



Open House Procedure



Head Start Performance Standards	ECEAP Performance Standard
1302.34 , 1302.51	CO-2, 5 , FEP-2 , FEP-3

PURPOSE

Open houses (OH) provide an opportunity for families to establish personal connections with other families, the classroom environment, and their child’s teacher as well as support the successful transition of their child to the classroom.

Staff share important information about the classroom environment, the daily schedule, and answer any questions about the program. Open houses support school readiness by providing opportunities for families to develop the family-school connections, helping to building trusting relationships with teaching teams, and engaging families in their child’s learning in our program.

PROCEDURE

Site Supervisors will schedule the Open Houses for each site in order to support participation of all team members. Open Houses must:

Part Year Programs	Full Year Program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Open House must be conducted prior to classes starting. This one will be prescheduled by site supervisor to ensure all members of the team can attend. 2nd one will occur in the evening and will be scheduled in coordination by site supervisor with all site staff. This one can occur any time before October 31. Each OH must be scheduled for no less than 60 minutes. All families are invited to attend both OH. Interpretive services should be scheduled in advance by site supervisor as needed. Prepare materials and activities to engage children and families and follow a set agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two OH must be conducted between September 1 and October 31 scheduled in coordination by site supervisor with all site staff. One OH must occur in the evening. Each OH must be scheduled for no less than 60 minutes. All families are invited to attend both OH. Interpretive services should be scheduled in advance by site supervisor as needed. Prepare materials and activities to engage children and families and follow a set agenda

Agenda and Routine

The agenda should consider both the audience and time available and needs to include the following:

1. Welcome

- Three greeting choices to families and greet families and children as they enter. Staff should use a visual for the greeting like greeting apron, plate, poster or other tool. Let families know this is how you greet children each day.
- Encourage families to spend a few moments exploring the classroom and speaking with other families and classroom staff.
 - The more connections they make, the greater the chance they will continue to engage in other program events and family gatherings throughout the year

2. Brain Smart Start

- Welcome families to the Open House

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- Explain that each morning children will engage in a Brain Smart Start to help them be in an optimal learning state (briefly explain the brain states)
 - Lead families through a Brain Smart Start activity that includes an activity to unite, disengage stress, connect, and commit.
 - Example commitment statement: “I am willing to meet three new people today.”
3. **All about our school**
 - Introduce yourself and any other staff
 - Share open house topics (see below), activities planned, and take families on a classroom tour
 - a. Briefly stop at key classroom sites (Job board, Friends and Family board, Safe Place, Visual Schedule), interest areas, Sign in area, Lesson Plan, etc.
 - b. Provide a brief overview of each site on your tour, using a “what, when, why” format
 4. **Conscious Discipline basics**
 - Explain that our program practices a social-emotional and classroom management philosophy called Conscious Discipline (CD)
 - CD uses everyday events rather than a prescribed curriculum to teach social-emotional skills and this is woven into our everyday classroom life to support children to develop self-regulation skills
 5. **Make and Take Poster**
 - Distribute poster boards to each family with attached instructions
 - Let families know you can take pictures and print them if they need it
 6. **Closing Ritual and Goodbye**
 - Review commitment statements from the Brain Smart Start activity
 - Celebrate and encourage families and thank them for coming
 - Just as you welcomed families upon arrival, use a closing ritual of your choice to say good-bye

TOPICS TO SHARE WITH FAMILIES	
Classroom Basics and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom emergency procedures and evacuation plan (<i>drills, etc.</i>) • Attendance/Sign In-Out procedure • Washing hands upon arrival with parent support • Child and parent library • Family mailbox and information board • When to keep your child home if they are not feeling well. • All About Me and Family Focus (<i>we do not celebrate holidays and birthdays at school</i>)
Screenings and Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly introduce TSG <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assessment 3-4x per year, studies, Family Access, and child portfolios • Conferencing 4x per year, 2x in home
Curriculum and Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum, Lesson planning, and parent input • Second Step- Child Protection Unit (<i>Talk about Touch including Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety</i>) • Share Benefits of Messy Play and what they can expect from school (<i>i.e. bring extra clothes</i>)
Family Engagement and Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Council/Family Gatherings • Volunteering • Spending time in classrooms • Substitute program • Reading to your child 20 minutes/day-In Kind