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Palermo Union School District

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Preschool Program Guidelines 2016-2017

Palermo Preschool

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Helen Wilcox Preschool

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* Available on the PUSD website, <http://palermoschools.org/>

Enrollment Procedures

Children are admitted according to wait list procedures, and enrollment criteria and priorities established and monitored by the California Department of Education.

▪ **Eligibility**

- The child must be age three (3) or four (4) years old by September 1st of the program year (July 1 – June 30).
- The family must meet one or more of the following eligibility criteria:
 - Be a current cash aid recipient of CalWorks program
 - Be income eligible
 - Have a child who is receiving child protective services through the county welfare department or is at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation
 - Be homeless

▪ **Need Criteria (for full day services only)**

- The family must meet and continue to meet one or more of the following need criteria:
 - Employment
 - Self-employment
 - Vocational Training
 - Seeking employment
 - Parental incapacity
 - Child Protective Services (CPS) or children are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation
 - Seeking permanent housing

▪ **Admission Priorities, Enrollment Priorities, and Eligibility Criteria:**

The first priority for services shall be given to at risk children, ages 3-5 without regard to income. Second priority is then given to income eligible four-year-old children and then to income eligible three-year-old children. Families with the lowest gross monthly income shall be ranked higher. This includes children who exceed the age limitations and children from families whose income exceeds the current income ceiling, issued by the California Department of Education, Early Education Support Division. Part day/Part time eligible families may exceed this current income ceiling by no more than 15% of the eligible families of the same size. These children shall comprise a maximum of 10% of the total enrollment for the PUSD Preschools.

- **Enrollment Process:** Before a family is enrolled in the CSPP program, the parent must meet with an enrollment staff member to submit all information and complete all paperwork required by PUSD Preschool and the California Department of Education.

The parent must:

- Supply documentation to prove the family’s income
- Supply documentation to prove the family’s need for child care (not applicable for part day services, full day only)
- Supply the following information for each parent residing in the family home;
 - Full name
 - Address
 - Telephone number
- Supply picture identification to document identity of each parent
- Supply the following information for each child residing in the family home:
 - Full name
 - Gender
 - Birth date
- Supply documentation to identify all children in the family. This documentation must demonstrate the relationship between the parents and the children and will be used to determine the family size.
- Supply a self-declaration under penalty of perjury regarding the absence of a parent when documentation to prove the child’s identity reflects the name of a parent who does not reside in the family home
- Supply proof that the children receiving services reside in the state of California
- Supply up-to-date immunizations for the children.
- Within 30 days of enrollment, supply a physician’s report for the children.
 - A physician’s report completed up to one year prior to the enrollment date is acceptable.

An application for child care services will be completed for the family based on the above information and documentation. The application must be signed by the parent and the PUSD staff member conducting the appointment. The application and supporting documentation supplied will be reviewed to determine if the family meets the applicable need and eligibility requirements for child care services.

After the enrollment packet has been reviewed, a written Notice of Action will be given or mailed to the parent stating whether services have been approved or denied. If services are approved, the Notice of Action will include the family’s “certified child care schedule” which reflects the days and hours of child care authorized based on the family’s need any applicable travel time, sleep time, and/or study time requested or the days and hours in which the child is enrolled in the part-day program.

Child care services are not approved until a Notice of Action approving child care to begin is issued.

Please note: It is important for parents to complete the enrollment requirements as quickly as possible after an enrollment appointment is scheduled. Delays in completing the enrollment requirements may cause a delay in the family’s enrollment or loss of the enrollment space.

Subsidized child care services are not entitlements. While staff will assist as much as possible in helping parents obtain the documentation necessary to meet the need and eligibility requirements, ultimately the burden of proof is the parents’ responsibility. If a parent cannot supply verifiable documentation to prove need and eligibility, PUSD is prohibited by state regulations from enrolling a child or continuing a child’s enrollment in the California State Preschool Program.

Fraud and Ineligible Services

PUSD is charged with administering public funds on behalf of families who meet the need and eligibility guidelines set forth by the State of California. To ensure only those families who are eligible receive services, PUSD has developed a strong alliance with other agencies responsible for providing subsidized assistance to families, regulatory agencies such as Community Care Licensing and the Butte County District Attorney's office, which investigates and prosecutes suspected child care fraud. PUSD actively cooperates with these agencies in their investigations of suspected fraud and, upon request, will supply parent information including, but not limited to, income, need, family size and attendance documentation/records.

What is Fraud?

Fraud is knowingly misrepresenting facts that are material to an issue, made with the intent to obtain benefits or payment to which one is not entitled.

Fraud exists when an individual:

- Knowingly, and with intent, makes a statement or representation to obtain benefits, obtain a continuance or an increase in benefits, or to avoid a reduction of benefits
- Knowingly, and with intent, fails to disclose a fact which, if disclosed, could result in denial, reduction, or discontinuance of benefits.
- Accepts benefits knowing he or she is not entitled thereto, or accepts any amount of benefits knowing it is greater than he or she is entitled to

Child care fraud includes but is not limited to:

- A parent knowingly has received, or is continuing to receive, child care services that he or she is not eligible to receive
- A parent knowingly has falsified documents of/for eligibility

When Fraud is Suspected by PUSD

Any fraudulent, false or misleading information provided to PUSD regarding attendance, employment, self-employment, seeking employment, enrollment in a vocational training program, parental incapacity, income, family size, or any other information related to parent need and/or eligibility, will be grounds for termination.

When PUSD suspects fraud, the case is referred to the District Attorney's office for investigation, which may result in charges being filed, repayment of ineligible child care services received and/or subject the parent to prosecution under State and/or Federal criminal statutes.

Any parent who is **being actively investigated** for fraud will be prohibited from participating in any of PUSD's programs.

Any parent who has **committed fraud or has intentionally misrepresented their eligibility** will be prohibited from participating in any of PUSD's programs.

Recovery of Funds

PUSD may recover any funds that were issued in error due to parent's failure to report pertinent information timely, and parent ineligibility, misrepresentation, or fraud.

Depending on the circumstances, parents will either repay PUSD directly or through the Butte County District Attorney's Office. The funds collected are either put back into the California State Preschool Program to be used for families who do meet the eligibility requirements or are returned to the California Department of Education.

Repayment Plans

When repayment is to be made to PUSD and the parent cannot pay the balance in full, a repayment plan may be submitted prior to the effective date on the Notice of Action terminating child care or the response date indicated on a delinquent account letter. Repayment plans must be reasonable and require approval by an authorized PUSD staff member.

If a parent cannot pay a repayment balance in full and does not submit a repayment plan, the balance will be turned over to the Butte County District Attorney's Office for collections.

Outstanding Balances

Parents who do not comply with their repayment plan (miss payments or do not pay the amount as outlined in the plan) will be issued a termination notice. The repayment balance will be turned over to the Butte County District Attorney's Office for collections.

When a parent is terminated for failure to repay PUSD for ineligible services, retroactive family fees, or failure to comply with a repayment plan, the parent will not be eligible for re-enrollment or participation in any PUSD program until all outstanding balances are paid in full.