



EARLY BRIDGES

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2024-2025

Table of Contents

Welcome Letter	3
Meet Program Staff	3
Early Bridges Contact Information	4
Communication Chart	5
BVCSD/ACAP, INC. Mission Statements	6
New York State Law for School Eligibility	7
Parent Committee	7
Policy Council	7
Communication/Folders	7
Meetings	8
Curriculum	8
Universal Educational Services	8
Special Education	8
Assessments/Progress Report	8
Family Conferences	8
Parents/Guardians Volunteering	9
Meals and Snack Procedures	9
Program hours	10
Transportation	10
Attendance	11
Confidentiality Policy	11
Releasing a Child to an Adult with a Possible Impairment	11
Behavior Expectations	12
Health	
• Screenings	12
• Requirements	12
• Vision/Hearing Screening	12
• Health History	12
• Medication	12
• Illness	12
• To Sick to Attend	13
• Returning After Illness	13
• Daily Health Check	13
• Head Lice	14
• Sunscreen	14
• Mental Health	14
Staff as Mandated Reporters	14
Large Motor/Gross Motor	14
Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing Procedure	15
Emergency Evacuation & Safety Drills	15
Program Practices	15
Video Surveillance	16
Services available at ACAP, Inc. for families	16
Program Handbook Review Signature Page(s)	17-18



Dear Parents/Guardians:

We would like to welcome you to the Early Bridges Team. Early Bridges is a highly qualified pre-kindergarten program that is a collaborative effort between Boquet Valley Central School and ACAP, Inc. We have combined BVCSD and Head Start staff to provide a unique program that focuses on the whole child and his/her families. Early Bridges is available free of charge to district and/or Head Start eligible three and four-year-old children who have registered at Boquet Valley Central School District.

This handbook is designed to provide you with information about our program and the important role you play in the success of our program. Early Bridges believes you are the most important educator for your child(ren), and you have the primary responsibility for your child's development. As we work together, we will provide the support your child(ren) needs to succeed in school and in life. It is our hope that you take advantage of everything the program has to offer to help your family and child to continue to grow.

Please know that we welcome your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions for improvement. We look forward to hearing from you and getting to know you and your family.

Best Regards,
The Early Bridges Staff



Early Bridges Contact Information for 2024 - 2025

Classroom Cell Phone Number: 518-603-4207

Josh Meyer, Boquet Valley CSD Superintendent	jmeyer@boquetvalleycds.org	518-873-6371
Lee Kyler Elementary Principal	lkyler@boquetvalleycsd.org	518-962-8244
Mallory Finnegan, Head Start Director	mfinnegan@acapinc.org	518-873-3207 ext. 224
Terra Thompson, Special Services Coordinator	tthompson@acapinc.org	518-873-3207 ext. 229
Nichole Martin, Education Coordinator	nmartin@acapinc.org	518-873-3207 ext. 255
Janet Allen, Staff Development Coordinator	jallen@acapinc.org	518-873-3207
Lindsay Marcotte-Hamel, Health Supervisor	lmarcotte-hamel@acapinc.org	518-593-2862
Jazmin Lee Health Assistant	jlee@acapinc.org	518-873-3207
Dianne Harvish, Transportation Coordinator	dharvish@acapinc.org	518-873-3207 ext. 233
Justine Crandall-Otis, Staff Support Specialist	jcrandallotis@acapinc.org	518-873-3207
Courtney Stockmar Staff Support Specialist	cstockmar@acapinc.org	518-873-3207
Julie Holbrook, School Lunch Manager	jholbrook@boquetvalleycds.org	518-873-6371 ext. 315
Dawn Haase, School Nurse	dhaase@boquetvalleycsd.org	518-962-8244
PK 4 Teacher	VACANT	518-962-8244
Farrah Whitney, Head Start PK Teacher	fwhitney@acapinc.org	518-962-8244
Marty Stratton Teaching Assistant	mstratton@acapinc.org	518-962-8244
Jolene Sayward, Family Worker	jsayward@acapinc.org	518-225-5162
Sara Anderson, Classroom Aide	sanderson@acapinc.org	518-962-8244
Brittany Jones, Teacher Aide	bjones@acapinc.org	518-962-8244
Montana Morrissey, Teacher Aide	mbaker@acapinc.org	518-962-8244
Megan Woodard, Classroom Aide	mwoodard@acapinc.org	518-962-8244
Jeanne Brown, Head Start Mental Health Consultant	jbrown@acapinc.org	518-573-1703



Early Bridges Communication Chart

This document is to help you contact the appropriate staff members with your questions and/or concerns. We would like to increase effective communication among all people involved in our children’s experiences at the Early Bridges Program.

<i>Areas of Concern/Question</i>	<i>1st step</i>	<i>2nd step</i>	<i>3rd step</i>	<i>4th step</i>
Academics Curriculum/instructional materials Difficulties Classroom procedures	Teacher	Head Start Education Coordinator	Elementary Principal/Head Start Director	Director of Student Support Services
Instructional/ Learning Concerns	Teacher	Head Start Special Services Coordinator	Essex County Children's Services Coordinator/ Elementary Principal	Director of Student Support Services
Attendance	Teacher	Family Worker	Elementary Principal/ Head Start Director	Director of Student Support Services
Medical issues	Teacher	School Nurse Carol/Head Start Nurse	Head Start Director/ Elementary Principal	Director of Student Support Services
Nutrition	Teacher	School Lunch Manager/Head Start Director	Elementary Principal	Director of Student Support Services
Policies/practices	Teacher	Head Start Staff Support Specialist	Elementary Principal/Head Start Director	Director of Student Support Services
Staff	Involved staff	Head Start Coordinator	Elementary Principal/Head Start Director	Director of Student Support Services
Transportation	Bus driver/ School Transportation Supervisor	Head Start Transportation Coordinator	Elementary Principal/Head Start Director	Director of Student Support Services





Boquet Valley Central School District

District Office
7530 Court Street
PO Box 158
Elizabethtown, NY 12932
(518) 873-6371

WEB: www.boquetvalleycsd.org

Josh Meyer, Superintendent

BVCSD Mission Statement

BVCSD, in partnership with our ADK community, will provide excellence in education that enables all students to achieve their full potential in an ever-changing world.

***P.R.I.D.E.*: Personal Responsibility in Delivering Excellence**

Every Learner Can Succeed



Adirondack Community Action Programs, Inc. (ACAP, INC)

7572 Court Street, Suite 2 PO Box 848

Elizabethtown, NY 12932 518-873-3207

WEB: www.acapinc.org

Alan Jones, Executive Director

ACAP Mission

**ACAP, Inc. connects people, values and resources
to promote personal, economic and community growth.**

ACAP Values

***Accountability* - to our customers, partners and supporters**

***Integrity* - as individuals, as a business and as members of the community**

***Citizenship* - and shared responsibility for community change**

***Respect* - for each individual's capacity to learn and grow.**



New York State Law for School Eligibility

1. **“Eligible child means a child who resides within the school district who is four years of age on or before December 1st of the year in which he or she is enrolled or who will otherwise be first eligible to enter public school kindergarten commencing with the following school year. For a summer only program provided in accordance with the provisions of section 151-1.4(d) of this Subpart, eligible child means a child who resides within the school district who is five years of age on or before December 1st of the year in which he or she is enrolled or who will otherwise be first eligible to enter public school kindergarten commencing with the current school year. Parents and/or guardians may choose, but are not required, to enroll their child(ren) in a universal prekindergarten program. However, upon enrollment, the school district's attendance policy must be applied.”** - NYS Education Department

Our program requires children that are going to be 5 before December 1 of the current school year that your child is being enrolled in; they must be enrolled in Kindergarten. If your child is going to be 4 before December 1 of the current school year that your child is being enrolled in; they must be enrolled in Prekindergarten.

For Early Bridges, your child must be 3 before December 1 to be eligible to enroll in the 3 year old classroom. If your child turns 3 after the December 1 cutoff they are not eligible for Early Bridges that school year. To be eligible for the Early Bridges 4 year old classroom your child must be 4 before the December 1 cut off otherwise they will be eligible for the 3 year old classroom.

Parent Committee

All parents/guardians of enrolled Early Bridges children are members of the “Parent Committee”. Some of the items that will be discussed and/or planned at these meetings are classroom activities, field trips, Policy Council updates, community involvement, transition activities, etc. These meetings are a great opportunity for you to become involved and support the “School Readiness” and “Family Engagement” initiatives.

Policy Council

Each Parent Committee is also responsible for electing representatives to the Head Start Policy Council- 1 regular representative and 1 alternate representative. (These representatives need to have a child also enrolled with Head Start.) Community representatives are also elected from Early Bridges and various resources in the county. The Council meets once a month, its purpose is to share in the decision-making process for the Early Head Start and Head Start programs. Members of the Council are eligible for mileage and child care reimbursement while carrying out their duties as a Council member. Please speak to your Family Worker if this is something you might be interested in. It's a great opportunity to partner with ACAP, Inc.

Communication/Folder

There will be communication folders that will go back and forth everyday in your child's backpack. It is very important that you check your child's folder everyday for important notes and notifications from the Early Bridges team. The staff check your child's folder every morning. If you have a note that needs to be sent in, please place it in your child's folder and a staff member will see that it gets to the proper place. Please refer to the Communication Chart when you have valid and important concerns/complaints regarding our program. This procedure enables individuals to express these concerns to the appropriate person who should be able to address the issue in a more efficient and timely manner.

Meetings



Parent- Teacher Conference meetings will be held in person.

CPSE meetings will follow IDEA and the Commissioner's Regulations 200 when planning for and conducting virtual IEP team meetings. IEP meetings will continue to be held on Google Meets this school year and under certain circumstances in person meetings can take place.

Curriculum

Early Bridges uses a combined curriculum of High Scope and Creative Curriculum. They are both based on the best practices for early childhood. Our instructional programs are Teaching Strategies GOLD and Ready Rosie. We partner with the kindergarten program to ensure our students are prepared for skills as they enter school aged programming.

Universal Educational Services

The goal of speech and language therapy in the Early Bridges program is to provide our preschoolers with supplemental support for students to be successful academically. We will also universally screen for communication disorders while providing remediation of articulation and phonological deficits, receptive and expressive language problems, which adversely affect a student's educational performance and literacy and language development.

Special Education

Preschool students in Special Education will receive their services in the classroom. All programming and instruction will be consistent with their IEPs. Additionally, related services for young children (Speech, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Special Education Itinerant Teacher, English Language Learner support) are most effective when children and adults are together in the same space, and our little ones can manipulate materials, see the adult's face, and receive immediate, in-person, feedback. Given the small-group nature of preschool, Boquet Valley Central School's Early Bridges Program will be offering consistent programming, while keeping groups small enough to ensure safety protocols. Currently, we are in the process of scheduling students for IEP services and inclusion opportunities that meet safety protocols and guidelines.

Assessments

All Early Bridges children are screened with the DIAL-4 upon entering the program, and also the following June. The DIAL-4 is a tool that screens children in motor, concepts, language, social and self-help development. This screening shows the staff where a child's abilities are and where they may need more support. The children are assessed using Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment. For these assessments the children are screened on language, motor and math skills. These assessments are done in the fall mid-winter and spring. It shows staff where the children are academically and where we need to get them. Children's progress is monitored throughout the academic year, through classroom observations, class work and participation during class.

Family Conferences/Progress Report

Staff will keep track of individual successes through observations and anecdotal notes. This information is not only used during Family/Teacher Conferences that are held in the fall, but also for Progress Report purposes. Conferences are an important time for families to discuss their child's progress with the Early Bridges teachers. Children within the 4-year-old room will receive three progress reports an academic year, which are mailed. The first is mailed after the first Family/Teacher Conference in November. The second progress report is mailed in March with the final progress report mailed in June to end the academic year. If you would like to discuss your child's progress at any time, you may make an appointment with the Early Bridges teachers. (See attached Progress Report template at the end of the document. It shows all the skills we work on throughout the year). Children in the 3-year-old room receive three progress reports, which are discussed during parent teacher conferences. Child goals are also discussed at this time.



Parents/Guardians Volunteering

Early Bridges will be allowing volunteers in the classroom. Early Bridges is for the families, as well as the child. By volunteering, you are not only a great help to the staff, but you have the opportunity to learn more about your child and to work with the other children we have in the classrooms.. We have two types of volunteers: spontaneous and regular. All volunteers need to follow the BVCS D Policy 4532 as well as the Head Start requirements. Please ask the staff for more information if you are interested.

While you are in the classroom volunteering, please assist, encourage and participate with the children in the following areas:

Art Activities	Singing	Outdoor Play
Reading	Circle Time	Table Games
Block Area	Science Table	Sensory Table
Dramatic Play	Large motor activities	Writing Center
Mealtimes	Clean Up	Dressing for outside

Below you will find some things to keep in mind while volunteering.

- Be patient. Let children try to do things for themselves. Give them time to finish a task.
- Help children feel good about what they can do. Direct them toward activities they can be successful with. Praise them for their efforts.
- Be a good language model. Always speak slowly and clearly to all children.
- Encourage all children to use words rather than gestures.
- Encourage children to develop self-help skills, such as eating, dressing and washing.
- Don't discuss a child/family in the presence of others. Remember our Confidentiality Policy.
- Remember that every child/family is an individual and brings their own experiences and personalities. We ask you to be kind, accepting, tolerant and confidential.
- Please remember, while you are in the Early Bridges classrooms, if you have any questions regarding "how we do things", please ask.....We will be glad to explain.

Meals and Snack Procedures

Our food is provided by the Boquet Valley Central School District. Early Bridges strives to promote child wellness by providing nutritional services that complement home and community practices. The menus reflect the philosophy of healthy living that supports our goal to establish healthy eating habits. These habits make for healthy brain development and physical wellness, promoting lifelong well-being. Therefore, our meals and snacks are low in fat, sugar, and salt. Also we do not allow any outside food to be brought in. Children are encouraged to try new foods and even the pickiest eaters will find something they enjoy eating. If your child has special nutritional needs and with proper documentation from your child's doctor, we can happily accommodate all food allergies and sensitivities. All allergies and intolerances are displayed visually within the classroom, one of which are red and white placemats used during mealtimes. If you have questions about how this may work please contact the teacher.

Breakfast and lunch will be served daily in the classroom. Meal times will be family-style, allowing time for conversation and engagement with each other. Staff members eat with the children since meal times are an extension of the classroom.

The meal service of breakfast and lunch is divided into three phases.



- Phase I: Pre-plated meals are meant to help young children transition into the preschool setting. The children are served meals which have been pre-plated in the kitchen. They will pass milk to each other and pour their own from the very start of the school year.
- Phase II: Family style meals are brought to the table with each component in a serving dish. Children practice asking, passing and serving themselves. Family style meals are meant to facilitate mealtime manners, and overall dining skills, including portion control.
- Phase III: Tray service meals provide an opportunity for children to become familiar with handling a cafeteria style tray, especially important for those children entering Kindergarten in the upcoming fall. Children pass through a service line to have their tray filled and then carry their tray to the table.

A daily snack is served in the classroom during Choice Time at the end of the day. Each child has the option of choosing if/when they would like to eat their quick snack at the supervised small snack table. Children will wash their hands, be given a snack of their choice off the snack tray, sit down at the supervised table and then eat the snack. Each child is responsible to clean up his/her own space before heading to another center. Parents are always welcome to join mealtime at Early Bridges. Sometime during the school year, each family will have a “Special Week”.

Program Hours

The Early Bridges Program is open from 8:10AM-3:10 PM. Children may be brought to the classroom beginning at 7:45 when BVCSD opens for the day. If your child will not be attending for the day, please call the classroom your child is in at 518-962-8244 before 8:20 a.m., which is the official attendance time for Early Bridges. **The Early Bridges Program closes at 3:10.**

Transportation

Age Group	School Arrival	School Departure
ACAP Bus (3 Year old)		
District Buss (4 Year Old)	Arrival to Lake View is 8:00 AM	Departure from Lake View is 3:15 PM

Parents are encouraged to drop off their children. State regulations prevent 3 year olds from riding the district bus; 3 year olds will ride the ACAP bus. 4 year olds are able to ride the district bus. Please remember that drop off begins at 7:45 am. This way your child can experience more time in the classroom with the other children. Consistent transportation plans help ensure safe and predictable routines for students. As an essential part of this we require a consistent plan for the transportation of students. Pick up and drop off of children should be at a consistent location daily. Any adjustments to this plan should be made in advance and clearly communicated with staff.

The district offers transportation for its more than 400 students. You and your family are essential partners in helping us be safe and on time for our children. You and your child should be ready 10 minutes prior to scheduled pick up and we as a district will work to drop off your child within 10 minutes of the scheduled time. Please note that for your child we require an adult present for drop off. Because we serve so many children over such a large area we are unable to return to pick up students. The bus needs to remain on schedule and the bus will not be able to return if missed.

Please remain 15 feet back from the road to wait for the bus.



When children are dropped off, they will only be released to their parents or their designated emergency contacts. If someone other than the parents or emergency contact is to receive the child, parents must notify Early Bridges and the school main office ***in writing*** advising who will be receiving the child and they must show identification.

If no one is home to receive the child, the child will be kept on the bus and the classroom will be notified. The Early Bridges staff will try to contact the parent to find out when they will be able to pick up their child. If the parent cannot be contacted, the staff will try to contact the emergency contacts to pick up the child. ***If no one is able to be contacted to pick up the child and it is time for the staff to leave for the day, the office and local police will be notified.***

In the event of an emergency, when a parent or emergency contact is not able to receive the child, authorization must be obtained from the parent/guardian for someone else to receive the child. A picture ID must be presented if the person is not known and either the bus attendance form or pick up/drop off form must be signed. Written documentation is required from the parent/guardian.

Attendance

If your child will be absent for the day, please call your child's classroom at 518-962-8244 or 518-603-4207 by 8:20 am. If your child is not at school and the program has not been notified, someone from Early Bridges will call within the first hour of the day to see why your child is not in attendance. If there has been no communication from the family for three consecutive days, a staff member will seek a face to face contact with the family. Regular attendance/participation is important in our program. ***If your child does not attend/participate on a regular basis, your child's enrollment slot may be in jeopardy. Regulations (Performance Standards) state that if a child does not attend regularly, we must consider that slot as vacant and enroll another child from our waiting lists.*** If there are circumstances that prevent regular attendance, please contact us.

Confidentiality Policy

Any and all activities and conversations that take place between parents and staff, parents and parents, and parents and children, are considered confidential information. Also, all information contained in a family file at Early Bridges is strictly confidential. Information within the files may be shared with schools, agencies, or professionals, only with the signed, informed consent of the parents, unless the information is legally subpoenaed.

Releasing a Child to an Adult with a Possible Impairment

To ensure the safety of all Early Bridges enrolled children and families, staff will use their best judgment to determine whether the person responsible for the supervision of a child is impaired in any way.

In the event staff determines the child may not be safely supervised or the adult in question may not be in a condition to drive safely, staff will:

1. Discuss with the adult in question regarding their concern and the need for safe supervision and transportation of the child.
2. The staff will suggest calling a designated emergency contact that may be able to provide safe transportation/supervision for the adult and the child.
3. If the adult refuses the above options and insists on leaving with the child, the staff will inform the adult that the police will be called.



Behavior Expectations

- Early Bridges helps children develop self-control and learn acceptable forms of social behavior. The greatest degree of success occurs when we partner with parents. We can do this by:
 - ❖ Maintaining frequent and open communication
 - ❖ Sharing strategies and resources for consistent implementation
 - ❖ Developing solutions-TOGETHER!
- Early Bridges' program's expectation is that all children will be safe, and will possess knowledge of basic safety rules and expectations. Children's temperaments and individual personalities will be considered.
- We follow the Pyramid Model that promotes positive behaviors.
- Our Head Start Mental Health Consultant is available to meet with parents individually and confidentially for any problems you may be experiencing. This service is available for all Early Bridges families. Please talk with your Family Worker or Teacher if you would like to meet with the Head Start Counselor.
- Individual Child Plan (ICP) is a feature of our programs; parents, service providers and Staff can meet to develop goals and strategies that may decrease challenging behaviors.

Health

Health Requirements for Attendance- Early Bridges requires that each child has a current (within one year) physical exam, an up-to-date immunization record, a blood test for lead with results, a hemoglobin screening (test for anemia) with results, and a yearly dental exam.

Vision/Hearing Screening- Early Bridges will provide vision and hearing screening for every child attending the program and the results will be provided to the parents. If additional treatment or services are needed as a result of the above screening or medical/dental exams, you should work with your child's medical/dental provider and Early Bridges to ensure that all necessary follow up are received.

Health History- Early Bridges staff will ask essential health information to identify any health needs or concerns your child may have. Health history will be updated yearly at registration or when changes occur. This information helps health services staff plan for conditions such as: allergies, medications, asthma or other conditions that require individual health plans; staff training or other accommodations that must be in place to ensure your child's health and safety in our program.

Medications- If possible, medication schedules should be arranged so medication will not need to be given during Early Bridges hours. If your child requires medications while at the program, please contact your Teacher, Family Worker or Program Nurse for more information and assistance. Medication cannot be sent into Early Bridges without following proper procedures. For your child's safety and the safety of all children, **never** send any medication in with your child, or in his/her backpack.

Illness- If a child develops signs of illness while at Early Bridges, the child will be kept comfortable on his/her cot in an area that is in view of, and under the supervision of staff. Parents will be notified and requested to pick up their child. If staff is unable to reach parents, the emergency contact(s) will be asked to pick up the child.



When a child is too sick to attend Early Bridges-

Do not send your child if:

- The child does not feel well enough to participate in **all** program activities
- Fever of 100.4 degrees
- Vomiting- within a 24-hour period
- Diarrhea
- Signs of severe illness such as; persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, lethargy
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Emergencies:

The health and safety of the children enrolled in Early Bridges is the utmost priority. Early Bridges follows the most strict policies and procedures held by ACAP, Inc. Head Start and BVCS. Early Bridges is also an Office of Children and Family Services licensed space. **The Pre-K staff will call 911 for serious medical issues, incidents, or illnesses.**

A serious issue, incident or illness includes, but is not limited to:

- The child's life is at risk or there is a risk of permanent injury.
- Difficulty breathing, is having an asthma exacerbation, or is unable to speak.
- Child's skin, lips look blue, purple or gray.
- Child has a seizure.
- Child is unconscious.
- Child becomes less and less responsive.
- Child is acting strangely, much less alert or much more withdrawn than usual.
- Child has any of the following after a head injury: decrease in level of alertness, confusion, headache, vomiting, irritability or difficulty walking.
- Child has severe pain anywhere.
- Child has a cut or burn that is large, deep and/or won't stop bleeding.
- Child is vomiting blood.
- Child has a severe stiff neck, headache and fever.
- Child appears dehydrated: sunken eyes, lethargic, not making tears, not urinating.
- Multiple children affected by injury or serious illness at the same time.

Returning after Illness- If your child has been temporarily excluded from Early Bridges due to illness or symptoms there are certain guidelines that must be met in order to return. For common symptoms such as fever, vomiting and diarrhea, the rule is that the child may return after 24 hours and is symptom free. In some instances, we may request a doctor's note stating that your child may return to Early Bridges and participate in all program activities.

Daily Health Checks- Upon arrival at the center each day, your child will be observed by staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect their ability to participate in classroom activities. If illness or injury are observed, you will be



contacted to see how your child was feeling and acting at home. Staff may also inquire about your child's sleep, appetite, toileting, medications and any other health concerns you may have since their previous day of attendance.

Head Lice- Parents will be notified if there is a case of head lice at Early Bridges. Information on identification, treatment and prevention will be sent home. It is very important that you contact your Early Bridges staff should you discover your child has head lice. It is our policy to screen the children for head lice every Monday and on the first day the children return after a break. If your child is found to have evidence of lice (nits within ¼ inch from the scalp or live lice) we will contact you and recommend treatment and removal of nits.

Sunscreen- Parental permission is required for Early Bridges staff to apply sunscreen to your child. Early Bridges will supply the sunscreen for use at the program. Starting in September through October 1st and again in May thru the end of the program year staff will apply sunscreen before outdoor activities. If you have a specific sunscreen for your child, it is your responsibility to purchase it and bring it to Early Bridges. We ask that you apply sunscreen to your child at home and provide other protection measures such as wide brim hats, sunglasses and protecting clothing.

Mental Health- Head Start contracts with a licensed Mental Health Consultant who assists with coordination of services for children. He/she observes the classrooms twice per year to help identify children who may need referral and offer suggestions to staff when working with behavioral or emotional needs. Individual child observations can be arranged with written parental consent. If you would like more information about this service, ask your child's teacher. This service is available for all children enrolled in Early Bridges. Mental Health consultants are available for our students and families.

Staff Are Mandated Reporters

New York State Law requires that any Early Bridges personnel who knows or suspects child abuse or neglect, will be responsible for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to the Mandated Reporters Hotline. We are not here to make judgment if a child is abused or neglected. Our reporting is to help protect a child if the need exists and to help families access any needed services. The care and well-being of a child is of the utmost importance.

Large Motor/Gross Motor Play

Children go outside to play every day, weather permitting. Our playground is located next to the school. If we can't go outside due to weather, our large motor play occurs in the small gym/auditorium. The children get at least 90 minutes of structured and or unstructured large motor play per day. Large motor activity occurs during Circle Time, outside/gym time, after lunch, and sometimes during free play. Besides the playground structure, a variety of portable equipment is used to encourage motor skill development. Some examples of portable equipment are hoops, scarves, scooters, bikes, balls, big trucks, sand toys, bubbles, and parachutes. More structured large motor activities occur in the classroom with the tunnel, dance and yoga. running, jumping, galloping, skipping, balancing, climbing, kicking, throwing, and catching are targeted motor skills.



Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing Procedure

The Superintendent of Schools may close or dismiss children early for hazardous weather or health emergencies. Emergency closings are announced on:

Radio	Television	Social Media
WJOY 123 AM	WPTZ	http://www.boquetvalleycds.org
WIZN 106.7 FM		BVCSD Facebook page
WOKO 98.9 FM		BVCSD Twitter page
WXXX 95.9 FM		
WVMT 620 AM		
WKOL 105.0 FM		
WEZF 92.9 FM		

Emergency Evacuation Drills and Safety Drills

Both ACAP, Inc. and BVCSD are mandated to have an Emergency Preparedness Plan. These plans provide for responses to all types of emergencies. We practice four(4) Lock-Down Drill and Shelter in Place per year. Staff will let you know in advance of the drills note home. Depending on the circumstances of the emergency, we will follow one of the following actions:

- o **Immediate Evacuation**-children are evacuated to a safe area outside in the event of fire, etc.
- o **Safety Drills**- sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous material related, may dictate taking cover inside the school is the best immediate response.
- o **Evacuation**- total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. In this case, the children will be taken to one of the relocation sites posted in the classroom.
- o **Modified Operation**-may include emergency closing, delays or rescheduling of normal activities.

Important note *We ask that parents not call us during an emergency evacuation. Our staff will contact you, or your emergency contacts, in the event the children and staff are relocated.

Program Practices

- o BVCSD is a tobacco-free zone. This includes school building, playground, field trips, on or near buses, or in view of any children.
- o Please supply an extra set of clothing for your child to be kept in his/her cubby. Wet or soiled clothing will be sent home in a sealed bag in your child's backpack.
- o Be sure your child's footwear is very secure. Sneakers are the preferred footwear.
- o Dress your child for outdoor play as he/she will be going outside when weather permits and when temperatures are above 20 degrees.
- o Other than the extra set of clothing, we ask that you please only send in your child's personal item for the purpose of napping. This should be **one** soft small comfort item.
- o **No outside food, balloons and/or plastic grocery bags** can be brought into Early Bridges.
- o Please refrain from using cell phones while at Early Bridges.
- o We are a scent-sensitive environment. Please do not wear heavy scented perfumes, colognes, body lotions, etc. when visiting us.
- o Please do not distribute any personal party invitations at Early Bridges.
- o Staff members are not allowed to accept gifts, money or gratuities from families.



Video Surveillance

Video surveillance cameras are installed at BVCS D. They provide enhanced security and are a deterrent to vandalism and robbery. The cameras are located to cover common areas, such as the playground, the front and back doors, and hallways. Video surveillance is not a substitute for competent and direct supervision of the children. Video is not for public/parent viewing and security is maintained at all times.

Services available at ACAP, Inc. for families

ACAP, Inc.'s main office is located in Elizabethtown. Early Head Start/Head Start share an office with the following programs:

- Aging Services
 - Nutrition Program for the Elderly
 - Senior Transportation
 - Food Service for the hospital

- Child and Family Services
 - Child Care Resource & Referral
 - After School
 - Daycare

- Community Services
 - Emergency Needs
 - Holidays are for Sharing Program
 - Food Pantries
 - Homeless Assistance

- Employment & Training
 - One Work Source Business & Employment Center
 - Older Worker Program

- Weatherization & Energy Services
 - Weatherization Assistance Program
 - Assisted Home Performance with Energy Star
 - EmPower NY

If you would like more information about any of these services, please contact our Family Worker, Jolene Sayward or visit the ACAP, Inc. office.



PROGRAM HANDBOOK REVIEW

We have reviewed this handbook in its entirety. Any questions have been discussed and answered. We will abide by this handbook and will review it again, if needed.

Parent(s) signature: _____

Staff signature: _____

Dated: _____

Please sign both copies of this form- This one is for your files, and the next one is for ours!!



PROGRAM HANDBOOK REVIEW

We have reviewed this handbook in its entirety. Any questions have been discussed and answered. We will abide by this handbook and will review it again, if needed.

Parent(s) signature: _____

Staff signature: _____

Dated: _____

Please sign both copies of this form.

