

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Burlington Early Education Program (BEEP) is to provide high quality, play-based early education in a variety of settings in our community. Within these inclusive settings, we also provide assessment and special education services for eligible children. We are committed to supporting the growth and development of young children and their families through home, school and community collaboration.

PHILOSOPHY

The Burlington Early Education Program provides children between 3 to 5 years of age with a high quality, play-based early education using a collaborative, team-based approach. Children attending the Burlington School District's Early Education Program are provided opportunities to develop skills in each of the early childhood learning domains. Domains include: science, math, literacy, motor, communication and social-emotional skills.

Our program is based on the philosophy that children learn best through playful engagement with peers and teachers. Instruction is designed to meet the needs of all learners within a positive, nurturing and diverse environment. All classrooms follow the guidelines of the Vermont Early Learning Standards.

We value families as a child's first teachers and as our partners in supporting each child's growth.

Burlington Early Education Program

The Burlington School District (BSD) has early education classrooms for children between 3-5 years of age at the following locations:

Integrated Arts Academy (IAA)

Morning Program: 8:10-11:00 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.
Afternoon Program: 11:45- 2:50 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.

J.J. Flynn Elementary School

Morning Program: 8:10-11:00 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.
Afternoon Program: 11:30-3:00 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.

All Day Program 8:10-2:50 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
8:10-1:50 Wednesdays

The Sustainability Academy (SA)

Morning Program: 8:10-10:45 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.
Afternoon Program: 11:30-3:00 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

The Ira Allen Early Education Center (Ira Allen)

Morning Program: 9:15-12:30 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

Afternoon Programs: 12:00-3:30 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

All classrooms at the Ira Allen site offer extended day services for children with intensive special needs. See pages 4 and 5 for more information about **The Ira Allen Extended Day Program**.

*ed by service providers as needed. Providers may
-Language Pathologists, Discrete Trial
ts, Occupational Therapists, Head Start Early Care
Howard Center.*

Enrolling in preschool at any of these specific locations does not predetermine kindergarten placement. The BSD's registration process must be followed when enrolling in kindergarten.

Accreditation

BSD Early Education programs are accredited through the Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS). 5 Stars have been awarded to the programs at IAA, Ira Allen, Flynn, and SA.

Licensing

In February of 2000, the BEEP became a licensed early childhood program under the Vermont Department of the Division of Children and Families. Each year the program renews its license, meeting all the regulations for licensing as related to staffing, programming and environment.

A copy of the Vermont Child Care regulations is posted at each site and is available to parents. All parents have unlimited access to their child without delay. If there are questions or concerns, parents are encouraged to:

- speak directly to your child's teachers
- contact the program Director at 802-864-8463 or
- contact the Child Care Consumer Line at 1-800-649-2642.

Special Education through Essential Early Education (EEE) Services:

Early Childhood Special Education services are provided to preschool children with identified disabilities and significant developmental delays. Consultation and support is also given to families of eligible children.

Referral Process

Children are referred for EEE services by parents, physicians, community early childhood programs and community agencies when there is a concern or question about a child's development. Referrals are taken by the Director, who then contacts the parent to ensure s/he has approved the referral and to gather more information to assist in determining the next step in the referral process.

For referrals of children with a suspected disability or medical condition, the next step would be assigning an evaluation team of an Early Childhood Special Educator, a Speech-Language Pathologist, and if needed, an Occupational Therapist and/or Physical Therapist. The evaluation team would contact the parent and schedule a time for a comprehensive special education evaluation.

Screening and Evaluation

A developmental screening is scheduled when there is no clear diagnosis upon referral. A screening is then scheduled with the parent and can occur at the child's preschool program or the parent may bring the child to the Ira Allen Early Education Center. An Early Childhood Special Educator and/or a Speech-Language Pathologist will conduct the screening. A screening includes: collecting information from the family and childcare provider if the child is in a setting. It also includes observation of the child in their natural setting and some play-based assessment.

If the child is developing in a typical manner, no further action is taken.

If there are concerns about a child's development, one of several actions will occur: more observation may be needed, s/he may be put on a monitor list for future follow up, or a child may be referred for a comprehensive special education evaluation.

If the child is placed on a monitor list, the parent is called back in three to six months' time to determine if the child has made progress. If the parent has seen little progress in the area(s) of concern, the child will be scheduled for a re-screen. In these "wait and see" situations, the parent is always provided with information and activities to support their child's development.

If the team suspects developmental delays or a medical condition that may be impacting the child's development, a comprehensive evaluation will be done to determine if the child meets criteria for special education and is in need of special education services.

Parents have the right to request a comprehensive evaluation at any point in this process.

Individual Educational Plan (IEP)

Once a child is found eligible for EEE services based on the results of the comprehensive evaluation and the Vermont EEE regulations, an IEP meeting is held with the parents. The child's current functioning is described identifying both strengths and challenges. The IEP goals and the special education services to support the attainment of these goals are agreed upon by the team, which includes the parents. The child will then be eligible for special education services through the Burlington Early Education Program.

Once in the program, there are many ways children can receive their EEE services. Many factors are considered when deciding the child will receive their services based on each child's individual needs.

- The evaluation results and the IEP goals are considered: Can this child be served in the least restrictive setting with same-age peers? Is the child currently at home or in a community early childhood setting? Could the child's IEP goals be met in those current settings?
- Other factors that are considered with the family include intensity of needs, staffing needed to meet a child's needs, past experience with a community setting, eligibility for subsidized child care funding, and transportation needs.
- The decision is based on the child's individual needs as outlined by the IEP and a balance of all the factors noted above.

We believe that parents are essential members of the education team. Parents are required to participate in every step of the process from referral to implementation of the individual educational program. Parents are respected for their input and for doing what they can to be a part of the educational team. It is important to note that being eligible for EEE services does not mean that a child will automatically be given a preschool placement. An IEP is a legal document for special education services. Options for service locations are as noted below.

Special Education Service Locations

EEE services can be delivered in a variety of settings including:

- **BSD Early Education Programs** at IAA, SA, J.J. Flynn or Ira Allen. EEE services at IAA, SA, J.J. Flynn and the Ira Allen half day preschool programs are generally for those children with developmental delays that can be addressed within a typical preschool program. Children with more intensive needs are served through the Ira Allen Extended Day Program.
- **The Ira Allen Extended Day Program** is for children with intensive special needs. Children participate in a half day preschool classroom and also access

individualized programs developed by their educational team. These programs supplement children's time in their preschool classroom with work in individual and small group settings.

The Extended Day Program Hours:

9:15-3:30 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

9:15-12:00 Friday.

- **Outreach Services**

We collaborate with many community child care centers and preschools within Burlington. An Early Childhood Special Educator and/or a Speech-Language Pathologist deliver(s) services to children within these settings as well as consulting with families and teaching staff.

- **Clinic Services**

Families bring their child to the Ira Allen Early Education Center for individual sessions which are typically for speech/language services.

- **Home Based Services**

In some specialized cases services are delivered within the child's home.

Head Start

The Burlington Early Education Program has partnered with the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity Head Start Program since 1994. This partnership has allowed us to extend more comprehensive family based services to our families through home visits and parent education programs. Current collaborative Head Start classrooms are located at J.J. Flynn, Ira Allen, and Sustainability Academy.

Family Involvement

Your participation in your child's educational program is extremely important. The teachers and other staff working with your child welcome your input and suggestions. You know your child best!

There are several ways that you can become involved with your child's program. Here are some suggestions:

- Come to school and spend time with your child. Your child will feel really important with you in the classroom.
- Family workshops - if families are interested, we can offer workshops on different topics of interest (eg: behavior management, early literacy skills, etc.) Please let us know if you would like a specific workshop this year.
- Home visits - the teacher or Speech-Language Pathologist may ask to come to your home to observe your child. This helps us understand your child a little better. It's also a great time for you to share information about specific skills or issues at home.
- Home-school contact - you and the teaching team can establish regular contact by identifying the best ways to communicate information.

Guidance and Behavior Management

We believe that supervision and a properly prepared environment promote positive interactions among children and can prevent many negative behaviors from occurring. One of our primary goals is to develop social-emotional skills, which promote positive peer interactions. When behavior management is needed, the primary focus is redirection to a positive behavior. If there are recurring negative behaviors, this will be discussed by the team and a specific plan addressing the behaviors may be implemented.

Immunization of Students

Vermont State Law requires schools to get proof of your child's immunizations. A student cannot start school if his/her immunization information is incomplete or there is no plan for having it completed. Up to date immunization information must be authorized by the school nurse.

To comply:

- Submit proof of immunization to your child's teacher.
- Make an appointment to have your child immunized with your child's health care provider and contact your child's teacher.
- Submit an exemption request form to your child's teacher.

Illness Policy

Please keep your child home and consult with your physician if your child has:

- A fever-- a child must be fever free, without fever reducing medications, for 24 hours before returning to school.
- An earache with a fever or behavior change that has lasted more than 3 days.
- A sore throat with a fever and/or difficulty swallowing.
- A rash with a fever or behavior change.
- Vomiting - two or more times within 24 hours.
- Five or more loose or watery bowel movements within an 8 hour period.

Keeping your child home when they display these symptoms is best for them and helps prevent the spread of illness to others.

Medication Policy

Most families whose children require medication are able to give it to their child at home. There are occasional times when medication may have to be given during school hours.

For prescription medications: A parent/guardian must complete a request form to have prescription drugs administered during school hours; many physicians' offices have copies or they may be obtained from the school. A written order from the prescribing health care provider is required. The medication must be brought to school in the original container labeled with the student's name.

For non-prescription medications: The parent/guardian must fill out and sign the medication administration form or write all the information on a paper. The medication must be in the original, labeled container. The medication will be given for 48 hours with each form. If the need for longer-term administration exists, please call the program director. The director or designee reserves the right not to give the medication when there is a safety concern; parents/guardians will be notified and medical clarification requested. Parents can always come to school and administer the medication themselves.

Head Lice

Families should check their child's head once a week, and especially before returning to school after vacations. The best way to do this is to use a metal lice comb to go through your child's damp hair. If you find lice, your school nurse or health care practitioner can give you good advice about getting rid of them. If your child is found to have head lice at school, you will be notified. It is very important to treat your child before s/he returns to school.

Control of head lice depends on prompt diagnosis and effective treatment. Your help in inspecting your child at least weekly throughout the school year for the presence of head lice is greatly appreciated.

Transportation

We encourage families to bring their children to school each day. When you do this, it offers the opportunity for closer, more frequent school/home communication

- **The Ira Allen Early Education Center**

Transportation is offered to all students attending the Ira Allen Early Education Center who are more than .7 miles from the center.

- **IAA, SA, FLYNN (half day program only)**

Transportation is offered to children eligible for special education services. Decisions for transportation services are determined by each child's IEP team.

- **Flynn All Day Classroom**

All children in this classroom can access transportation since it is Federally funded through the Pre K Expansion Grant.

In order to make the bus service most effective, good communication between school and home is essential. To accomplish this, the following procedures are recommended:

- When your child is ill, and will not be attending school, please call the preschool (864-8463) **AND** the bus garage (864-8453) by 7:30 a.m. so the bus driver can avoid unnecessary delays.
- If it is necessary for your child to be dropped off or picked up at a different location, please let the bus driver know ahead of time, and if possible, in writing. A change in pick-up or drop-off locations should occur on a very limited basis. For your child's safety, a regular schedule should be maintained as much as possible.

- If it is necessary for a different person to take your child off the bus, the bus driver should be notified ahead of time - just call the bus garage (864-8453) and the message will be relayed to the driver. The bus driver cannot leave your child with an unauthorized person.
- Have your child ready when the bus arrives. Take him/her to the bus. The bus aide will settle your child and buckle the seat belt. If your child is not quite ready when the bus arrives, give the bus driver a signal so s/he will know you are home and your child will be out in a minute.
- Be ready and waiting for the bus to bring your child home.

We are pleased that you and your child will be part of our program this year. We hope that you have a year filled with fun and learning. Please let us know if there is any way we can make your experience even better.

Here's to a great year!