



2020-2021 Participant Handbook





MISSION

We exist to educate. Education improves the quality of life for all.

STRATEGY

Build strong systems to drive improved life outcomes for all students.

PRIORITIES

Install the MI Excel Blueprint for Strategic Reconfiguration as the framework to provide high quality teaching and learning.

Curriculum and Instruction

Deliver a rigorous and relevant education for each student, caring for both the student's academic and non-academic needs.

Improve student achievement and ensure students are prepared for a successful and productive life.

Finance and Operations

Educational priorities and student need drive resource decisions.

Operations are efficient and effective.

TCAPS is fiscally responsible.

Communication

Develop broad community connections, specifically with those who have no direct connection to our schools.

Reinforce TCAPS' reputation as a quality school system and a great choice for families.

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Table of Contents

Overview	1
Philosophy of Education	1
Admissions Policy	1
Withdrawal Policy.....	2
Change of Address or Telephone Number.....	2
Check-In/Check-Out Procedures.....	2
School Calendar.....	2
Transportation	3
Attendance	3
Health Regulations	3
Accident & Emergency Procedures	4
Medication Policy	5
Referral Policy.....	5
Data Analysis	5
Supervision Policy.....	5
Confidentiality	6
Student Records (FERPA)	6
Exclusion Policy.....	15
Snow Days & Delays	15
Outdoor Play.....	15
Clothing	15
Rest Time	16
Nutrition Policy.....	16

Food Service/Meal Plan.....	16
Curriculum & Developmental Assessments.....	17
Sample Daily Schedule.....	18
Parental Involvement.....	20
District Behavior/Discipline Policy	21
Child Protection Policy.....	22
Staff/Volunteer Screening Policy	23
Grievances	24
Parent Notice of Program Measurement	24
Non-Discrimination Statement.....	24
Contact Numbers.....	24
Subject to Change Notice	25
Child Care Licensing.....	25
Receipt of Participant Handbook.....	26
Transportation Agreement	26

Overview

The Michigan Department of Education funds the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) to provide children with a high quality preschool experience. Traverse City Area Public Schools' GSRP program serves qualifying children who are four years old by September 1st of the year enrollment is sought. The classes are taught by certified teachers with an assistant in each room. The curriculum is child-centered and aligns with district and state kindergarten curricula. This tuition-free program provides family style lunch and nutritious snacks for the students each day. Research supports that children served by this preschool program show significant, positive developmental, and academic achievement when compared to children who have not attended a program (www.tcaps.net/earlychildhood).

Philosophy of Education

We believe that all children develop emotionally, intellectually, physically and socially. All areas of development are equally important and affect one another. We also believe that children develop as a result of their interactions with adults, other children and the materials around them. Based on these beliefs, we provide opportunities for children to develop in all domains through interactions individually, with the teacher, other children, and with materials. Our curriculum is designed to enhance the development of children, to extend their skills and levels of understanding as well as foster positive self-esteem and positive feelings about school. We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children and strive to enhance parent knowledge about child development and the specific development of their child. We encourage parent involvement in their child's schooling.

Admissions Policy

GSRP is funded by the state of Michigan and is a free preschool program offered to children who are four years of age by September 1st of the current school year and who meet income eligibility requirements. No fees will be incurred for families enrolled in the program below the 250% FPL (Federal Poverty Level). **A one-time fee will be incurred for families enrolled in the program above the 250% FPL (Federal Poverty Level). Fees incurred will be \$10 for an FPL between 251%-300%, \$360 for an FPL between 301%-350%, \$580 for an FPL of 400%, and \$720 for FPL of 401% and above.**

To apply, please contact the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NMCAA) at (231) 346-2116. Following the application process at NMCAA, your application will be forwarded to the Early Childhood Office at Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS). Openings in the program are filled by income and risk factor criteria rather than on a first-come, first-served basis. Priority is given to families highest in need. If your child is placed in the program, parents must complete TCAPS' enrollment paperwork by the required deadline to finalize the enrollment process.

Withdrawal Policy

Any student moving outside the district or whose parent (legal guardian) has decided to remove their child from the program must notify the GSRP teacher and school office two weeks prior to withdrawal (if possible) and provide the reason for withdrawal. The two-week notification will ensure a smooth transition for your child. In the event that you move outside of the TCAPS district we have the right to remove your child from the program.

Change of Address or Telephone Number

Please inform your school office and teacher as soon as possible if there are any changes in address, phone number or email. If we need to contact you in case of an emergency, current information is essential.

Check-In/Check-Out Procedures

If transporting your children, they must be escorted and signed in and out of the GSRP program each day by the parent/guardian to and from the designated program. When children are leaving the program at any time, you must sign your child out on the attendance sheet. If someone not authorized on your child's Child Information Form is picking up your child, you must notify the teacher in writing or by telephone prior to the pick-up time. We will not release a child to anyone without proper authorization and identification. Children will NOT be allowed to leave on their own or with siblings under 18 years of age.

The safety of the children in our care is of the utmost importance. If there is any suspicion of intoxication involving a parent/adult picking up a child, staff will work with this adult/parent to contact another adult (from Child Information Form) prior to releasing the child from care. If the adult/parent suspected of intoxication insists on leaving with the child, staff will be required to inform local law enforcement.

School Calendar

School calendars will be shared at the first home visit prior to the start of the school year. The program is held four full days per week. The first and last day of school for GSRP program students **does not** coincide with the K-12 school year calendar. School day hours vary by site.

Transportation

Busing is provided at no cost to families that live in, or can access a bus stop established in, the elementary attendance area of the school the program is held. (i.e. if a child is enrolled in GSRP at Traverse Heights, the family must live in the Traverse Heights attendance area to receive busing).

If busing is provided for your child, a parent or an adult over 18 years of age must physically accompany the child to and from the bus stop and wait for the bus to arrive/depart. Parents/guardians are asked to walk (to) or greet (from) their child at the school bus door. Parents/guardians are not permitted to board the school bus.

If a family lives outside the elementary attendance area of the school where the program is held, transportation must be provided by the parent to and from the program.

Attendance

Regular attendance in the GSRP program is important to your child's learning process. Research shows that frequent absences seriously affect learning and may affect future work habits. When your child is going to be out of school due to illness or any other reason, please contact your school office to notify them of your child's absence. We encourage families to schedule all doctor/dental and all other such appointments during non-school hours. **Excessive tardiness or unexcused absences of 10 or more may result in your child being dismissed from the GSRP program.**

Please ensure your child is picked up in a timely manner at the end of the school day. Excessive late pick-ups may result in your child being dismissed from the GSRP program.

Health Regulations

Each child must have a physical examination before starting in the GSRP program as required by state child care licensing. All children must be up-to-date on their immunizations or present an authorized waiver form prior to attending a TCAPS school. Michigan revised the immunizations rules to require all individuals who wish to waive one or more vaccines to:

1. Seek an authorized waiver for medical contradictions from your family physician.
2. Seek an authorized waiver for all non-medical concerns from a county health department.

Your family physician must complete a Health Appraisal form. The cost of the physical examination and immunizations is the responsibility of the family.

What to Do When Your Child is Not Feeling Well

Whenever a child complains of not feeling well on a school day, parents are faced with the decision of whether or not to send their child to school. **How do you make the right choice?** Generally speaking, if a child is sick, he/she should NOT come to school. We cannot provide care for your child if he/she is ill. When your child is ill and will not be attending school, please notify

your school office the morning of the absence and provide the reason why your child will not be attending. If your child should become ill while in our care, a parent/guardian will be notified.

To protect themselves and others, children should be kept at home for at least 24 hours (or until he/she is completely recovered) if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Sore throat
- Temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater
- Earache/discharge
- Nausea or vomiting
- Skin rash
- Swollen glands
- Diarrhea
- Inflamed eye/discharge
- Sores on skin such as impetigo, scabies or ringworm

If your child is sick, but you feel he/she can come to school as long as he/she stays inside, **please reconsider: a student well enough to attend school will be considered well enough to participate in outside recess.** Without a doctor's note, children will be sent outside.

Accident/Illness/Incident/Serious Injury Emergency Plan

In the event of a serious accident, illness or injury, the following steps will be taken:

- Immediate first aid will be provided as necessary.
- Staff will evaluate the situation and call for backup assistance as needed. Assistance could be from the office, classroom assistant, custodian, or any staff member, depending upon the urgency of the situation.
- Contact the main office and building principal during school hours or contact the District Child Care Coordinator during non-school hours.
- Call 9-1-1 if the situation is critical.
- Contact TCAPS' Health Coordinator (Liisa Szarapski) at 231- 933-1789.
- Notify a parent/legal guardian immediately. If not able to reach a parent, call emergency contact as listed on LARA Child Information Record.
- Determine what action parents or emergency contact would like taken.
- Complete an Incident/Accident Report Form (TCAPS and LARA).

In the event of an incident, a parent/legal guardian will be notified by phone immediately. An Incident/Accident Report form will be filed with LARA and TCAPS. An incident includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- A child is lost or left unsupervised.
- Alleged sexual contact between children or a child and a staff member or volunteer.
- Physical discipline of a child by a staff member or volunteer.

Medication Policy

Only medication prescribed by a doctor specifically for your child will be administered. The medication must be brought to the school in its original container (not expired) and a medication permission slip must be filled out and signed by the parent or guardian and prescribing physician as per school district policy. Instructions and medication permission forms may be obtained upon request from your school office. All medication must be administered according to the instructions on the container or pharmacy label. All medication will be administered by a school designee.

Referral Policy

Children experiencing difficulties with educational development are referred, by a teacher or parent, to the Early Childhood Special Education Team at Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District (TBAISD). If you have a concern regarding your child's academic or social development, please contact the preschool diagnostic team at (231) 922-6288.

Data Analysis

Our preschool program participates in monthly Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) meetings. This is a process that uses data-based problem-solving to integrate academic and behavioral instruction and intervention for students who are in need of additional support within the classroom.

- If a parent or teacher has concerns about a child's academic, behavior, or social progress at any time throughout the year, this child may be brought up at MTSS in order to put in place helpful interventions. Parent permission is required to discuss your child at these meetings. **Student names are kept confidential.**

Supervision & Ratio Policy

Teaching staff will supervise children primarily by sight. Supervision for short periods of time by sound is permissible, as long as the GSRP teacher or assistant checks frequently on children who are out of sight (including, but not limited to: independent use of toilet, napping, reading in quiet area). Independent use of toilet is encouraged; however, assistance will be provided by the GSRP teacher or assistant when necessary. A 1:8 adult/child ratio must be maintained in the GSRP classroom. The maximum number of students will not exceed 16.

Confidentiality

No Traverse City Area Public Schools employee shall disclose personal or confidential information to persons not authorized by law and/or ethics to receive information regarding any student enrolled in the GSRP program. (This includes income, risk factors, suspected child abuse, etc.)

Student Records – FERPA

(Policy 8330)

In order to provide appropriate educational services and programming, the Board of Education must collect, retain, and use information about individual students. Simultaneously, the Board recognizes the need to safeguard student's privacy and restrict access to student's personally identifiable information.

Student "personally identifiable information" ("PII") includes, but is not limited to: the student's name; the name of the student's parent or other family members; the address of the student or student's family; a personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record; other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name; other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or information requested by a person who the District reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

The Board of Education is responsible for maintaining records of all students attending schools in this District. Only records mandated by the State or Federal government and/or necessary and relevant to the function of the School District or specifically permitted by this Board will be compiled by Board employees. The Board hereby authorizes collection of the following student records, in addition to the membership record required by law:

- A. observations and ratings of individual students by professional staff members acting within their sphere of competency
- B. samples of student work
- C. information obtained from professionally acceptable standard instruments of measurement such as:
 - 1. interest inventories and aptitude tests
 - 2. vocational preference inventories
 - 3. achievement tests
 - 4. standardized intelligence tests
 - 5. other assessments as authorized by the Board or required by Michigan legislation
- D. authenticated information provided by a parent or eligible student concerning achievements and other school activities which the parent or student wants to make a part of the record
- E. verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns

- F. rank in class and academic honors earned
- G. psychological tests
- H. attendance records
- I. health records
- J. custodial arrangements

In all cases, permitted, narrative information in student records shall be objectively-based on the personal observation or knowledge of the originator.

Student records shall be available only to students and their parents, eligible students, and designated school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information, or to other individuals or organizations as permitted by law. The term “parents” includes legal guardians or other persons standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the welfare of the child). The term “eligible student” refers to a student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older or a student of any age who is enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

In situations in which a student has both a custodial and a noncustodial parent, both shall have access to the student’s educational records unless stipulated otherwise by court order. In the case of eligible students, parents will be allowed access to the records without the student’s consent, provided the student is considered a dependent under section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code.

A school official is a person employed by the Board as an administrator, supervisor, teacher/instructor (including substitutes), or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); and a person serving on the Board. The Board further designates the following individuals and entities as “school officials” for the purpose of FERPA:

- A. persons or companies with whom the Board has contracted to perform a specific task (such as an attorney, auditor, insurance representative, or medical consultant);
- B. contractors, consultants, volunteers or other parties to whom the Board has outsourced a service or function otherwise performed by the Board employees (e.g. a therapist, authorized information technology (IT) staff, and approved online educational service providers).

The above-identified outside parties must (a) perform institutional services or functions for which the Board would otherwise use its employees, (b) be under the direct control of the Board with respect to the use and maintenance of education records, and (c) be subject to the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 99.33(a) governing the use and re-disclosure of PII from education records.

Finally, a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks (including volunteers) is also considered a “school official” for purposes of FERPA provided s/he meets the above-referenced criteria applicable to other outside parties.

“Legitimate educational interest” shall be defined as a “direct or delegated responsibility for helping the student achieve one (1) or more of the educational goals of the District” or if the

record is necessary in order for the school official to perform an administrative, supervisory or instructional task or to perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family. The Board directs that reasonable and appropriate methods (including but not limited to physical and/or technological access controls) are utilized to control access to student records and to make certain that school officials obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interest.

The Board authorizes the administration to:

- A. forward student records, including any suspension and expulsion action against the student, on request to a school or school district in which a student of this District seeks or intends to enroll upon condition that the student's parents be notified of the transfer, receive a copy of the record if desired, and have an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the record;
- B. forward student records, including disciplinary records with respect to suspensions and expulsions, upon request to a public school or school district in which a student in foster care is enrolled;
Such records shall be transferred as soon as possible to the enrolling district
- C. provide "personally-identifiable" information to appropriate parties, including parents of an eligible student, whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals, if there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, considering the totality of the circumstances;
- D. report a crime committed by a child with or without a disability to appropriate authorities and, with respect to reporting a crime committed by a student with a disability, to transmit copies of the student's special education records and disciplinary records including any suspension and expulsion action against the student to the authorities and school officials for their consideration;
- E. release de-identified records and information in accordance with Federal regulations;
- F. disclose personally identifiable information from education records, without consent, to organizations conducting studies "for, or on behalf of" the District for purposes of developing, validating or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, or improving instruction;

Information disclosed under this exception must be protected so that students and parents cannot be personally identified by anyone other than representatives of the organization conducting the study, and must be destroyed when no longer needed for the study. In order to release information under this provision, the District will enter into a written agreement with the recipient organization that specifies the purpose of the study. (See Form 8330 F14.) Further, the following personally identifiable information will not be disclosed to any entity: a student or his/her family member's social security number(s); religion; political party affiliation; voting history; or biometric information.

While the disclosure of personally identifiable information (other than social security numbers, religion, political party affiliation, voting record, or biometric information) is allowed under this exception, it is recommended that de-identified information be used whenever possible. This reduces the risk of unauthorized disclosure.

- G. disclose personally identifiable information from education records without consent, to authorized representatives of the Comptroller General, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Education, as well as State and local educational authorities;

The disclosed records must be used to audit or evaluate a Federal or State supported education program, or to enforce or comply with Federal requirements related to those education programs. A written agreement between the parties is required under this exception.

The District will verify that the authorized representative complies with FERPA regulations.

- H. request each person or party requesting access to a student's record to abide by the Federal regulations concerning the disclosure of information.

The Board will comply with a legitimate request for access to a student's records within a reasonable period of time but not more than forty-five (45) days after receiving the request or within such shorter period as may be applicable to students with disabilities. Upon the request of the viewer, a record shall be reproduced, unless said record is copyrighted, and the viewer may be charged a fee equivalent to the cost of handling and reproduction. Based upon reasonable requests, viewers of education records will receive explanation and interpretation of the records.

The Board shall maintain a record of those persons to whom information about a student has been disclosed. Such disclosure records will indicate the student, person viewing the record, information disclosed, date of disclosure, and date parental/eligible student consent was obtained (if required).

Upon written request by a student's parent or legal guardian, the District shall disclose to the parent or legal guardian any personally identifiable information concerning the student that is collected or created by the District as part of the student's education records.

If the District provides any personally identifiable information concerning the student that is collected or created by the District as part of the student's education records to any person, agency, or organization, then the District shall disclose to the student's parent or legal guardian upon his or her written request:

- A. the specific information that was disclosed;
- B. the name and contact information of each person, agency, or organization to which the information has been disclosed;
- C. the legitimate reason that the person, agency, or organization had in obtaining the information.

This information shall be provided without charge within thirty (30) days after the District receives the written request and without charge to the parent or legal guardian. The District is not required to disclose to the parent or legal guardian, even upon written request, any personally identifiable information concerning the student that is collected or created by the District as part of the student's education records and is provided to any person, agency, or organization in any of the following situations:

- A. provision of such information to the Michigan Department of Education or CEPI
- B. provision of such information to the student's parent or legal guardian
- C. provision of such information to its authorizing body or to an educational management organization with which it has a management agreement
- D. provision of such information to or from its intermediate school district or to another intermediate school district providing services to the District or its students pursuant to a written agreement
- E. provision of such information to a person, agency, or organization with written consent from the student's parent or legal guardian or, if the student is at least age eighteen (18), the student
- F. provision of such information to a person, agency, or organization seeking or receiving records in accordance with an order, subpoena, or ex parte order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction
- G. provision of such information as necessary for standardized testing that measures the student's academic progress and achievement
- H. provision of such information that is covered by the written opt-out notification described above, unless the student's parent or legal guardian or, if the student is at least age eighteen (18) or is an emancipated minor, the student has signed and submitted the written opt-out notification

Only "directory information" regarding a student shall be released to any person or party, other than the student or his/her parent, without the written consent of the parent; or, if the student is an eligible student, the written consent of the student, except those persons or parties stipulated by the Board policy and administrative guidelines and/or those specified in the law.

The Board shall exempt from disclosure directory information, as requested for the purpose of surveys, marketing, or solicitation, unless the Board determines that the use is consistent with the educational mission of the Board and beneficial to the affected students. The Board may take steps to ensure that directory information disclosed shall not be used, rented, or sold for the purpose of surveys, marketing, or solicitations. Before disclosing the directory information, the Board may require the requester to execute an affidavit stating that directory information provided shall not be used, rented, or sold for the purpose of surveys, marketing, or solicitation.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Each year, the Superintendent or designee shall provide public notice to students and their parents of the District's intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information." The Board designates as student "directory information": student name and address; parent name and address; parent email address; student and parent telephone numbers; student's place of birth; student's major field of study; student's participation in officially recognized activities and sports; student athletes' height and weight; dates of attendance; date of graduation; student honors, awards, degrees, and scholarships earned; student honor roll designations; student grade placements; photographs and videos of students participating in school activities, events, or programs; and information generally found in yearbooks. The Board further designates district-assigned student email addresses as directory information for the limited purposes of (1) facilitating the student's participation in and access to

online learning platforms and applications, and (2) inclusion in internal school and district email address books.

The Board designates school-assigned email accounts as “directory information” for the limited purpose of facilitating students’ registration for access to various online educational services, including mobile applications/apps that will be utilized by the student for educational purposes. Students’ email addresses may also be released to federal and state authorities per legislation. School-assigned email accounts shall not be released as directory information beyond this/these limited purpose(s) and to any person or entity but the specific online educational service provider and internal users of the District’s Education Technology.

A parent or legal guardian has the ability to opt-out of directory information disclosure with written communication to the student’s school administrators within the first thirty (30) days of the school year. A student who is at least age eighteen (18) or is an emancipated minor may act on his/her own behalf with respect to the opt-out.

Parents and eligible students may also refuse to allow the District to disclose any or all of such “directory information” upon written notification to the District within ten (10) days after receipt of the District’s public notice.

ARMED FORCES RECRUITING

The Board shall provide United States Armed Forces recruiters with at least the same access to the high school campus and to student directory information (names, addresses, and telephone listings of secondary students) as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. “Armed forces of the United States” means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent or legal guardian of a student submits a signed, written request to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent or legal guardian does not want the student’s directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives, then the officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student’s directory information. The Board shall ensure that students and parents and guardians are notified of the provisions of the opportunity to deny release of directory information.

Public notice shall be given regarding the right to refuse disclosure of any or all “directory information” including to the armed forces of the United States and the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

A fee, not to exceed the actual costs incurred by the high school, for copying and mailing student directory information under this section, may be charged an official recruiting representative.

Directory information received under armed services authorization request shall be used only to provide information to students concerning educational and career opportunities available in the armed forces of the United States or the service academies of the armed forces of the United States. An official recruiting representative who receives student directory information under this section shall not release that information to a person who is not involved in recruiting students for the armed forces of the United States or the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

Annually, the Board will notify male students age eighteen (18) or older that they are required to register for the selective service.

Requests to the District records officer shall be presented on a standardized form developed by the armed forces of the United States requesting access to a high school campus and a time for the access. Requests should bear the signature of the ranking recruiting officer of the armed service making the request.

Whenever consent of the parent(s)/eligible student is required for the inspection and/or release of a student's education records or for the release of "directory information", either parent may provide such consent unless stipulated otherwise by court order. If the student is under the guardianship of an institution, the Superintendent or designee shall appoint a person who has no conflicting interest to provide such written consent.

The Board may disclose "directory information" on former students without student or parental consent, unless the parent or eligible student previously submitted a request that such information not be disclosed without their prior written consent.

The Board shall not sell or otherwise provide to a for-profit business entity any personally identifiable information that is part of a student's education records. This does not apply to any of the following situations:

- A. providing the information as necessary for standardized testing that measures the student's academic progress and achievement
- B. providing the information as necessary to a person that is providing educational or educational support services to the student under a contract with the District

The parent of a student or an eligible student has the right to inspect upon request any instrument used in the collection of personal information before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student. Personal information for this section is defined as individually identifiable information including a student or parent's first and last name, a home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town), a telephone number, or a Social Security identification number. In order to review the instrument, the parent or eligible students, must submit a written request to the building principal at least ten (10) work days before the scheduled date of the activity. The instrument will be provided to the parent within five (5) business days of the principal receiving the request.

The Superintendent or designee shall directly notify the parent(s) of a student and eligible students, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when such activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled.

This section does not apply to the collection, disclosure or use of personal information collected from students from the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or service for, or to, students or educational institutions, such as the following:

- A. college or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment;
- B. book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products;

- C. curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary and secondary schools;
- D. tests and assessments used by elementary and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments;
- E. the sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities; and
- F. student recognition programs.

The Board may establish online access for the parents or the eligible student to the student's confidential academic and attendance record. To authorize such access, the parents or the eligible student must sign a release (see Form 8330 F10). This release shall remind the parents or eligible student that the account and confidential information about the student is only as secure as they keep their account information. Neither the District nor its employees will be held responsible for any breach of this policy by the parent/eligible student or any unauthorized party.

The Superintendent or designee shall prepare administrative guidelines to ensure that students and parents are adequately informed each year regarding their rights to:

- A. inspect and review the student's education records;
- B. request amendments if the record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's rights;
- C. consent to disclosures of personally-identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to unauthorized disclosures allowed by the law;
- D. challenge the Board's noncompliance with a parent's request to amend the records through a hearing;
- E. file a complaint with the United States Department of Education;
- F. obtain a copy of the Board's policy and administrative guidelines on student records.

The Superintendent or designee shall also develop procedural guidelines for:

- A. the proper storage and retention of records including a list of the type and location of records;
- B. informing employees of the Federal and State laws concerning student records.

The Board authorizes the use of the microfilm process or electromagnetic processes of reproduction for the recording, filing, maintaining, and preserving of records.

No liability shall attach to any member, officer, or employee of this District specifically as a consequence of permitting access or furnishing student records in accordance with this policy and regulations.

Any entity receiving personally identifiable information pursuant to a study, audit, evaluation or enforcement/compliance activity must comply with all FERPA regulations. Further, such an entity must enter into a written contract with the Board of Education delineating its responsibilities in safeguarding the disclosed information. Specifically, the entity must demonstrate the existence of a sound data security plan or data stewardship program, and must also provide assurances that the personally identifiable information will not be redisclosed without prior authorization from the Board. Further, the entity conducting the study, audit, evaluation or enforcement/compliance activity is required to destroy the disclosed information once it is no longer needed or when the timeframe for the activity has ended, as specified in its written agreement with the Board of Education. See Form 8330 F14 for additional contract requirements.

M.C.L. 380.1135, 380.1136

Letter, April 6, 2004 Jeremy Hughes, Deputy Supt. Department of Education

34 C.F.R. Part 99, 2002

Section 444 of subpart of part C of the General Education Provisions Act

Title IV of Public Law 90-247

20 U.S.C., Section 1232f through 1232i (FERPA)

20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

20 U.S.C. 7165(b)

26 U.S.C. 152

20 U.S.C. 7908

Revised 6/95

Revised 7/02

Revised 5/03

Revised 2/04

Revised 5/09

Revised 8/09

Revised 1/11

Revised 11/12/12

Revised 8/24/15

Revised 9/11/17

Revised 11/13/17

If you feel TCAPS has failed to comply with the requirements of FERPA, you may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Ave., SW

Washington, DC 20202

Exclusion Policy

Children will not be excluded or expelled because of the need for additional medical or behavioral support, assistance with toileting, or staff attitudes and/or apprehensions.

Snow Days and Delays

In the interest of safety, school occasionally needs to be canceled due to inclement weather. Announcements are posted on TCAPS' website (www.tcaps.net) by 6:00 a.m. and are made available on all local radio and television stations between 6:00 a.m.-7:30 a.m. All elementary and middle school after-school and evening activities are automatically canceled when school is canceled due to inclement weather.

On rare occasions, weather conditions may dictate an early dismissal. While all attempts will be made to avoid early dismissal, in the rare instance that an early dismissal is necessary parents will need to make child care and transportation arrangements.

Outdoor Play

Each day children will go outside unless the temperature is below 0 degrees (with wind chill). Child care licensing requires that all our children spend time outdoors daily, weather permitting. An example of appropriate clothing for outdoor play includes, warm jackets, snow pants, boots, mittens, hats, and proper shoes for recess (no flip-flops). Please label your child's clothing with their name.

Children will be using the school playgrounds. For the safety of the children, they will only use the equipment that has been approved for preschool-aged children by the playground inspector and safety guidelines. Playgrounds are regularly inspected with documentation per child care licensing rules.

Clothing

Situations do arise in the school day where a child's clothing may become wet and/or soiled. If extra clothing is sent to the school for your child, please place the items in a bag clearly marked with your child's name.

Rest Time

Children will be given an opportunity to rest each day for 45 to 60 minutes in the afternoon following lunch. Quiet time is mandated by child care licensing and states that children in care more than five hours will be provided an opportunity to have quiet time. Each child is provided a rest mat. We realize that children have different ways of sleeping and relaxing. During rest time, children are provided quiet time with soft music, books to look at, and limited lighting to allow them to relax. Children who are not sleeping will be allowed to enter into quiet mat activities while the others are sleeping. Sleeping children will be allowed to wake at their own pace and join the afternoon activities.

Nutrition Policy

Children attending GSRP will receive a nutritional snack. GSRP is a participant of the Michigan Department of Education Child Care Food Program and implements their guidelines for good nutrition. If your child attends a full-day program, a snack and lunch will be provided for your child.

Michigan law requires all GSRP programs to provide meals and snacks meeting LARA Child Care Licensing And Child Care Food Program (CACFP) or National School Nutrition Programs (NSNP) to all children. These provide minimum standards for nutritious and safe meal service. The meals and snacks are provided at no cost to the family.

Food Service/M Meal Plan

GSRP understands that a child needs to learn independence and self-help skills. In order to facilitate that, meals and snacks will be served in a seating that is appropriate for small children. Children are encouraged to try new foods. They will learn social skills through meal conversations. For full day programs, snack and meal menus are posted in the classroom and are available on TCAPS' website (www.tcaps.net/menus).

If your child has allergies, please notify the teacher during registration and bring in documentation from the doctor stating the allergy. If families send in food due to personal preferences, they will be required to sign a contract and complete the daily food log. The logs are to be approved by the teacher

The foods provided must reflect the home and community cultures and be high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt. Parents who have concerns about the food provided should work first with teaching staff/Early Childhood Specialist and then with program administration to improve food choices. Additionally, some families have chosen to adopt specialized diets; in this case, parents may elect to provide food from home for their child although this is not expected or encouraged. The food provided from home must also meet CACFP or NSNP requirements except when documented food allergies or intolerance or family beliefs prohibit.

Curriculum & Developmental Assessments

Creative Curriculum focuses on eleven interest areas or activities in the program environment: blocks, dramatic play, toys and games, art, sand and water, library, discovery, music and movement, cooking, computers, and the outdoors. Teachers work with children at different developmental levels to promote learning and guide them in adapting the environment to make it more challenging.

The program is required to individualize instruction for each child. This process supports children's strengths, needs and overall development. The teachers implement an ESI-R Screen as an initial assessment. The ESI-R screening will be given at the start of the school year. A parent will be notified with a phone call if there is a need to have a Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District (TBAISD) staff observe/evaluate their child.

Each GSRP classroom is evaluated by TBAISD annually using the Preschool Quality Assessment (PQA), which is a state-mandated assessment to ensure program funding.

Children are assessed on the following Creative Curriculum Gold objectives three times per year:

Social-Emotional

- Regulates own emotions and behaviors
- Establishes and sustains positive relationships
- Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations

Physical

- Demonstrates traveling skills
- Demonstrates balancing skills
- Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
- Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination

Language

- Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
- Uses language to express thoughts and needs
- Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills

Cognitive

- Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
- Remembers and connects experiences
- Uses classification skills
- Uses symbols and images to represent something not present

Literacy

- Demonstrates phonological awareness
- Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
- Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
- Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
- Demonstrates emergent writing skills

Mathematics

- Uses number concepts and operations
- Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
- Compares and measures
- Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Science and Technology

- Uses scientific inquiry skills
- Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things
- Demonstrates knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials
- Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment
- Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks

Social Studies

- Demonstrates knowledge about self
- Shows basic understanding of people and how they live
- Explores change related to familiar people or places
- Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge

Sample Daily Schedule (schedules may vary)

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM Arrival/Breakfast/Greeting Time – Children enter the classroom at their own pace. Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay until children are ready for them to leave. Children have choices about whether to eat, spend time with books, or interact with adults and one another. Once all children have arrived, adults share the daily announcements.

8:45 AM – 9:00 AM Large-Group Time/Music and Movement – All adults and children participate in activities planned around children's interests, developmental levels, music and movement, cooperative play and projects; and events meaningful to children.

9:00 AM – 9:10 AM Planning Time – Children indicate their plans to adults in a place where intimate conversations can occur and where people and materials are visible. Adults use a range of strategies to support children's planning (e.g., props, area signs, tape recorders, singing, planning individually, in pairs, in small groups).

9:10 AM – 10:10 AM Work Time (children’s hour of uninterrupted Choice Time) – Children always initiate activities and carry out their intentions. Children make many choices about where and how to use materials. During work time, adults participate as partners in child-initiated play and encourage children’s problem solving both with materials and during times of social conflict.

10:10 AM – 10:20 AM Cleanup Time – Children and adults cleanup together keeping the spirit of play and problem solving alive. Children make many choices during cleanup. Adults accept children’s level of involvement and skill while supporting their learning.

10:20 AM – 10:30 AM Recall Time – Gathered in small group settings, children choose work time experiences to reflect on, talk about, and exhibit. Adults provide a variety of materials and strategies to maintain interest as they follow the children’s lead and encourage children to share (e.g., individual props such as puppets, telephones or periscopes, group games using a hula hoop, ball or spinner, re-enacting, drawing, showing and describing a structure or painting). Adults are unhurried in their approach and may complete recall time with four or five children each day.

10:30 AM – 10:45 AM Small Group Time – An adult-initiated learning experience based on children’s interests and development where children explore, play, work with materials, and talk about what they are doing. Individual children explore and use the same set of materials in their own way.

10:45 AM – 11:30 AM Outside Time – Children have many choices about how they play in the outdoor learning environment, much as they do during work time indoors. Adults supervise children for safety and also join in their active outdoor play, supporting their initiatives and problem solving.

11:30 AM – 11:40 AM Bathroom/Wash Hands/Prepare for Lunch – Children assist in preparation and set up. Children choose where they would like to sit and are encouraged to serve themselves.

11:40 AM – 12:25 PM Lunch – Family-Style meals support children doing things for themselves (e.g., serve themselves, pour beverages, distribute napkins, wipe up spills). Children choose whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat. Adults eat and have meaningful conversations with the children. Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.

12:25 PM – 1:25 PM Quiet/Resting Time – Resting is a time for sleeping or quiet, solitary, on-your-own-cot play. Rest time plans should be individualized to meet the needs of each child. Quiet play could include books, soft music, baby dolls, or fine motor manipulatives.

1:25 PM – 1:55 PM Wake/Bathroom/Snack – As children wake up, adults and children work together to put away cots and set up for snack. Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.

1:55 PM – 3:00 PM Plan/Work/Cleanup/Recall – (refer to AM descriptions).

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM Outside Time/Dismissal (refer to AM descriptions).

Parental Involvement

Children who are successful in school have many healthy interconnections between family, school, and community. Parental involvement in the learning process strengthens learning at home and is directly linked back to positive child outcomes at school. Communication and strong relationships are the keys to successful parental involvement.

Parental involvement is a very important part of our program and parents are welcomed visitors in the classroom at any time. You may come to observe any part of the day or eat lunch with your child. If you are visiting and/or volunteering in the classroom, please complete the volunteer application at www.tcaps.net/volunteer.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Home visits – two home visits are required by the Michigan Department of Education grant; one prior to the start of the school year (Fall) and one in the Spring. The home visit prior to the start of the school year is an excellent time to get acquainted with one another and the Spring home visit helps to provide a smooth transition to kindergarten.

Conferences – parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year (Fall and Spring). During the conference, the teacher will discuss your child's progress, answer any questions, and develop a plan to address any areas of concern or particular interest. Conferences are required by the Michigan Department of Education grant. Teachers will work with parents/guardians to schedule a time for the conferences.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Open House – usually held prior to the first day of school. This is an opportunity for parents and children to come and visit the classroom and meet other parents and students. Participation in this event will help alleviate any first day jitters.

Parent Advisory Meetings – Regional meetings are held twice a year (Fall and Spring) and are held at a local GSRP elementary school. Those that attend the advisory committee meetings consist of, but are not limited to, parents, GSRP teachers, GSRP administrators, Early Childhood Specialist, Head Start teachers, Title I preschool teachers, kindergarten teachers, school specialists, Department of Human Services, Community Health Services (0 to 6 Workgroup), Head Start and local early childhood programs, elementary principals, and school superintendent.

School Readiness Advisory Committee – Due to the rural nature of the five county region, this committee consists of multiple collaborative efforts of existing groups including: Great Start Collaborative, 5toOne Parent groups, Great Start Parent Coalition, Great Start Readiness Program Parent Advisory Committees, Great Start to Quality Northwest Resource Center and continuous opportunities for feedback using technology. The School Readiness Advisory Committee meets as needed for special issues not currently addressed within existing structures.

Great Start Collaborative – Every county in Michigan is part of a Great Start Collaborative. Every Collaborative includes parents, service providers, partners and stakeholders who contribute their time and expertise to help make sure children receive the best care and education we can provide.

- Locally the Great Start Collaborative Traverse Bay consists of: Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties.

Great Start Parent Coalition – A volunteer group of parents working to ensure that all families have access to information, programs and services in their communities.

If you would like to be involved in any of these committees, please contact TBAISD Early Childhood Office at (231) 922-6437 or visit www.facebook.com/greatstartparents.

OTHER POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Share special interests with children such as fishing, photography or sewing
- Provide recyclables and help your child make play materials
- Assist with classroom lending library (CARES materials)
- Create displays of child-initiated work
- Meet with teachers at parent/teacher conferences to set developmental goals and discuss children's progress
- Support children's learning at home
- Read or contribute to a parent newsletter
- Story time (read aloud to your child before bedtime, nap time)
- Have your child write their own story and read it back to you
- Word recognition, touching words
- Play word games during road trips
- Visit your local library
- Cook with your child – have your child read the recipe
- Use an animated voice when reading to your child
- Play memory games
- Help a teacher – volunteer to make copies, cut-out crafts, read to students, assist at toys and games tables

District Behavior/Discipline Policy

Traverse City Area Public Schools' GSRP program provides a warm, positive environment which meets children's daily needs. There are times when discipline problems occur and need to be handled in an appropriate manner. The following discipline guidelines have been developed in support of this environment.

The Child Care Bill of Rights outlines the behavior expectations for TCAPS' programs:

We have the right to be safe at GSRP: this means keeping our hands safe while in school (i.e., hitting, pushing, etc.).

We have the right to be treated with kindness and respect at GSRP: this means to be kind to all; be fair to all; do not hurt others' feelings.

We have the right to hear and be heard at GSRP: this means to be respectful when others are talking and to let others work quietly.

We have the right to have personal property respected at GSRP: this means to handle classroom items and student belongings with care.

We have the right to attend a clean and orderly GSRP: this means to put items back after use and dispose of all litter.

We have the right to know that everyone is respected at GSRP: this means be considerate; cooperate with adults and children.

Children have many strong emotions and feelings and sometimes have a difficult time figuring out how to manage them. As supportive adults in the child's life, it is our role to help them make sense of these strong emotions and feelings. Warm and caring relationships and consistent boundaries work best and ultimately assist children in developing self-control, self-direction, increased self-esteem and cooperation. Listed below is the conflict resolution process used in the GSRP classroom.

GSRP early childhood teachers and staff use the following conflict resolution process:

- Gather information from the children (what happened, what upset the children).
- Restate the problem.
- Ask children for solutions and encourage them to choose one together.
- Be prepared to give follow-up support when children act on their decisions.

Should behaviors become extreme and overwhelming or overly disruptive to the child, parents, or the classroom, GSRP teachers will work with their school principal, the TCAPS Early Childhood Department, and the parents/guardians to set up a supportive plan to best meet the needs of the child.

Child Protection Policy

The law requires that staff members and other professionals who come into regular contact with children must report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Department of Human Services.

If a parent or other adult has concerns about the safety of children in GSRP, it is the responsibility of the parent or other adult to initiate an investigation by contacting Child Care Licensing Consultants at the Department of Child Care Licensing Division of the Department of Human Services.

Staff/Volunteer Screening Policy

Traverse City Area Public Schools requires all staff and unsupervised volunteers participating in State of Michigan licensed child care programs to participate in the following screening processes:

- Program Manager/Directors, all caregivers and any unsupervised volunteers will be required to complete the Michigan Child Care Background Check fingerprint before they are allowed in the center. Staff will not be present in a center until they obtain an eligibility letter from this background check from LARA indicating they are eligible to work in the center.
- A digital scan (IDENTIX or equivalent) FBI fingerprint check will be initiated by the HR Department on all TCAPS employees.
- TCAPS will not extend offer of employment, nor allow staff to be present in the center if they have been convicted of (a) A listed offense, as defined in section 2 of the sex offenders registration act, 1994 PA 295, MCL 28.722. (b) Child abuse or child neglect, (c) A felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual within 10 years immediately preceding the date of hire. A staff member shall not be present in the center until there is an eligibility letter on file at the center indicating that he or she has not been named in a central registry case as a perpetrator of child abuse or child neglect.
- All staff and volunteers will sign a statement regarding knowledge of the Child Protection Law and understand their responsibility under this law.
- Volunteers will be supervised when in the presence of children by an eligible staff member. If the volunteer is to be unsupervised, then he/she will be required to complete the Michigan Child Care Background Check fingerprint before they are allowed in the center. R 400.8125(6) and (8).
- All supervised volunteers shall receive a public sex offender registry (PSOR) clearance before having any contact with a child in care. A copy of this clearance must be kept on file at the center.
- Any individual registered on the public sex offender registry (PSOR) is prohibited from having contact with any child in care, including volunteers who are parents of children in care.
- Each child care staff member and each volunteer who has contact with children at least 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks is free from communicable tuberculosis (TB). Verification of TB status is required within 1 year before employment or volunteering.

Grievances

If you have concerns or questions about any aspect of the GSRP program, it is important you share them with us so we can continue to provide a safe and high quality program for all children. Feel free to call, schedule an appointment, or just drop in to visit your child's classroom at any time. Remember, we are always open to discuss ideas, observations, and concerns.

Parent Notice of Program Measurement*

Traverse City Area Public Schools is required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to measure the effect of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). Information is sometimes collected about GSRP staff, enrolled children, and their families. Program staff or a representative from MDE might:

- Ask parents questions about their child and family.
- Observe children in the classroom.
- Measure what children know about letters, words, and numbers, etc.
- Ask teachers how children are learning and growing.

Information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law.

Questions? Contact: mde-gsrp@michigan.gov or (517) 373-8483 or MDE, Office of Great Start, 608 W. Allegan, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909

*Provided to parents upon enrollment.

Non-Discrimination Statement

It is the district policy of Traverse City Area Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, (collectively, "protected classes"), in its educational programs or activities. The Board also does not discriminate in its employment policies and practices as they relate to students and does not tolerate harassment of any kind.

Contact Numbers

The following numbers will allow you to contact your GSRP teacher or GSRP staff:

- Silver Lake – (231) 933-3581
- Traverse Heights – (231) 933-3501

Executive Director of Special Education – (231) 933-1780

Early Childhood Administrative Assistant – (231) 933-1783

If you have discussed an issue with the teacher and felt that your concern was not addressed, please call the Executive Director of Special Education (see above).

Subject to Change Notice

Items in the GSRP Parent Handbook are subject to change due to state and federal policies/mandates. Written notification of changes will be provided to parents and will supersede this handbook.

Child Care Licensing

The Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers Notebook is available in your child's classroom. The following are available in the licensing notebook:

- The licensing notebook contains all the licensing inspection and special investigation reports and related corrective action plans for the past five (5) years.
- The licensing notebook is available to parents during regular business hours.
- Licensing inspection, special investigation reports, and corrective action plans from at least the past three (3) years are available on the child care licensing website at **www.michigan.gov/michildcare**.
- School-age centers operating in school buildings approved by the Michigan Department of Education are exempt from subrule (11) of rule R400.8170 (Outdoor play area), provided the licensee informs parents, in writing at the time of enrollment, if the center plans to use a public school's outdoor play area and equipment that does not comply with rule R400.8170.

Receipt of Participant Handbook

My signature below verifies that I have received, read and understand TCAPS' GSRP handbook policies and guidelines. I agree to abide by the policies and guidelines.

Child's Name (printed) _____

School _____

Parent's Name (printed) _____

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____

THIS PAGE MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE GSRP TEACHER BY THE FIRST DAY OF THE GSRP PROGRAM.

Transportation Agreement

I give TCAPS permission to transport my child on a routine basis if busing is provided and I live in the attendance area. In the event my child goes on a field trip, I will give separate and written permission prior to the event.

Child's Name (printed) _____

School _____

Parent's Name (printed) _____

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____

