

**SOUTHDOWN'S PRE-K CENTER
2050 HOOD AVENUE
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808**

MARY SUE SLACK, PRINCIPAL

TELEPHONE: 225-346-1127

August 7, 2009

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Southdown's Pre-K Center for the 2009-2010 school year! Attached is your copy of our student-family handbook for your information. Please read the handbook and sign and return the bottom section of this letter to your child's teacher. Keep the handbook so you may refer to it during the school year. If you have a particular question or concern, please feel free to call the school office at 225-346-1127. A copy of our student-family handbook can also be found on our school website at <http://southdowns.ebrschools.org>. Please bookmark this for future reference. This website is regularly updated and contains current information.

Adherence to these policies will ensure a successful school year.

The faculty and staff are looking forward to a successful year. We welcome your participation and input.

My door is always open and I urge you to become an active participant in your child's education process.

Mary Sue Slack, Principal

Please cut on line and return bottom portion.

I have received and have read the parent handbook for Southdown's Pre-K Center. I understand it and I am willing to follow the policies.

Student's Name

Teacher's Name

Parent's Signature

Date

FAMILY EVENTS

Our school sponsors parental involvement activities through out the year which will give families opportunities to interact and work with other school families.

Dates of our family activities are listed below:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
August 24, 2009	Open House 6:00 PM
October 2, 2009	Field Day
October 30, 2009	Fall Festival
November 5, 2009	Lunch & Learn for families- 'Smooth Parenting' at 11:30
November 12, 2009	Donuts with Dads
January 26, 2010	Math Night
February 3, 2010	Lunch & Learn for families- 'Pre-K Discipline—Making It A Positive Experience' at 11:30
February 19, 2010	Grandparents Day
March 2, 2010	Dr. Seuss Night 6:00 PM
April 28, 2010	Lunch & Learn for families- 'Parenting Made Easy' at 11:30
May 6, 2010	Muffins with Mom

This is a great opportunity to get to know other Southdowns families.
We hope to see you at our school!

SOUTHDOWNS PRE-K CENTER

The staff and faculty of Southdowns Pre-K Center will provide quality education for all children by stimulating early childhood development in a nurturing environment while empowering families through home intervention. Our school's purpose is to provide an environment in which children can work toward their potential in all developmental

areas. Furthermore, we strive to guide families to effectively work with their school and community to access services for their children, now and in the future. In a partnership with parents, we accept the challenge to meet the individual needs of each of our children. We welcome and encourage family involvement.

SOUTHDOWNS PRE-K CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

The staff and faculty of Southdowns will provide a quality preschool education in a nurturing environment to prepare students for the future.

SOUTHDOWNS PRE-K CENTER PHILOSOPHY

Southdowns Pre-K provides a warm, nurturing atmosphere in which a preschool child can feel secure, learn and grow. We believe that each child who comes to our school is unique and special.

Educational programming is designed to meet the needs of each student. Our programming is developmental in nature, based on the individual needs and abilities of each child in accordance with National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) best practice standards. We assist our parents in developing an appropriate Individual Educational Plan (IEP) to meet the social, motor, academic and communication needs of their child. Our faculty and staff through planned programs and activities, will promote participation, involvement, and communication with parents.

SOUTHDOWNS PRE-K CENTER PLEDGE

I promise to do my best at Southdowns. I will obey school rules, listen to my teachers and be a friend to others. Parents should assist their child in memorizing this pledge, which is recited daily during our morning announcements. Students will also learn to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag each morning.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Listed below are policies that should be followed at all times. When requests are made for money, permission slips, answers to notes, etc. it is imperative that you respond immediately.

I. School Day - Arrival and Departure Times

The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:25 p.m. If you bring your child to school, please have him/her here no earlier than 8:10 a.m. Parents must utilize our carpool line. Bus duty personnel will take your child to the classroom. All students must be picked up by 3:25 p.m. Parents who are consistently late picking up their children may be asked to withdraw their child from school. The Child Protection Office will also be notified.

If you bring your child to school and arrive after 8:30 a.m., you must bring your child to the school office, because our duty teachers will not be out on duty after that time. Your child will be considered tardy if he arrives at school after 8:30 a.m. Please avoid dropping off your child after 8:30 a.m., because a break in the daily routine may be stressful and confusing for your child.

If you check your child in late or pick your child up early, it will be necessary for you to use our computerized sign-in/sign-out system [located in the hallway by our main office]. When checking your child into school, the computer will issue you a badge. Your child's teacher will collect 'tardy' badge from you and will not admit children to their classrooms without the badge. If you need to pick your child up from school early, please pick him/her up prior to 3:00 p.m. If you have not arrived by the time the busses depart, we will put your child on the bus. Supervision of students occurs only during regular school hours, which are 8:10 a.m. to 3:25 p.m.

Our students leave in the afternoon via the busses or parent pick-ups. If for any reason a relative or friend picks up your child, the office must have received written notification from the parent prior to 2:30. Please inform us of the individual's name who will pick up your child because we will ask to see proper identification before we release your child. This policy is for the safety of the children. If we have not received notification, we will not release your child to the individual.

It is a school board policy that all persons report to the office when entering the school. Please do not go directly to the classroom. We ask that you remain in the reception/parent waiting area until the office notifies you. All parents and visitors must check in with the office and sign in each time they visit our school.

II. Transportation

A. If your child rides a on a bus, please have him/her ready when the bus comes. The bus drivers cannot wait for children. Busses begin to leave school at 3:05 p.m. Please arrange to pick up your child before 3:15 p.m. if your child does not ride the bus.

B. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school and the bus driver(s) of irregularities in your child's schedule.

C. If you transport your child to school, you may not park in the bus-loading zone between 7:45 and 8:30 a.m. as well as 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. For safety reasons, parents are asked not to pass cars or busses in the carpool lane at any time.

D. The East Baton Rouge Parish transportation system will not transport children to after-school private therapy. Please arrange to transport your child.

E. The telephone number for East Baton Rouge Parish School System's transportation office is 226-3784. This office will remain open until 5:00 p.m. each day to assist parents. If your child's bus is late, please contact that office.

F. Parents are not allowed to pick up or drop off their child at bus transfer sites for safety reasons. Parents must pick up or drop off their child at our school. This is a School Board Policy.

G. Our state has a mandatory seat belt law (Louisiana Revised Statutes 32:295), which requires children to use a seat belt, or car seat at all times, depending on weight. If you transport your child, please be aware that our school and duty personnel will enforce this law by asking you to have a car seat or proper seat belt in your car.

H. When transporting your child to and from school, please refrain from talking on your cell phone. Use this time to develop appropriate language and social skills with your child.

III. Emergency Dismissal

Families must keep on alert in times of severe weather or other emergencies that may require closing of school. Such emergencies will be reported on radio and television, and students will be dismissed using the usual methods unless you come to or call the school with other directions. Please be aware that during an emergency, contacting the school by phone may not be helpful with the number of calls coming in. Discuss with your family how your child will leave school in an emergency.

IV. Absent/Tardy Days

If your child will not attend school on any given day, it is your responsibility to call the school's office (346-1127) by 8:30 a.m. to inform the school. This will help ensure the safety of your child. If your child will be arriving late due to a doctor's appointment, please notify your child's teacher or the office. Please make every effort to schedule doctor's appointments in the afternoon for your child. If that is not possible and your child will not arrive at school until after 11:00 a.m., please keep him/her at home for that day.

V. Tardy Policy

Parents are required to adhere to arrival times. Attending school on a regular, punctual basis is in the students' best interest. Punctuality facilitates transition into daily routines and learning centers. **Parents that do not observe the arrival time will receive a telephone call and/or a letter from the school principal.** A parent may also be required to attend a conference with the principal and teacher before the student may return to school. If tardiness continues to be a problem, the family will be referred to the Child Welfare and Attendance officer. Parents of students in the B.E.S.T. classes may be asked to remove their child from the program.

VI. Records

A. It is absolutely necessary that the school records have the correct address, home telephone number and emergency number for all students. Please inform the secretary in the school office and the teacher of any changes made during the year. All changes must be made in writing. If you have an unlisted number, please make sure that we

have that number on file. We must be able to contact you at all times.

B. The following records must be in your child's cumulative folder:

Birth certificate
Social security card
School registration form
Immunization shots or booster shots
Health Card stamped by the Health Unit or signed by the doctor.
(State law requires that all children in school must have current immunization for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough (DTP), polio, red measles (rubeola), German measles (rubella), HIB and Varicella)

If these requirements are not followed, your child will be sent home after notification from the school nurse and principal.

C. In accordance with School Board Policy, we will also require each family to show proof of residency. Any two of the following documents may be used and must be current:

lease/rental agreement	cable bill	phone bill
utility bill	pay stub	bank statement

D. Every student must have a current emergency card on file in the office. If your address or telephone number is changed, it is your responsibility to inform our school and to make the proper corrections on the card. All changes to the card must be made by the parent or guardian. School personnel are not allowed to make any changes to the card. Changes in this information should be made as soon as possible to prevent loss of time in case of an emergency. For your child's safety, we will release your child only to those individuals whose name appear on the emergency card.

VII. Money

- A. When sending money to school, always include:
1. Your name
 2. Amount of money
 3. What money is for

The money must be placed into an envelope and placed in the red Bear Folder. We advise against sending cash because we cannot be responsible for it before your child arrives at school.

B. Please do not let your child bring any money to school unless the teacher requests it.

C. We do collect supply/activity money. Each teacher will send home a supply list of items for you to purchase for your child. Please send these items to school as soon as possible.

D. Please do not send a check unless you are positive you have funds to cover the amount of the check. If at any time you give us an NSF check, we are required to collect \$25.00 NSF charge from you and we will ask you to make all future payments in cash.

VIII. Cafeteria Policies

A. Lunch charges are payable in advance by the week or month. Checks should be made payable to "**E.B.R.P. School Food Service**".

B. Lunch payments must be kept current by the week or the month. Partial payments will not be accepted. If there is a problem with lunch payments, please contact our cafeteria manager. Application for free or reduced lunch may be made at any time during the year.

C. If a parent is one month late in paying their child's lunch money, a notification will be sent and it will be necessary to provide a bag lunch for your child until the past due bill is paid in full. Please note that it is the responsibility of the parent to provide for the child's lunch. This lunch may not be a commercially prepared lunch (McDonald's, Church's, etc.).

D. Our cafeteria manager will notify you at the beginning of each month of your lunch balance.

IX. Medication Policy

A. As general principle, medications should not be given at school.

B. Students may not have medication in their possession on the school grounds.

C. Antibiotics and other short-term medications, including non-prescription drugs, should not be given at school.

D. Possible exceptions to the general policy:

1. Medication for behavior modification (i.e. Ritalin)
2. Insect sting allergy medication - must have note from physician with specific instructions.
3. Anticonvulsive medications (i.e. Dilantin, Phenobarbital)
4. Medication for serious asthmatic conditions.

Any medications given at school must be labeled with name of medication, amount to be administered, and time of administration. No more than one month supply will be kept at school (in Nurse's office) and empty bottles will be sent home at the end of the week with the child.

E. Our office must have a signed, dated note from the parent and Physician and must be updated yearly.

F. All medications must be delivered by an adult and must be in original pharmacy containers.

X. Illness

A. If your child is sick or appears to be sick, please do not send him/her to school. It is not fair to expose other children, and it could also have an adverse affect on the sick child. For parents who work and have someone else responsible for their child, please be sure we have their name and phone number so they can be contacted at any time.

B. If your child has a contagious illness, you may be requested by the principal or school nurse to send a note from your child's doctor stating that he/she is no longer contagious. Please comply with this school policy for the benefit of all of our students. Control of communicable diseases in the preschool setting takes a joint effort on the part of parents and staff.

C. We ask that you keep your child at home if he/she has had any of the symptoms listed below in the past twenty-four (24) hours:

- a. Diarrhea
- b. Contagious rashes
- c. Pink eye
- d. Vomiting

- e. Bad colds
- f. Fever

XI. Conferences, Visitation and Release Policies

A. If you wish to talk to a teacher about your child, a conference can be arranged in the mornings from 7:55 to 8:20 or in the afternoons after 3:25 or during conference week. Call the office at 346-1127, to make an appointment. The secretary will clear the date and time with the teacher(s). We encourage parents to attend conferences with their child's teacher(s).

B. If a conference is planned please let the school know in advance if the child is to remain at school or ride the bus.

C. If it is necessary for you to pick up your child during the school day, please come to the office to inform the secretary. Teachers will not release a child directly to the parent without notification from the office. This policy is for the safety of all children.

D. Parents are always welcome at Southdowns Pre-K Center. However, all visitors must sign in at the office before going into classrooms. When you sign in you will be given a VISITOR'S BADGE which must be worn while on campus. Please sign out when you leave our campus.

Visitor passes are available in the school office except during dismissal time (3:00 - 3:25). Every attempt is made by our school staff to monitor the campus carefully so that strangers have no access to the school. We can keep a secure, safe campus only if visitors are identified. When parents visit the classroom, teachers and students continue working. If a conference needs to be scheduled, please do so through the office or by sending a note to the teacher.

XII. IEPs

Each child receiving Special Education Services must have an Individual Education Program (IEP) written for him/her. By law, the parents are expected to participate in writing the I.E.P.; therefore, when contacted about your child's I.E.P., your cooperation will be appreciated. We expect parents to attend at least one conference at the school during the year.

XIII. Parent Organizations and Volunteers

Information will be sent home during the year about activities for parent participation (please see a list of 'Family Events'). Our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings are held periodically during the year. You will be notified of each meeting. We encourage you to become involved and participate in our PTO.

Parents are encouraged to take an active part in the school's program. Please feel free to join us for special parties, playtime or snack. Parent participation is a valuable component of our program.

XIV. School Uniforms and Personal Items

On May 28, 1998, the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board approved a uniform policy for all elementary school students, including Pre-K students.

The Standard Uniform:

Under the School Board policy, the uniform for elementary school students is:

Navy blue bottoms (pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers, not more than 5" above the knee), no jeans, biking shorts, tight fitting/stretch pants or sweatpants.

Burgundy shirts with a collar (turtlenecks are acceptable in winter), no t-shirts.

Navy blue and/or burgundy coats, jackets, sweaters, parkas, sweatshirts, etc. are preferred, but existing winter wear may be worn.

Closed-toed shoes/sneakers, no sandals or flip-flops.

Belts will be worn on bottoms with belt loops; shirts/blouses will be tucked in.

Approved club uniforms (scouts, 4-H, etc.) may be worn on club meeting days.

Each Friday is designated by our School Improvement Team as Spirit Day. Students may wear Southdowns T-shirts with navy blue pants OR the standard uniform on Fridays. Students may also wear Southdowns T-shirts on all approved field trips.

It is the parent's responsibility to label all clothing items and possessions, such as book bags, eye glasses, etc.

Disciplinary Procedures for students in non-compliance with the uniform policy:

- First offense: letter of reminder (warning) sent to the parent/guardian from the principal with the requirement that it be signed and returned the following day
- Second offense: telephone call by the principal to the parent/guardian
- Third offense: parent/guardian will be required to attend a conference with the principal
- Fourth offense: 1-2 days (at home or in-house) suspension with the requirement that the parent/guardian return to school with the student and participate in a conference with the principal prior to the student's return to class

XV. Class Assignments

Children are assigned to a class based upon several factors. We anticipate that your child will remain with the same teacher for the entire school year; however, due to a sudden growth in the program, it may be necessary to move your child to another class. You will receive advance notification if this becomes necessary.

XVI. Permission Slips

Please sign and promptly return all needed forms. Due to a school board policy, your child will not be allowed to participate in school-sponsored activities until the classroom teacher receives the signed form.

XVII. School Sponsored Events

Please be aware that the school discipline rules and all school policies are in effect for all school sponsored events, such as field trips, etc.

XVIII. Immunization Requirements

If your child is entering school, you must present documented proof of immunizations required by the Louisiana Law (Act No. 104/). These include the following immunizations:

DIPHTHERIA, TETANUS AND PERTUSSIS (DPT) - At least four (4) doses, fourth dose after fourth birthday.

POLIO (OPV) - At least three (3) doses, the third dose after the fourth birthday.

MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA (MMR) - Two (2) doses, first dose after 12 months of age, second dose after fourth birthday.

HIB, VARICELLA

Your child will not be allowed to register or enter school without proper documentation of completed immunization, or documented proof that immunizations have been started and are in progress. This documentation must be obtained from your private doctor, county or parish health unit.

Any contra-indications for medical or religious reasons must be noted and brought to the attention of the principal and school nurse.

A. Medical Reasons - A signed statement from a private physician must be presented at the time of registration or school entry.

B. Religious Reasons - A written notarized letter of dissent must be presented by the parent or legal guardian at the time of registration or school entry.

XIX. School Attendance Policy

We encourage and expect all students to attend school on a regular basis. If your child has five (5) or more unexcused consecutive absences, we are required to report your child to the Child Welfare and Attendance Supervisor. Please be aware that you will receive a letter from the Child Welfare Office which will state the attendance policies and consequences for students who experience frequent unexcused absences. This is according to current school board policy and state attendance laws. The Child Welfare and Attendance Office in cooperation with The Office of Family Services and School Principals will begin assisting AFDC recipients in determining their eligibility to remain active in order to continue to receive cash benefits or to be terminated from the AFDC rolls. Please be aware that school attendance records may be reviewed by the AFDC office to determine the number of absences of your child.

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System's attendance policy is:

1. All students have the right to attend school until graduation, provided they are not expelled because of their conduct.

2. Students may be excused for whole or partial day absences for the following reasons:

- a. Personal illness
- b. Serious illness in the student's immediate family
- c. Death in the student's immediate family
- d. Recognized religious holidays of the student's own faith
- e. Natural catastrophe and/or disasters

3. Students granted excused absences for the above reasons should be allowed to make up any schoolwork, which was missed.

Responsibilities of families include:

1. Regular attendance in school is expected of all students.
2. Written statements from a parent, legal guardian or physician stating reasons for absences shall be given to

proper school personnel within five (5) school days after the student returns to school.

After five (5) school days, the absence will have to be excused by the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance.

XX. Toy Policy - Parents are asked not to allow their child to bring toys, candy or gum to school.

XXI. Extended Day Program - Our school offers an extended day program. Both before and after school care is provided. Activities include daily snacks, sports, games, and arts and crafts. Additional information will be sent home.

XXII. Staff Development Days - The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board has developed a Comprehensive Staff Development Plan. All staff members will be participating in parish-wide staff development and staff training. As a part of this, all students will be dismissed at 12:15 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month.

XXIII. Communication - Our staff recognizes the importance of communication between the school and home. In an attempt to keep you informed of the school activities, we will send home a bimonthly newsletter and calendar. Your child's teacher will send home a Weekly Classroom News listing important events. Please be aware the dates are subject to change and we ask you to regularly check your child's Weekly Classroom News letter for any changes. Our school website is current and is also a great source of information about our program.

XXIV. Suggestion Box - Our staff welcomes any parental suggestions, comments and concerns. Please feel free to place your comments in the suggestion box that is located in the hall adjacent to the administrative office.

XXV. Inclusion and Reverse Mainstreaming Policy/Philosophy - Our staff recognizes that children learn best from each other in a nurturing, appropriate learning environment. To that means, our students with special needs often spend educational time in our pre-k classes and/or our pre-k students are "mainstreamed" into our special education classes. Inclusion is a practice that is endorsed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

XXVI. Pet Policy - Classes are allowed to have small animals, such as fish, birds, hamsters, etc. They are not allowed to have larger animals, such as cats and dogs. Our students health needs will always be considered before placing any pet in the classrooms. If a student is allergic to pet dander, fur, etc., the teacher will not be allowed to have a class pet.

XXVII. Curriculum - Our school implements and follows all state and parish mandated curriculums. We are currently implementing the East Baton Rouge Parish Pre-K curriculum and Open Court Reading Program.

XXVIII. Guidance and Discipline - Our staff recognizes that all children need and respond to appropriate guidance techniques. We utilize the following strategies to guide children's behavior: positive reinforcement (including praise and encouragement), using natural and logical consequences and time-out.

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

- 1st nine weeks - October 15-16, 2009
- 2nd nine weeks - January 15, 2010
- 3rd nine weeks - March 26, 2010
- 4th nine weeks - May 18-19, 2010

Staff Development Days:

August 19, 2009
September 16, 2009
October 21, 2009
November 18, 2009
December 16, 2009
January 20, 2010
February 17, 2010
March 17, 2010
April 21, 2010

Our school office will send home notices prior to each early release day.

Please check our school website often for reminders and updates. You will also have an opportunity to view many of our school activities on the website.