of making and maintaining friendships
- Is increasingly **self-aware** and able to sense physical and emotional states, as well as identify and articulate needs
- Is curious, observant and **actively inquisitive** about the world, displaying wonder and delight in the process of learning



- **Conceives of his or herself** as a writer, reader, mathematician, scientist, artist and explorer
- Values the written word and is able to apply emergent **literacy skills** in creative and communicative ways
- Extends and refines **gross and fine motor skills** through playful as well as intentional activities
- Explores and values **artistic expression** in multiple forms
- Demonstrates a desire to explore, care for, understand and conserve resources as a **steward of the natural world**

OBSERVATION AGREEMENT

We invite you to visit our school with the expectation that you will do so in a manner respectful of our mission and the needs of the learners we serve. The following are guidelines to which we ask you to agree before you observe:

1. **Act ethically.** It is expected that you will conduct yourself in an ethical manner throughout your time at the school
2. **Interact appropriately.** Please use developmentally appropriate language and behave in a way that does not overexcite or distract the children.
3. **Observe discreetly.** Ideally your presence/interactions will not alter the usual flow of activities, typical behaviors of the children, or their engagement in the learning experiences.
4. **Maintain confidentiality.** It is necessary to respect the confidentiality of ELC children. While you are welcome to discuss your observations in a class setting, you must omit child names or personal information. Outside of an educational purpose you are asked not to discuss your observations.
5. **Photo/Video only with Director permission.** If you wish to take photos, please speak directly with Mark Bailey to clarify parameters beforehand.
6. **Safety.** It is important to recognize that at no time are you allowed to be alone in a room with any ELC child.
7. You are welcome to bring and use your **laptop**, however please know that you do so at your own risk. Please request approval to use a power cord.
8. **Food and beverage.** Please enjoy your coffee and food in the kitchen area rather than in any classroom.
9. Please turn off your **cell phone**.

Because of potentially life threatening **peanut allergies** some of our students have, you are not allowed to bring any product containing peanuts or peanut byproducts into the ELC. Furthermore, if you have recently eaten or come into contact with something containing peanuts, please thoroughly wash your hands and face and refrain from entering the ELC for 15 minutes.

I have read the statements above and will follow the guidelines as described. I recognize that the faculty of the ELC may need to adjust the parameters of my observation at any time. Furthermore, if my presence is deemed inappropriate for any reason by the faculty of the ELC, I recognize that I may be asked to leave and will immediately comply.

General Purpose of Observation _____ Date _____

Name (printed) _____ Signature _____