



# Rodman Early Childhood Program Student/Family Handbook 2023-2024

***Donna Kilday, Early Childhood Coordinator***

960 Washington Street  
Canton, MA 02021

Phone: 781-821-5060 Extension 1505

Fax: 781-821-575-6500

Website: <https://www.cantonma.org/preschool>

## **Canton Public Schools**

### **Vision**

An exceptional education that develops innovative thinkers, curious and empowered learners, and compassionate citizens.

### **Core Values**

- Respectful and collaborative relationships
- Equity
- Academic and personal excellence
- Community engagement
- High-quality teaching, learning and leading

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

August 2023

Welcome to the Rodman Early Childhood Program! Our team of exceptionally qualified early childhood and special education professionals is excited to provide your child a rich experience filled with learning through exploration and discovery. Each child will be both challenged and nurtured throughout the year and we are looking forward to watching your child grow.

Our program seeks to ensure an environment of inclusion and collaboration for our preschoolers, for our families and for our staff. In the classroom, inclusive environments provide opportunities for children of all ability levels in all our classrooms to participate as peer partners in learning. All of our classrooms are “integrated,” providing a program that is designed to meet the needs of both children with and without disabilities in the same setting. Teachers seek to build on individual strengths as well provide foundational skills and strategies to strengthen any other areas.

In these classrooms instruction is differentiated (provided at a variety of levels) in order to ensure that all students have opportunities for enrichment. Peers are the best teachers at this age. Our teachers capitalize on the peer partner model, providing opportunities for academic learning and discovery through social interaction. Research tells us that quality peer partner programs enable all children involved to learn and discover at their own developmental rate. In addition, children in these classrooms, with and without special needs, develop an awareness, or a greater awareness, of empathy for individual differences in others.

We have a set of deeply held core values at the preschool; respect, acceptance and inclusion. We strive to celebrate the uniqueness of each child and their family. Providing an equitable experience where all students access the curriculum and see themselves represented is a priority for us. Establishing a genuine sense of belonging is important to us at the preschool and we hope that both you and your child will feel as though you are a valued member of our community.

As we continue to return to more normal school experiences, our focus will remain on strengthening our connection to our families and building even more of a “community” here at the Rodman Early Childhood Program. We encourage you to get involved and help our school continue to grow!

As I enter my tenth year as the Early Childhood Coordinator I can’t help but think how lucky I am! It is arguably the best job in the world! I am committed to supporting our students, staff and families and ensuring the highest quality early childhood experience for our preschoolers! As we say here, Rodman Rocks!

Donna Kilday  
Early Childhood Coordinator

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

## Translations

### English

If you need any of this document translated please contact Megan Bryne, Interim Director of Student Services at [byneme@cantonma.org](mailto:byneme@cantonma.org) or 781-821-5060 x1121.

### Chinese

如果您需要本文件的任何部分的翻译, 请联系Meghan Byrne(黛布拉 布罗姆菲尔德), 学生服务处处长  
[byneme@cantonma.org](mailto:byneme@cantonma.org)  
or 781-821-5060 x1121

### Spanish

Si usted necesita alguno de este documento traducido póngase en contacto con Meghan Byrne, la directora de Servicios Estudiantiles, en [byneme@cantonma.org](mailto:byneme@cantonma.org) or 781-821-5060 x1121..

### French

Si vous avez besoin de traduire ce document s'il vous plaît contacter Meghan Byrne, la directrice des Services aux étudiants, à [byneme@cantonma.org](mailto:byneme@cantonma.org) or 781-821-5060 x1121

## District Liaisons

Director of Student Services	Meghan Byrne	781- 821-5060 ext. 1135
Homeless Liaisons	Meghan Byrne, Director Stephanie Shapiro, Coordinator	781- 821-5060 ext. 1135 781- 821-5050 ext. 2107
English Language Learner Liaison	Meghan Byrne, Director	781- 821-5060 ext. 1135
Section 504 District Coordinator	Meghan Byrne: District	781- 821-5060 ext. 1135
Title II Liaison	Meghan Byrne	781- 821-5060 ext. 1135
Title VI Civil Rights Officer	Meghan Byrne	781- 821-5060 ext. 1135
Title IX Officer	Meghan Byrne	781- 821-5050 ext. 1135

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

---

# 2022-2023 Rodman Early Childhood Handbook

<b>Canton Public Schools District Appendix</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Program Information</b>	<b>6</b>
Program Overview:	6
<b>Program Staff</b>	<b>7</b>
Classrooms	7
Specialists	7
Nursing	7
Student Services Coordinator	7
Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)	7
<b>Rodman Early Childhood Program Team Members</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>School Calendar</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Daily Operations</b>	<b>9</b>
Arriving on Time: Please arrive ON TIME!	9
Dressing for Preschool	9
Protocol for Managing Food Allergens in the Classroom during Lunch	9
Snack	10
Lunch	10
<b>Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>11</b>
Confidentiality	11
Enrollment	11
Children with Special Needs	11
Community Peers	11
<b>Tuition</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>12</b>
Traffic Patterns for the rear preschool parking lot	12
Van Transportation:	12
<b>Health</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Absences</b>	<b>13</b>

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

<b>Diapering/Toileting Procedures</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Diaper Changing</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Evacuation and Lockdown Drills</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Discipline</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Restraint Policy</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Inclement Weather</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Conferences, Report Cards and Progress Notes</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Student Assessment</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Child Study Team</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Parents as Partners</b>	<b>17</b>
Coffee and Collaboration	17
Visiting the Program	17
Parent Volunteer Opportunities	17
Program Evaluation	17
<b>Important Tips and Tidbits</b>	<b>18</b>
Spare Clothes	18
Labeling	18
Communication Folders	18
Birthday Celebrations	18
Home Toys	18
Communicating with Teachers and Staff	18
Paperwork	19

## **Canton Public Schools District Appendix**

In addition to the Early Childhood Program School Handbook which outlines a range of elementary specific procedures, processes and information the Canton Public Schools has an in-depth District Appendix that includes the District policies, State and Federal laws and regulations and detailed information. It is important that as part of this Handbook, the District Appendix also be reviewed. The District Appendix can be found linked [here](#) or on our website; [cantonma.org](http://cantonma.org)

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NONDISCRIMINATION**

The Canton Public Schools is committed to equal education opportunity for all students. It is the goal of the Canton Public Schools to maintain a school environment free of harassment and/or discrimination based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, disability, gender identity, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness or any other class protected by state or federal law. The Canton Public Schools will not tolerate discrimination or harassment in any of its schools, including any school programs, services or activities. The Canton Public Schools is committed to equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities. The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate in admission to its schools, access or treatment in its services, programs and activities for any student.

### **Program Information**

#### ***Program Overview:***

The Canton Public Schools Early Childhood Program is committed to fostering each child's development as a unique "whole child," approaching learning comprehensively across seven developmental domains. With this focus, we have built our curriculum on the high standards established by *The National Association for the Education of Young Children* (NAEYC) and reflected in the MA and Common Core Standards. These tools have formed the foundation for a comprehensive curriculum that addresses the following developmental domains that make up each "whole child":

Cognitive  
Early Academic Readiness  
Fine Motor  
Gross Motor  
Independence  
Speech and Language  
Social and Emotional

Activities are selected and designed through a curriculum mapping process, based on the Common Core Standards, involving our teachers and specialists in order to contribute to and enhance the logical development of all students participating in the program.

Language and movement play a significant role in young children's brain development and we strive to seamlessly weave both language and movement in our preschool curriculum. We provide opportunities for staff to collaborate with our Speech and Language, Occupational and Physical Therapists, creating stimulating experiences which incorporate language and motor development throughout the preschool day.

Here at the Rodman Early Childhood Program, we recognize and value that the parent is the child's first teacher who knows and understands that child in a way that only a parent can. We are committed to creating essential opportunities for partnerships between home and school in order to allow each of our students to develop to his/her maximum potential

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

Our students participate in an inclusive, or “integrated” preschool model. In these language-based classrooms, children of all ability levels, with and without identified special needs, are taught together in an environment that nurtures peers as partners in learning. Research has proven that linking children of varying ability levels actually enhances the growth and development of all the children. Each of our classrooms maintains a low class size, maxing out at 15, with a Massachusetts certified teacher and a qualified educational assistant.

### **Integrated Preschool Classroom Descriptions**

2-Day Program	Tuesday, Thursday	9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
3-Day Program	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
4-Day Program	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
5-Day Program	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

## **Program Staff**

### **Classrooms**

The Canton Public Schools is committed to hiring educators of the highest quality, and our early childhood program is no exception! Each classroom is staffed with one licensed teacher certified in early childhood development/special education as well as at least one highly qualified educational assistant.

### **Specialists**

At the Rodman Early Childhood Program we have a board certified *Speech and Language Pathologist*, *Occupational and Physical Therapists* and a *School Psychologist* on staff. Each of these specialists not only provides services for our children with special needs, but also consult with our classroom teachers and facilitate whole group activities to ensure the growth and development of all our students.

### **Nursing**

The Rodman Early Childhood Program also has a full-time nurse on staff who is available to consult with families and teachers about medical conditions, allergies and even promoting overall health and wellness. In addition, the Nurse Leader for the district is also located in the Rodman building and is available to staff and families as needed.

### **Student Services Coordinator**

Because our program is an integrated preschool, we provide services to children with disabilities found eligible for special education through the eligibility process, we also have a student services coordinator. This person, Mary Bania, oversees the special education eligibility process and all special education services at the preschool.

### **Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)**

At the Rodman Early Childhood Program, we have a comprehensive ABA program which is overseen by our BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst) . There is a team of Applied Behavior Analysis tutors who focus on behavioral interventions and classroom support.

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

## Rodman Early Childhood Program Team Members

<p>Donna Kilday, M Ed Early Childhood Coordinator 781-821-5060 ext. 1505 <a href="mailto:kildayd@cantonma.org">kildayd@cantonma.org</a></p>		<p>Lauren Pushard Nurse Leader 781-821-5060 ext. 1113 <a href="mailto:pushardl@cantonma.org">pushardl@cantonma.org</a></p>
<b>Special Educators</b>	<b>Specialists</b>	<b>Educational Assistants &amp; ABA Tutors</b>
<p>Jessica Berry, MS.Ed. 781-821-5060 ext. 1510</p>	<p>Ms. Rebecca Golden Board Certified Behavior Analyst 781-821-5060</p>	<p>Ana Groves Ashley Howard Laura Morganelli Sara Ryan Jessica Yarosh Betty Dvoske Tyasia Smith-McCray Natalya Toney Carolyn Peyton Guerline Ulysse-Bel-Amour Vanedjie Rosefort Allison Wedge</p>
<p>Kerry E. Emde, MS.Ed. 781-821-5060 ext. 1506</p>	<p>Jenna Piassa Physical Therapist 781-821-5060 ext. 1501</p>	
<p>Valerie Danforth M.Ed 781-821-5060 ext. 1511</p>	<p>Amy Delaney, OTR/L Occupational Therapist 781-821-5060 ext. 1501</p>	<p>Nurse Bailey Hewit 781-821-5060 ext. 1508</p>
<p>Jennifer Anzivino M Ed 781-821-5060 ext. 1509</p>	<p>Patty Parks, M.S., CCC-SLP Speech and Language Therapist 781-821-5060 ext. 1504</p>	<p>Physical Therapist Jenna Piassa</p>
<p>Kyle A. O'Leary, MS.Ed. 781-821-5060 ext. 1507</p>	<p>Anna Robinson Russo School Psychologist 781-821-5060 ext. 1513</p>	<p>Secretary Susan Crespi 781-821-5060 ext. 1503</p>
<p>Ashlie LaCivita M Ed 781-821-5060 ext. 1511</p>	<p>Caroline Cesario COTA 781-821-5060 ext. 1501</p>	<p><b>Homeless Liaison:</b> Stephanie Shapiro 781-821-5050 ext. 207</p>
<p>Samantha Campbell 781-821-5060 X 1196</p>	<p>Aoife O'Mahoney SLPA 781-821-5060 ext. 1504</p>	

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*



Staff can be reached via email as follows:

[Last name first initial@cantonma.org](mailto:Last name first initial@cantonma.org)

For example: Donna Kilday is [kildayd@cantonma.org](mailto:kildayd@cantonma.org)

## School Calendar

The Canton Early Childhood Program will follow the Canton Public School Calendar as published on the website: <https://www.cantonma.org/preschool>

### Early Release Days

- Occasionally there will be early release days for the Canton Public Schools that have been set by the Canton School Committee to provide for staff development opportunities. Dismissal time on those days will be at 11:30.

## Daily Operations

### Arriving on Time: Please arrive ON TIME!

Our day at the Rodman begins at 9:00 and students should arrive between 9:00 and 9:10 in order to ensure a smooth transition to the school day. This window was created to allow for safer and smooth arrivals. Arriving on time to school is important to ensuring your child's smooth daily transition. Late arrival can make it more difficult for your child to enter the group and can be very disruptive once the classroom routine has begun. A child is considered tardy if they arrive after 9:15.

### Dressing for Preschool

Here at the Rodman Early Childhood Program we recognize that children learn when they are busy exploring their environment and the materials around them. In other words; we love to play!

- We are known to enjoy more than our share of messy activities, so all clothing should be washable.
- Consider the changing weather and please dress your child accordingly. Provide sweaters and jackets even on the first sunny fall days, it is easy to remove an unneeded item, but harder to find an extra one on those chilly days.
- Appropriate footwear should also be considered for the playground and the motor room which are used almost daily. Open toed shoes and crocs are not recommended.

### Protocol for Managing Food Allergens in the Classroom during Lunch

Unlike the other five schools in the Canton Public School district, the Rodman Early Childhood Program does not have a cafeteria where students eat lunch. Lunch is consumed in the classroom. Our program adheres to the district's Food Allergy Management Policy and Food Allergy Awareness and Management plan adopted March 1, 2018, in order to minimize the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions.

This protocol addresses the accommodations necessary to ensure the safety of children with life threatening allergies specific to lunch in the classrooms at the Rodman Early Childhood Program.

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

Students and staff will wash hands before and after eating lunch. Alcohol based hand wipes or hand sanitizers are not acceptable for a student with food allergies

Establish an allergy aware table in the classroom during lunch where a student with allergies may eat

A staff member must remain at the allergy aware table to monitor for safety

A strict “no food/drink sharing” and “no utensil sharing” policy will be enforced

A child consuming an allergen should be placed at another table and a staff member must remain at the table to monitor

After lunch, immediate and thorough hand washing with soap and water must take place to rid the student’s hands of the allergen

The table and chair where the food allergen was consumed must be washed with a school supplied antiseptic cleaner

Sweep/vacuum floor after lunch

## **Snack**

Snack time is learning time here at the Rodman. It is a time that fosters rich conversation, self-help skills and nutritional awareness. A snack will be provided by the program and will be a selection of individually prepackaged foods purchased through our food services program.

In an effort to ensure that our students develop healthy snack habits, we supply snacks that are both approved by our school nurse and found on the “A-List” of *acceptable* foods utilized by the entire Canton School District and available at [www.cantonma.org](http://www.cantonma.org).

***Be sure to inform us of any food allergies or intolerances (i.e. chocolate, nuts, sugar, milk, eggs, dairy etc.) so we can ensure that snack time is safe for your child by contacting our school nurse, Bailey Hewit.***

## **Lunch**

Lunch is an important time of the day for community building, strengthening social and language development. You would be amazed at the amount of learning that happens during meal time. We are pleased to offer the option of purchasing lunch through our school lunch program at the Canton Public Schools. The food services staff has been busy preparing special “preschool menus” for our friends. Parents have the option of applying for free and/or reduced lunch for their child.

If you are sending lunch with your child there are a few things you should know.

**Per NAEYC criteria, children under the age of four are not allowed to have popcorn. Grapes and hotdogs for all preschoolers should be quartered. Chunks of hard carrots, nuts or hard candy are not allowed. We support and teach healthy eating habits so no soda or candy please.**

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

# Policies and Procedures

## Confidentiality

To protect the privacy of children and their families, we follow strict confidentiality laws. We do not release the names, ages or other personal information including evaluation results, without written permission. Information regarding a child's development, progress or evaluation results is shared with the immediate staff working with the child and is shared for ensuring the child's safety and for curriculum planning purposes only. Please respect the privacy of the other families by only discussing and sharing information about your own child

## Enrollment

The Canton Public Schools offers an inclusive early childhood program through the Rodman Early Childhood Program for children ages three to five. Placement in one of our integrated classrooms is through either the special education/team evaluation and eligibility process, as part of the student's IEP, or through the annual application and lottery process for community peers. This lottery is completed in February of each year to determine enrollment for the following school year. The number of students enrolled in each classroom is determined by the Massachusetts regulations and by the space available.

## Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs are enrolled in the Rodman Early Childhood Program only after the development of an Individualized Education Program and the determination that participation in the program is appropriate to meet the needs of the child.

## Community Peers

Eligibility criteria for Community Peers:

- Child must be 3.0 by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year participating
- Child must be a Canton resident
- Child may not have been found eligible for special education services through the TEAM process.
- Parents assume responsibility for annual tuition payments, following the payment schedule provided with their enrollment application.

Community Peer slots are awarded by a lottery held in February of each year. Parents/Guardians must submit a lottery application in order to participate in the lottery system.

Upon acceptance into the Early Childhood Program as a community peer, parents are required to return an agreement and non refundable deposit to the Early Childhood Coordinator that is forwarded to the Business Manager's office. It is the parent's responsibility to make payment according to the payment schedule ***as no bills will be sent.*** Checks Payable to the Canton Public School are to be mailed to:

Canton Public Schools Business Office  
960 Washington Street Canton, MA 02021

***Failure to pay tuition will result in your child's inability to attend the program.***

Under no circumstances is transportation provided by the Canton Public Schools for community peers.

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

A community peer may no longer be eligible to participate in the Early Childhood Program if it is felt that his or her behavior, once determined not to be related to a disability, is detrimental to the health or safety of other, or is such that it may interfere with the appropriate developmental acquisition of skills of the other children participating in the program.

## Tuition

Each integrated classroom has up to 8 spots that are reserved for community peers. These spots are awarded through a lottery that is held the second week in February. Rates for the 2023-2024 school year are as follows:

Program Days	Tuition Cost
2 Day Program	\$2338
3 Day Program	\$3507
4 Day Program	\$4676
5 Day Program	\$5845

Tuition assistance is based on a sliding fee scale and is available for qualifying families. All families receive this application at the beginning of the school year. If you wish to be considered for tuition assistance, please complete the application and return it to Mrs. Crespi, our Secretary. She will communicate with you if further documentation is required.

Awards are good for the current school year. Families must reapply for assistance each school year, and are required to provide up to date, current documentation.

## Transportation

### Traffic Patterns for the rear preschool parking lot

- **Safety is our first priority!** Drop off and pick up can get a bit busy and it is CRITICAL that you hold your child's hand at all times.
- **NO PARKING** in the Preschool Parking Lot. Please park in the loop adjacent to the high school walkway or any legal spot in those back parking lots.
- **Please use identified crosswalks** for crossing in the lot. Do not walk in the street.
- **Drop Off:** Parents should park and escort each child to the door of the school. Upon the school's opening, adults may walk their child directly to the child's classroom.
- **Pick Up:** Parents should park as directed above and enter the building to pick up their child.

### Van Transportation:

- Children enrolled in the Rodman Early Childhood Program with an IEP who may not otherwise be able to access services are eligible for van transportation.

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

- Parents who can transport their children are encouraged to do so as it provides an opportunity for family and peer connections while families congregate outside the school entrance.
- Students are required to wear their “bus tag” for the first month of school to ensure safety and accuracy. The bus tag help staff ensure that your child gets on the correct bus.
- Parents will be notified at the beginning of the school year (or service delivery period) of the van schedule through the transportation company.
- Any transportation issues must be reported to and are resolved by contacting the Student Services office at 781 821-5060 x1135, or the Early Childhood Coordinator at x1505.

## Health

Your child’s health is a matter of major importance to us. Your child may be sent home if he or she appears to have symptoms of illness during the school day. In addition, it is important that you keep your child home if he/she:

- Has evidence of a newly developed cold (runny, stuffy nose, coughing, sneezing). The greatest period of contagion is the first 2-3 days after onset of symptoms.)
- Has the flu or flu like symptoms.
- Has had an elevated temperature, over 100 degrees within the past 24 hours.
- Has a suspicious rash.
- Has sore or discharging eye(s) or ear(s).
- Has had an upset stomach, vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
- Has a contagious disease (i.e. strep throat, tonsillitis, bronchitis, conjunctivitis, etc.) until he/she has been on medication at least 24-48 hours from the first dose.

Please call the school nurse with any health related questions at 781-821-5060 ext. 1508.

## Absences

**All absences must be reported to the Secretary, Susan Crespi.**

Please call 781-821-5060 ext. 1503 and leave a message when you know your child will be absent.

Upon return to school, your child must have a note from the parent explaining the absence.

(This is a policy established by the Canton Public Schools and outlined in the District Appendix.)

If your child is tardy, or dismissed early, please sign them out at the office.

## Diapering/Toileting Procedures

A bathroom equipped with appropriate fixtures is either within the classroom or just outside and students will be encouraged to use the facilities. They will be supervised and given assistance as needed. All areas are sanitized and maintained in a safe manner. Toilet training will not be coerced. Generally staff will assist parents in carrying out the toileting routine upon which you have decided. For best results, please discuss this with your child’s teacher. Families should supply all necessary diapers, pull-ups and wipes for their child. Students wash their hands with liquid soap and running water after toileting. Staff members also wash their hands with liquid soap and running water after assisting children with any toileting routine or if dealing with bodily fluids. Individual paper towels shall be used to dry hands. Clothing soiled by feces, urine, vomit or blood shall be double-bagged in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items.

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

## Diaper Changing

**Children at the Rodman Early Childhood program shall not be denied admittance based on whether they are toilet trained. Staff will work together with families to meet the developmental needs surrounding toileting of all children.**

A supply of clean diapers and wipes is maintained for each child by the child's family.

Diapers are changed by classroom staff and nursing staff. Staff responsible for the preparation of food does not change diapers.

Diapers are checked every two hours and are changed when wet or soiled as soon as possible. If a child falls asleep, the diaper will be checked when the child awakes.

Diapers are changed either in the large bathroom stall in each of the children's bathrooms.

If a child is wearing cloth diapers the following will be in place:

- The diaper must have an absorbent inner liner and be completely covered by a waterproof material. The waterproof "pants" are changed along with the diaper.
- Soiled or wet cloth diapers are placed in a plastic bag, sealed and sent home at the end of the school day.

## Evacuation and Lockdown Drills

Fire evacuation, shelter in place and lockdown drills are held periodically to ensure that students and staff are aware of emergency procedures. Procedures are posted by the door in each classroom. All parents will be notified via email on the day of the drill, after it has occurred. Our teachers are very aware of the feelings these drills may cause in young children and are quick to reassure them. We explain to the students that this is just one of the many ways we keep everyone safe. Please let us know if you or your child has any questions about any aspect of safety in our program. The complete policy can be found in the attached Appendix.

## Discipline

At the Rodman Early Childhood Program, we understand that challenging behavior is a form of communication and not atypical for preschoolers. We focus on providing a consistent routine and expectations with appropriate experiences for our students. We strive to create a welcoming and nurturing environment where students feel safe to express themselves, engage with peers and develop their skills in a positive learning setting. We work to foster positive relationships with staff, students and families.

When challenging behaviors arise, we work as a team to support the student. Our educators use a variety of strategies including utilizing positive behavior expectations and reinforcement, modeling appropriate behavior, offering choices, giving space for calming and regulation when necessary, and implementing a social skills curriculum. The collaborative problem solving approach is fostered throughout the program and staff encourages parents to engage in this process as well. The program employs a part time Board Certified Behavior Analyst, a part time licensed social worker who serves as a home-to-school liaison, and a full time school psychologist to support staff, children and families.

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

**Teaching staff never use physical punishment and do not engage in psychological abuse or coercion. Teachers do not use threats or derogatory remarks and neither withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.**

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

## **Restraint Policy**

The Canton Public Schools complies with the provisions of 603 CMR Section 46.00 dealing with restraint of students in public schools. To that end, the district’s policy developed pursuant to those regulations is available upon request from the Early Childhood Coordinator, the Director of Student Services or at the Superintendent’s office. See District Appendix for full policy.

## **Inclement Weather**

Our program operates according to the school calendar that is posted on the Canton Public School’s website. In the event of snow or other weather-related concerns, please check television channels 4, 5 and 7. You can sign up for instant notifications via email or text message on each of these websites. In addition, a “Connect Ed” telephone message will go out from the superintendent to all homes announcing the cancellation or delay. Start times for any delayed openings are posted on the calendar also.

## **Curriculum**

Our curriculum is designed to support our belief in the value of play, the need for exploration and the benefits of hands-on learning to support the development of key early readiness skills. Our curriculum, literature and materials reflect our students; their race and cultures. Representation is a major area of focus for us. Our children’s literature is chosen after a careful review designed to identify bias and negative stereotyping. Lessons are selected and designed through a curriculum mapping process involving our educators and specialists in order to contribute to and enhance the logical development of all students participating in the program. Throughout the school year we explore different thematic units which may include seasons, families, and animals and their habitats . There is an overarching theme of community! These units are created by our staff to meet the needs of current students and to reflect the MA curriculum standards. The staff has also created units of study to support the vocabulary and language development of mathematics, as well as the study of various artists. In addition to these units, we also implement the following curriculum programs:

Lively Letters  
Heggerty Phonemic Awareness  
We Thinkers! (Social Thinking)  
Be Your Best Self

## **Holiday Celebrations**

In line with our core values of inclusion, respect and acceptance, we do not have holiday parties at the Rodman. Instead, we like to bring in the culture, language and traditions of our students. Some of these traditions may be celebrations and you may see that reflected in our curriculum. Our goal is to ensure that no child or family feels excluded in our program and that our students have a preschool experience exposing them to diverse races and cultures.

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*



## Conferences, Report Cards and Progress Notes

Parent Conferences are held twice a year with the first one occurring in November and the second in April. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents, guardians and classroom teachers to connect and you are highly encouraged to participate in these. A strong partnership between school and home is ideal for student success. Report cards will be sent home in January and June. Our report card is based on the research of child development and supports students as they proceed through a continuum of early readiness skills. Progress notes for students on IEPs are sent home at the same time report cards go out. Progress notes provide updates on progress toward IEP objectives.

## Student Assessment

Our assessment system focuses on all areas of child development and includes a variety of data collection strategies. Assessments in the program are used for a variety of purposes; to measure student growth and learning in all areas of child development including; cognitive, language, social-emotional, approaches to learning, health and wellness, fine and gross motor, self-help or independence. We use these assessments to inform curriculum and teaching decisions, to identify student interests, to assist in determining special education eligibility and to monitor progress and development. Families are encouraged to participate in the assessment process by sharing any relevant information about their child with the classroom teacher. Your input is important to us and staff will be looking to you for your thoughts on areas of development.

### ***Tools & Methods;***

A variety of methods and tools are utilized on an ongoing and integrated basis including the following:

- Teacher observation throughout the classroom day
- Teacher created checklists utilized through play and teacher directed times
- Pre- and post-curriculum assessments completed during play and teacher directed times
- Collection of work samples & photographs
- Developmental screening is conducted with all community peer students. These screenings take place within the first two months of the school year. Children enrolled in special education do not participate in this screening. This screening is used to identify individual student strengths and areas of improvement in order to guide instruction and/or to lead to a referral for a formal evaluation to determine the presence of a disability. **Parents/guardians wishing to refer their child for a formal evaluation should contact the early childhood coordinator, Donna Kilday at [kildayd@cantonma.org](mailto:kildayd@cantonma.org) to schedule a meeting.** Results of the screening are shared with families via a screening report form. Translation of this report is available upon request.
- BASC-3 Behavioral and Emotional Screening System is also used to determine the need for any additional support or interventions from the classroom teacher or school psychologist. This tool has a parent/guardian reporting form which the program uses as well. The data also helps us evaluate the effectiveness of our social thinking curriculum.

**Assessment results are reviewed with the program staff in October, January and May and with parents and guardians four times a year; twice through report cards and twice through conferences.** The first set of report cards will arrive in January with the second coming in June. Report cards are electronic and will be emailed directly to families. Please let us know if you need a paper copy. Progress reports for students on an IEP are also sent twice a year and follow a very similar schedule. If at any time you have any questions about your child's progress or development please let us know. We are happy to meet with you. Conferences are a great opportunity for classroom teachers to connect with families to share assessment results and report on progress and to learn more from families on their assessment of the child. Families are encouraged to connect

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

with classroom teachers at any time for updates on development or to share any questions, concerns or assessment information.

## **Child Study Team**

If staff identify areas of concern (e.g. academic progress, behavior) the teacher may consult with the program's Child Study Team. This interdisciplinary team may consist of the Early Childhood Coordinator, Student Services Coordinator, School Psychologist, Behavior Analyst, Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and additional special education staff. Parents are made aware of Child Study Team referrals and are encouraged to collaborate with the team. The team represents much expertise and the desire for all students to succeed! The Child Study Team implores a whole child, strengths based approach to designing appropriate short term interventions to support student growth. The Child Study Team may recommend the implementation of additional supports and progress monitoring. In cases where more information is needed about a student, other assessments may be utilized at the discretion of the team and guardians. Need for these types of assessments is determined through a multi tiered systems of support and parents/guardians receive communications and updates regarding the process.

## **Parents as Partners**

### **Coffee and Collaboration**

Every other month we host an informal coffee hour (Coffee with the Coordinator) for parents and the early childhood coordinator to discuss topics around child development, parenting, behavior and program news. These are held during the evening hours. Watch the monthly calendar and newsletters for specific information.

### **Visiting the Program**

The Rodman Early Childhood Program has an open door policy. Parents and Guardians are welcome in the program at all times of the day. Please sign the visitor sign in sheet upon arrival and check in with either the Student Services Coordinator or the Early Childhood Coordinator. If you wish to observe in your child's classroom please contact the Student Services Coordinator to schedule a time.

### **Parent Volunteer Opportunities**

Parents and guardians who complete a Cori are invited to volunteer in the preschool. We are always looking for ways to incorporate parent volunteers in our program. Maybe you would like to join us for storytime? Maybe you enjoy copying newsletters or helping to sort recyclables? Do you enjoy prepping art activities or cutting out pictures? Are you a gardener? Our garden always needs someone with a green thumb! Maybe you have a special talent you want to share? Whatever it is, please let us know. We are eager to get to know you as well as your child.

### **Program Evaluation**

We periodically evaluate the early childhood program in our effort to improve the quality of the program and services offered to families. Your input into the evaluation is important. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts and ideas so, when possible, we can adjust our program to the changing needs of our families.

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

## **Important Tips and Tidbits**

### **Spare Clothes**

Learning in preschool can be messy and sometimes toileting accidents and spills happen! It is critical that we are prepared. Please send in a complete set of extra clothing in a large zip-lock bag that we can keep at school. Each bag should include: shirt, pants, underwear, diapers (if needed) and socks and each item must be labeled. If spare clothing is needed, please remember to clean them and send them back to school as soon as possible.

### **Labeling**

Make sure labels are on the inside of all personal belongings, with both first and last names (jackets, sweater, boots, mittens, books, backpacks, sharing items, etc.).

### **Communication Folders**

Recognizing the importance of opening the lines of communication, each child is provided with a folder. This folder will hold any notes from school and we also encourage you to use the folder to send in any notes you may have. Teachers check the folder daily, and we ask that you do as well. It is sure to be filled with beautiful pieces of artwork from your little one!

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Birthdays are a very important and exciting celebration for many of our preschool children and their families and we are also excited to share in your child's special day if this is customary in your home. On their birthday, each child will have the opportunity to wear a birthday crown/ hat and be recognized in many special ways by their teacher and class. Some ways to celebrate might include being the line leader that day, picking out the story for that day, and/or participating in music and movement activities.

In keeping with our snack policy, as well as the district's health and wellness initiative, special snacks are not allowed. We understand you may want to send in special gift bags or treats for your child's class, however this can be overwhelming, distracting or upsetting for some of our students. Therefore, please refrain from sending in gifts or favors. If you are interested in joining us in some way for your child's celebration or have any questions for us please contact your child's teacher as their birthday approaches.

### **Home Toys**

We have plenty of toys and games at school to excite and engage your child so we encourage them to leave their toys at home to enjoy after school. It can be distracting and upsetting for some of our friends when toys from home arrive at school. Often this causes more distress than comfort to your child as they are not prepared for the attention their toy will receive from peers. In our busy classrooms there is also the risk that it may get lost. We cannot be responsible for toys that are brought to school. We do however understand that each child is unique with their own individual needs and some children may need to bring a small transition item. If that is necessary please let the teacher know, label the item and be sure it does not present a choking hazard. Preschoolers still have a tendency to put things in their mouth. Guns, war toys, weapons, super heroes or other toys of destruction are not allowed.

### **Communicating with Teachers and Staff**

Email is probably the best way to contact our classroom teachers and special education staff. Each email is in the same format:

- Donna Kilday [kildayd@cantonma.org](mailto:kildayd@cantonma.org)  
(Last name, first initial @cantonma.org)

*The Canton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or homelessness. Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)*

By Telephone:

- Classroom teachers and specialists each have voicemail, but their phones will not ring in the classroom. They will return calls at their earliest convenience. You can find their extensions on page 8 of this document.
- Emergency calls should be made directly to:
  - School Nurse: 781-821-5060 ext. 1508
  - Student Services Office 781-821-5060 ext. 1135

## **Paperwork**

Please make sure you return all the required paperwork to your classroom teacher as soon as possible:

- Signature Return Page stating that;  
Parents/Guardians have read the Family/Student Handbook  
**Parents/Guardians have read the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for technology**  
Provides us permission to take and use pictures and video of your child for educational purposes
- Parent Goals  
This gives parents an opportunity to share their goals for their child over the next year.

***Thank you for taking the time to review our Student/Family Handbook. Please let us know if you have any questions about anything you have read.***