

# Parent Handbook 2024-25



**REGINA**  
**CATHOLIC**  
EDUCATION CENTER

## Regina Early Childhood Center

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(319) 383-1017

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# Welcome

Regina Early Childhood Center was established in 1989 as a way to welcome our youngest learners into the Regina community. Since our inception, we have worked to surpass any standards set by law and provide the highest quality early education experience.

Preschool-aged children are creative and receptive. Our Early Childhood Center strives to nurture and encourage these qualities in all children who walk through our doors. Our program reflects the belief that every activity in which your child invests time will teach him or her something in return, both in skill and value.

Our primary purpose is to provide an exceptional education based in the Christian faith - our whole-child approach includes the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, moral, and religious development of each child. We utilize evidence-based early childhood education curriculum guided by our professional expertise in child development.

Our caring staff provide a safe and comfortable environment where your child is met right where they are at. Your child can be their own person, work at their own pace, and in their own style. Each child is respected for being their individual self with a special place in God's world.

We welcome you to visit our busy, sometimes noisy, creative classrooms to see the children at play. I look forward to working with you and sharing in the growth and development of your child.

Sincerely,

*Michala D. Cox*

Michala Cox, Director

# Philosophy and Objectives

At Regina Early Childhood Center, we believe that ***growth takes love***. Learning through love promotes loving to learn. We provide a warm, nurturing environment where children are valued, respected, and feel important in the world. Every person in the world possesses a unique individuality, not simply for mere existence, but to fulfill a distinct purpose. Each child, created by God, must be recognized and accepted as an individual with his/her unique qualities, needs, and pattern of growth.

Regina Early Childhood Center provides a positive learning environment enhancing the child's social, emotional, physical, and spiritual development. We seek to prepare students socially and academically for kindergarten by encouraging exploration of their world through creative art, literature, music, food preparation, self-awareness, and play. Further, our pre-kindergarten programs provide your child with an environment parallel to the security and love of your family. Our caring and qualified staff work to aid your child in developing independence and self-control, while gaining new knowledge and friendships.

Collaboration must exist between the administration, teachers, and family to provide the best possible learning experience for our children.

Regina Catholic Education Center, as a complete body, seeks to make their unique contribution to a God-centered education in the development of Roman Catholic tradition in a changing society. Guided by this philosophy, our objective is to aid each child in their unique development, focusing on these goals:

1. Foster a love of learning that lasts throughout the child's academic career
2. Develop self-worth and positive feelings about themselves
3. Impart an understanding of the feelings and rights of others
4. Grow in an appreciation of God's love
5. Provide a safe, stimulating environment where children can learn through a variety of teacher and child-initiated activities

# Curriculum

Regina Early Childhood Center seeks to provide a diverse and exciting learning experience through a variety of means and methods including both instructor-led and child-initiated activities.

Our pre-kindergarten programs implement the Creative Curriculum, a rigorous, evidence-based framework of study that is developmentally-appropriate while meeting the needs of individual learners. This curriculum features inquiry, exploration, and discovery as the foundation of all learning. Daily learning objectives cover 9 major developmental areas of:

- Social-emotional
- Physical
- Language
- Cognitive
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies
- Art and Music

The first five years of life lay the foundation for all future learning and development – so focus on foundational skills and how they build upon each other to support children’s development and learning through the early elementary grades.

Religion is an integral part of our everyday routine at Regina. We pray to begin our day, before our meals, and as part of our morning meeting.

We follow *Stories of God’s Love*, a Scripture-based approach that presents the Bible through developmentally-appropriate stories that connect to students’ everyday lives. This curriculum is family-focused with weekly stories to take home, helping children and their families connect to learning at school.

Language enrichment is also part of our daily routine. Lessons and songs introduce both Spanish and American Sign Language to familiarize students with different types of communication.

# Facility

Located within the Regina Catholic Education Center, our newly-renovated Early Childhood Center held its grand opening in August 2022. We have four classrooms that encompass preschool and pre-kindergarten programs. Our Early Childhood Center also includes an outdoor playground, a dedicated cafeteria room for snacks and lunch, a Large Motor Classroom for indoor physical activity and movement, a STEM classroom, and a Nature Explore Classroom for outdoor exploration and gardening.

Between 7:30-8:30 am, students may be dropped off at the Early Childhood Center entrance. Parents and authorized pick-up persons may use a biometric reader or assigned PIN and Passcode to enter the Early Childhood Center hallway. This process ensures that all students are signed in and out of the school each day. After 8:30 am, all visitors must enter through the Elementary school entrance before proceeding to the Early Childhood Center.

# Personnel

Regina has at least one full-time lead teacher and one full-time assistant teacher assigned to each classroom. Each lead teacher is required to have childcare experience or have a degree in elementary education or early childhood. The lead teacher is responsible for planning and implementing daily lesson plans. The assistant teacher is under the direct supervision of the lead teacher and Director. Assistant teachers are responsible for assisting with the daily activities in the classroom and the supervision of children.

Regina Early Childhood Center utilizes the following minimum requirements to guide our adult - to - child ratios:

<u>AGE</u>	<u>MINIMUM RATIO PER DHS</u>	<u>REGINA'S RATIO</u>
3 years	one adult to every 10 children	one adult to every eight children
4 years	one adult to every 12 children	one adult to every ten children
5 years	one adult to every 12 children	one adult to every ten children

Regina Early Childhood Center’s total capacity is 106 children. The following is the maximum number of children allowed in each classroom:

<b>CLASSROOM</b>	<b>STUDENTS</b>
Lambs	30
Lions	24
Doves	24
Eagles (Pre-K only)	22

## Volunteers

We welcome volunteers to join our classrooms for field trips and celebrations. If you would like to volunteer, please see the Director to complete the necessary paperwork as required by our licensing agency. We encourage parents and family members to participate in Regina Early Childhood Center activities as much as possible. This may include opportunities such as reading to the children, assisting with field trips, preparing materials for activities, or providing treats for special celebrations. Signing in and out of the ECC is necessary for all volunteers. All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age and sign a statement indicating:

1. Whether or not the potential volunteer has been convicted of any law in any state or any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse in any state. All volunteers must pass both state and national criminal record and child & dependent adult abuse registry checks. Regina Inter-Parish Catholic Education Center is a Diocesan Entity in the Diocese of Davenport. Therefore, all volunteers are also required to complete a 1-hour online training titled, *Protecting God’s Children*, as well as a separate background check through CMGConnect.
2. Whether or not they have a communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of children.
3. They have been informed of their responsibility as a mandatory reporter of child abuse.

## Open-Door Policy

Parents are encouraged to visit their child at Regina at any time. Our open-door policy states that parents may visit or pick up their child during our hours of operation.

When parental contact is prohibited, the custodial parent must provide Regina ECC with a written court order documenting the restriction. If the restricted parent were to arrive at Regina, the court order would allow us to receive police intervention while asking that parent to vacate the premises. If no court order is on file at Regina, we are only able to inform the custodial parent that the restricted person is at Regina - however, we are unable to physically stop the person from taking the child.

## Playground & Outdoor Play Safety

Regina ECC has an outdoor playground dedicated to early childhood play and large motor development. The outdoor environment is inspected monthly for safety hazards, broken equipment, or items in need of repair. Daily safety checks are completed by staff that include attention to safety hazards such as broken bottles or toys, discarded cigarettes, stinging insect nests, and packed surfacing under slides. Fall surfacing must be sufficient so that injuries do not occur around high-traffic areas (i.e., swings, slides, climbers). Each year, an individual trained in playground inspection (typically our county's Nurse Consultant) completes an audit of our play areas both indoors and outdoors.

Supervision outside on the playground is critical. Staff are instructed to position themselves on opposite sides of the playground in order to reduce blind spots and increase active supervision.

## Licensing

Regina Early Childhood Center is fully-licensed under the Iowa Department of Human Services. A copy of the Iowa Department of Human Services Licensing Standards and Procedures is available on the Department of Human Services website. If there are questions about these standards or practices, please contact our DHS licensing consultant:

### **Heidi Brown**

315 Iowa Ave, Suite 2  
Muscatine, Iowa 52761



(515) 631-8846

Email: [hbrown@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:hbrown@dhs.state.ia.us)

### **Child Care Complaint Hotline**

(844) 786-1296

## **Enrollment Procedures**

Regina Early Childhood Center admits children regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or religion. Children who are between the ages of 3–5 years are eligible to enroll. Admission requirements and enrollment procedures are as follows:

1. When limiting enrollment in educational programs of the Diocese of Davenport the following priorities shall be used:
  - a. Siblings of currently enrolled Regina students
  - b. New students from supporting parish(es)
  - c. New students: non-parishioner Catholic
  - d. All other new students
2. Applications will be accepted until February 1st of the upcoming academic year. At that time, applications will be reviewed and sorted according to enrollment priorities. Programs will be filled according to the above tiers and by date of application.
  - a. A complete application includes the required inquiry form and a \$100 non-refundable application fee. Incomplete applications will not be processed.
3. Notification of acceptance or waitlist will be sent after February 15th for the upcoming academic year. Applications received after February 15th will be placed in the appropriate tier in order of receipt.
4. Children must be fully toilet trained to be admitted into Regina Early Childhood Center.
  - a. Student must independently use the toilet for both urinating and stooling, and communicates to others that they need to use the restroom (see full criteria below).
5. All necessary (DHS-required) forms, such as medical and immunization records, must be completed and on file in the ECC office prior to the first day of the child's attendance.
6. As vacancies occur during the year, they are filled from the waiting list according to the above procedures.

Families will be provided a Registration Packet to be completed prior to a child being enrolled in our programs. This packet includes:

- Electronic Application
- Registration Forms:
  - Health Promotion Forms: Emergency Medical Consent, Medical Information, Pick up Permission Forms
  - CACFP Enrollment Document
  - Dietary Modification Form (if applicable)
  - Emergency Action Plan (if applicable)
  - Letter of Financial Agreement
  - Regina Emergency Communication Form
- Family Handbook
- Tuition Express Form
- Physical and Immunization records - updated annually and signed by the student's healthcare provider
- Procure Parent Engagement App Registration Instructions

This information must be collected, along with a \$100 non-refundable application fee, prior to your child's first day. Periodically, Regina will request that this information be updated. Failure to update the required forms when asked to do so may result in suspension of a child's enrollment. For a child to remain enrolled it is also expected that account balances be paid in full by the 10th of each month during the academic year.

If a family needs assistance completing the necessary paperwork, understanding communication from Regina Early Childhood Center, or finding services or resources in the community, please contact the Director or Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral and/or the Department of Human Services.

Regina Early Childhood Center prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, or sexual orientation.

If you will be withdrawing your student from Regina Early Childhood Center, you are required to submit a 30-day written notice to the Director. Full tuition will be charged for the 30 days prior to a student's withdrawal

## Toilet Training

Regina Early Childhood Center does not assist in teaching children how and when to use the toilet. Our staff are not allowed to change pull-ups or disposable diapers. All children must meet the following definition of toilet training in order to be admitted to our programs:

*Student must independently pull pants and cloth underwear up and down. Student uses the toilet for both urinating and stooling. Student uses toilet paper to clean themselves independently after using the toilet. Student recognizes when they need to use the toilet and uses words to communicate to someone that they need to use the toilet.*

Regina acknowledges that accidents do sometimes occur after toilet training is completed, and therefore does not believe in disciplining children when this occurs.

If a student is admitted to Regina ECC but upon entry does not meet the above criteria, the student's admission may be deferred. There is a one-month trial period from the child's first day at Regina to determine if the student is fully toilet-trained. Should the student not demonstrate success, the Director reserves the right to defer admission until the next academic year.

## Photography Release

As part of new student enrollment, families will complete a photography release for use on social media, classroom projects, and on our website for the purpose of promoting our Center. No financial benefits from the use of photos will be paid. Families may opt out of photos.

## Health Promotion Documents

The enrollment packet contains the health forms that Regina is required to keep in each child's confidential file. Parents are responsible for reporting to Regina any changes to these health documents when they occur. Parents will be asked to update these forms prior to each academic year and as they change.

Regina requests that parents provide the following information:

- Names and contact information of the student's physician and dentist
- Name of local hospital that the family wishes a student will be taken to in the event of an emergency
- Consent to obtain emergency medical care
- A current physical record, signed by the child's healthcare provider
- A current immunization record, printed on an Iowa Immunization Certificate, and signed by a healthcare provider ensuring compliance with Iowa's immunization laws for childcare.

## Accommodations of Special Needs

Regina Early Childhood Center believes in providing the best possible educational experience for all students. This includes children that may need some special needs requirements providing reasonable accommodations. That being said, we are unable to provide support for some children who need assistance addressing behavioral concerns or assistance from a health professional. Regina ECC will work closely with the child's family and support professionals to decide whether admission is appropriate.

## Dismissal Procedures

Sometimes our early childhood programs are not the most beneficial environment for a child. If a child is exhibiting consistently disruptive or dangerous behavior, we may ask you to withdraw your child.

No child will be withdrawn from our Center without conferences between parents, teachers, and the Director. Parents are asked to provide one month's notice if and when they choose to withdraw from the program.

If a child demonstrates a pattern of aggressive behaviors that injures other children or adults and requires regular removal from group activities, the child may be dismissed from ECC programs. No child shall be dismissed from our programs without first collaborating with the child and family to reach a workable solution to improve behavioral problems. If unacceptable or dangerous behavior continues, a notification of dismissal will be given to the parents. In the event that a child's behavior is threatening the safety of the children in our ECC or impedes the learning and developmental process of the group, the Director will recommend that the child be removed immediately. All efforts will be made to avoid this outcome.

If monthly tuition fees are not paid within the time allotment and notices of late payment are ignored, your child may be dismissed from the Early Childhood Center as per agreement within the financial agreement form. Regina Early Childhood Center reserves the right to dismiss a child at any time.

## Our Schedule

### Hours of Operation

**Regina Early Childhood Center is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 am - 5:30 pm.**

Our designated preschool and pre-kindergarten programming takes place from 8:30 - 11:30 am each day, Monday through Friday. Parents can choose for their student to attend preschool/pre-k only programming, or add a wrap-around care option to their program.

The wrap-around care option allows parents to drop off their students as early as 7:30 am, and pick their child up no later than 5:30 pm. Preschool/pre-k only drop-off time is between 8:15 - 8:30 am and pick up is between 11:30 - 11:40 am.

There are four program options for preschool and pre-kindergarten:

Preschool/Pre-k only, MWF	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Preschool/Pre-k only, M-F	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Preschool/Pre-k + wrap-around, MWF	7:30 am - 5:30 pm
Preschool/Pre-k + wrap-around, M-F	7:30 am - 5:30 pm

## After Hours Drop-Off/Pick Up

Drop-off prior to 7:30 am is not allowed, and all children must be picked up by 5:30 pm. Families who drop off prior to 7:30 am or pick up after 5:30 pm will be charged a fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child. The Department of Human Services will be contacted for children not picked up by 6:00 pm.

## Closures

Regina Early Childhood Center will generally follow the Elementary School academic calendar. Please follow our Early Childhood Center Calendar for details concerning center closures. Generally, the Center will be closed on:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Spring Break
- Good Friday (noon dismissal)
- Easter Monday
- The entire week prior to Summer Camp
- Independence Day
- The entire 2 weeks after Summer Camp
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving holiday break
- The entire 2 weeks of Christmas break
- And any other scheduled teacher in-service days as noted on the Regina Academic Calendar.

## Winter Weather Cancellations, Delays, and Early Dismissals

Regina Early Childhood Center will follow the Regina Education Center's emergency closure procedures. If the Elementary School is closed due to inclement weather, the ECC will also close. Generally, Regina will follow the Iowa City Public School dismissal/cancellation notices for weather. Please sign up for Regina Powerschool notices via text/call to stay up to date.

If the Elementary School is delayed, morning preschool programs will be canceled. The wrap-around care program will begin at 10:00 AM on delayed school days. If the Elementary School is dismissed early due to weather conditions, the Early Childhood Center will dismiss 30-45 minutes prior to the Elementary dismissal time to ensure that safety is maintained in the parking lots. Look for communication via email and Procure from the Director on these days.

# Tuition

Tuition is due monthly on the 10th day of each month. No refunds will be issued for illness, vacations, snow days, etc. This means that tuition will be due during the academic calendar year each month regardless of breaks or closures and will not be prorated. Regina Early Childhood Center does not currently accept childcare assistance from the Iowa Department of Human Services.

As a parent, it is important that tuition is paid on time. In the event that tuition payments are late, parents will be given up to one month to make restitution. If, after one month, payment has not been made, you will be asked to withdraw your child from Regina Early Childhood Center. Tuition rates for the 2024-25 school year are as follows:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Monthly Tuition Rate</b>
<b>Pre-K only – 3 days</b> 8:30 am – 11:30 am Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays	\$310
<b>Pre-K only – 5 days</b> 8:30 am – 11:30 am Monday – Friday	\$530
<b>Pre-K + wrap-around care – 3 days</b> 7:30 am – 5:30 pm Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays	\$880
<b>Pre-K + wrap-around care – 5 days</b> 7:30 am – 5:30 pm Monday – Friday	\$1265

# Board of Education

The Regina Board of Education is the governing body of the Regina Inter-Parish Catholic Education Center as of July 1, 2022. The Board consists of three representatives from each of the four parishes and the pastor from each parish. Ex-officio non-voting members include the five program administrators. The Bishop is president, one pastor acts as “Provost,” who is a member of the executive committee and signs legal documents with the chairperson. The legal name of our institution is “Regina Inter-Parish Catholic Education Center.” The functions of the Board of Education are to:

- Ensure that the operation of the Regina Inter-Parish Catholic Education Center complies with the laws of the State and with diocesan policy and is in accord with the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.
- Develop the budget for the Regina Inter-Parish Catholic Education Center.
- Oversee the collection and disbursement of financial resources necessary for the operation of the Regina Inter-Parish Catholic Education Center.
- Provide and maintain the facilities necessary to meet the educational goals of the Center.
- Determine and implement a long-range plan for the Center.
- Formulate and adopt general, educational, and financial policies that will guide the administration and enable the Center to function efficiently and in such a manner as to maximize educational opportunities and enhance the quality of education provided.
- Conduct an educational evaluation of the performance of the President.

## Board Committees

Regina Inter-Parish Catholic Education Center's board committees help Regina implement many of the areas listed above and are open to any interested parent. Please contact the school administrators or any board member if you are interested in serving on any of these committees: Communication, Education, Finance, Policy/By-Laws, Building and Grounds, Strategic Planning, Faith Formation, and Health Safety. Further information on these committees is contained in the Regina Elementary Handbook or by inquiry to the Business Office.

## Notice of Nondiscrimination

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment with schools in the Diocese of Davenport are hereby notified that the schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability as defined in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning schools' compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, and Title IX, of the Civil Rights Laws, the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 is directed to contact: Tiara Hatfield, Human Resource Coordinator, who has been designated to coordinate the schools' efforts to comply with the regulations related to these laws.

**Contact:**



Tiara Hatfield, Director of Human Resources and Risk Management  
780 W. Central Park Ave., Davenport, Iowa 52804-1901  
Phone: (563) 888-4366

### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement (Revised 2-15-23)**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **Mail:**  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250-9410; or
2. **Fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:** [Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

## **Suggestions, Compliments, and Grievance Procedures**

We encourage you to provide us with insight and suggestions throughout the year. One of our objectives at Regina is to help parents, teachers, administration, Board of Education, and lay board members to develop into a "family." A family is defined as a

group of people united by a common philosophy and a common set of beliefs and goals. At Regina, these beliefs are encompassed within the Catholic faith - the philosophy is based on the Christian belief to love one's neighbor - the goal is to educate the children in the fundamentals of the Catholic faith within the context of life experience.

Open communication is vital to the health of the Regina community. However, a family is more than a group of people who can converse in a civil manner. The Catholic school family is bound together by Christian love. This love allows the family to effectively address problems and resolve conflicts without any single member being harmed. Further, it fosters the growth of each member's spirit, faith, and self-image, thereby improving the individual's ability to navigate through our world.

*"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over..." Matthew 18:15*

A family promotes love and goodwill through a continual series of simple gestures, such as greetings, compliments, concern for one another, sharing, listening, and helping. When conflict arises in these settings, there is concern for individuals and a willingness to resolve the conflict without harm. The suggested format for conflict grievance procedures for teachers/employees, administrators, and board members is contained within the Elementary Handbook found online.

## Program Activities

Each classroom at Regina Early Childhood Center establishes and implements a written plan of daily activities. The objective of the program of daily activities is to foster incremental developmental progress. Written plans are posted outside of each classroom door. All ECC classrooms follow the same daily routines and sequences of activities (e.x., coats away, bathroom/wash hands, sign in), but the routine is tailored to each age group and their developmental needs. A planned but flexible schedule allows children to make decisions about their activities and fosters both independence and creative expression.

Our daily activities include:

- Structured and unstructured activities
- Teacher-directed and child-initiated experiences
- Family involvement
- Indoor and outdoor exploration
- Active and quiet activities

- Individual and group times
- Health, safety, and nutrition instruction

## Scheduled Rest Periods

Regina Early Childhood Center provides an opportunity for, but does not require, sleep and rest for students who enroll in the wrap-around care program. We make available a regularly scheduled rest period from 1 pm - 2:15 pm each day. Each student is assigned a cot and will need to bring their own “cot cover.” Cot covers may be purchased from Regina or families may purchase their own. Cot covers must accompany the child to school on a Monday, and will be sent home each Friday afternoon to be washed. Students are able to bring their own comfort object with them for rest time. For children who are unable to sleep, Regina ECC provides time and space for quiet play.

## Classroom Groupings and Transitions

Regina Early Childhood Center’s classrooms are largely grouped by age and consist of children in similar developmental stages. Students will stay in their assigned classroom through the entirety of the academic year. With that in mind, we believe that each child is an individual who develops at their own unique pace. If in an extenuating circumstance Regina ECC staff agree that a student shows developmental readiness for a different classroom and it is in the child’s best interest, we would suggest a transition to another classroom at the end of a semester.

Some children take more time to feel comfortable with a new setting and different routines, whether they are transitioning to Regina for the first time or transitioning to another room within our ECC. If a child is having a difficult time transitioning to the new classroom, both parents and teachers will work together to individualize the process.

## Technology Usage and Communication

Regina Early Childhood Center uses the Procure Parent Engagement app as a primary communication tool with families. Email is a secondary communication method. Classroom teachers use iPads to take photos and send information to families throughout the day via the Procure App. Each classroom also has a Smart Panel installed that is used for movement activities, music, and other educational activities.

Regina Early Childhood Center schedules parent-teacher conferences both in the fall and in the spring. Parents may request a formal conference at any time during the year.

Regina Catholic Education Center utilizes PowerSchool K-12 software for both emergency and non-emergency messages related to school closing, late arrival, early dismissal, and other miscellaneous notification messages from the school or extracurricular staff. When enrolling in the ECC, families will be given the opportunity to register for text/phone/email notifications from this software. It is important to keep contact information current and complete in PowerSchool so the message center is using the most up-to-date information.

## Supervision

Teachers directly supervise preschool children by sight and sound at all times, even when the children are in sleeping areas. Teachers will regularly count children on a scheduled basis, at every transition, and whenever leaving one area and arriving at another, to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times. Developmentally appropriate adult:child ratios are maintained at all times during hours of operation, including indoor and outdoor play as well as field trips.

If a child is noted to be missing from the group, the teacher will ask for the help of the Director as well as building administrators to find the child. An administrator will page throughout the building and ask for everyone to search their classrooms and the administration will check the playgrounds, offices, bathrooms, and dining areas. After a search of the building is complete, if the child is not found, the Iowa City Police Department and the child's emergency contacts will be notified. The Director will notify the DHS Childcare Licensing Consultant that a child is missing. The teacher assigned to the child will be placed on immediate suspension. The future of those person's employment at Regina Catholic Education Center will be dependent upon the findings from the DHS investigation, the circumstances, and the safety level of the child when he/she was found.

## Field Trips

Activities outside the Early Childhood Center will require a separate permission form. This form will include all relevant information about the field trip including the means of transportation and will require a parent/guardian signature. Regina transportation policies will be followed on each field trip. If a parent or family member would like to attend the field trip as a volunteer, they will be required to complete a volunteer statement before attending the field trip and provide proof of identification. Attendance records and emergency contact information must be with the group at all times when leaving campus.

Regina contracts with a bussing company to transport students to and from field trips. Staff to child ratios are maintained while being transported to and from field trip locations. Any driver who transports students for Regina Early Childhood Center must be at least 21 years of age and must have:

- A valid driver's license that authorizes the driver to operate the bus being driven.
- No record of substance abuse or conviction for crimes of violence or child abuse.
- No alcohol or other drugs associated with impaired ability to drive within 12 hours prior to transporting students. Drivers ensure that any prescription drugs taken will not impair their ability to drive.
- No criminal record of crimes against or involving children, child neglect or abuse, or any crime of violence.

## Family - Staff Relationships

At Regina, it is our goal to develop a relationship between our staff and families to ensure that our school environment is a continuation of the home environment, and vice versa. Parents and teachers are encouraged to speak freely with each other about concerns and suggestions as it relates to the student. There is a reciprocal responsibility of the family and caregiver to observe, participate, and be trained in the care that each child requires. Involved, non-custodial parents have access to the same developmental and behavioral information given to the custodial parent, if they have joint legal custody, permission by court order, or written consent from the custodial parent. Teachers should informally share with the family about their child's needs and activities. This communication primarily takes place through daily communication via Procare and verbal communication at drop-off and pick-up.

Preschool is often a student's first experience in a school setting. This experience will be most beneficial if parents and teachers develop feelings of mutual respect and trust. In such a situation, children feel a continuity of affection and concern, which facilitates their adjustment to separation.

If a parent or guardian has a concern or a need not able to be met by the classroom teacher, they should see the Director. The Director is available via in-person meeting, phone call, or email to address questions or concerns at any time.

## Parent Code of Conduct

Regina Early Childhood Center requires parents of all enrolled students to behave in a manner consistent with our values of decency, courtesy, and respect. We are a Catholic institution and our behavior as a community must reflect these shared values. Parents who violate our code of conduct will not be permitted on Regina property thereafter.

No parent is allowed to curse or use other inappropriate language on Regina property at any time, whether in the presence of children or not. Parents must be in control of their behavior at all times. Appropriate dress attire is required to pick up and drop off your children (i.e., shirts, shoes, pants pulled up above waist).

## Under the Influence

If a parent or authorized pickup person arrives at Regina Early Childhood Center and a staff member believes the person is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the staff member is required to immediately notify the Director. The Director will inform the person that they are not believed to be in a condition to care for the student and the alternate contact/emergency contact will be called. If the person chooses to leave with the student, the police will be contacted to report that an intoxicated person has left our school with a student. Both parents will be notified.

## Health and Safety Promotion

### Outdoor Play

Children will play outdoors when weather and air quality conditions do not pose a significant health risk. During cold weather, children should wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing. Outerwear such as coats should be tightly-woven and be at least water repellent. Hats, coats, and mittens should be snug at the wrist.

The National Weather Service states that weather that poses a significant health risk includes a wind chill at or below 15 degrees Fahrenheit or a heat index at or above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Air quality conditions that pose a significant health risk will be identified by announcements from local health authorities.

Children will be protected from the sun by using shade and sunscreen with UVB-ray and UVA-ray protection of SPF-50 or higher, with parental permission. Before prolonged physical activity in warm weather, children will be well-hydrated and will be encouraged to drink water during the activity. Open spaces in outdoor areas encourage children to

develop gross motor skills and fine motor play that are difficult to duplicate indoors. Nevertheless, some weather conditions make outdoor play hazardous. Teachers must protect children from adverse weather and air quality.

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Healthy Child Care Iowa has prepared a convenient color-coded guide for childcare providers to use to determine which weather conditions are comfortable for outdoor play, which require caution, and which are dangerous. Teachers should check the children for comfort every 15 minutes. When outdoor play is not permitted, we will use the Large Motor Classroom located in the Early Childhood Center. The IDPH Weather Watch guide is available at:

<https://iowaccrr.org/resources/files/BGP/232%20Weather%20Watch.pdf>

Regina also consults the Air Quality Index to determine if it is safe for children to play outside or have classroom windows open. Outdoor play time may be canceled due to poor air quality conditions: <https://www.iqair.com/us/usa/iowa/iowa-city>

## Exclusion Criteria due to Illness

Iowa Department of Health and Human Services and the Iowa Department of Public Health outline specific criteria for excluding children who are acutely ill or injured:

Temporary exclusion from our program is recommended when the student:

- Has an illness that prevents the student from participating comfortably in daily Center activities.
- Has an illness that results in a need for care that is greater than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other students.
- Has a severely ill appearance, such as lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or a rash.
- Has a fever (temperature > 100.4°F by any method) with or without behavioral changes.
- Has diarrhea, defined by stools that are more frequent or less formed for the individual student, and are not associated with changes in diet. Exclusion for diarrhea is required if the student is having accidents.

Unique circumstances requiring specific exclusion criteria include:

- Diarrhea with blood or mucus requires clearance from a healthcare professional prior to readmission.
- Vomiting in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-infectious condition and the student remains adequately hydrated. Student is excluded until 24 hours after the last vomiting episode or until a healthcare provider determines that the student is not contagious and that the student is not in danger of dehydration.

- Abdominal pain lasting more than 2 hours or intermittent pain accompanied by fever or other signs of illness.
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes, the student must be excluded until the student's healthcare provider has determined that the illness is not infectious.
- Conjunctivitis (i.e., pink eye), student is excluded until 12 hours after beginning antibiotics.
- Norovirus, student is excluded until 24 hours after diarrhea and/or vomiting cease, and until stools are formed.
- Erythema infectiosum (i.e., 5th Disease), student is excluded until fever subsides.
- Active tuberculosis, until the child's primary healthcare provider or Johnson County Public Health communicates that the student is on an appropriate treatment plan and may return to school.
- Impetigo, exclusion is required until lesions can be covered and student is undergoing treatment.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (i.e., strep throat), student must be excluded until at least 12 hours after treatment has begun.
- Head lice, excluded only if the student has not been treated after notifying parents at the end of the prior school day.
- Scabies, excluded only if the student has not been treated after notifying parents at the end of the prior school day.
- Varicella (i.e., chickenpox), exclusion is required until all lesions have dried or crusted, usually 6 days after onset and no new lesions have appeared for at least 24 hours.
- Rubella, student is excluded until 7 days after the rash appeared.
- Pertussis, student is excluded until 5 days after antibiotic treatment began.
- Mumps, student is excluded until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, student is excluded until 4 days after the onset of rash.
- Hepatitis A viral infection, student is excluded for 1 week after symptom onset or as directed by the Johnson County Public Health.
- Meningitis (bacterial), student is excluded until 24 hours after beginning antibiotics.
- Covid-19: please see the CDC website for the current isolation guidelines that align with your family situation.
- Any student who has been determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak must be excluded.

## Illness while at Regina ECC

If a student becomes ill while at school and it is determined that the student should be excluded, the following procedure will be followed:



- Immediate contact by Director or On-Site Supervisor to the parent, legal guardian, or first listed emergency contact.
- Child will be separated from the group activity to be cared for.
- Appropriate care and attention will be provided to the student until parent arrives, including a designated quiet area.
- Sanitation procedures will be executed: i.e., hand washing, disinfecting surfaces, using universal precautions.
- The student should be picked up within 90 minutes of the initial contact with parents or guardians.

At Regina ECC, the designated quiet area for students who are ill or injured is the Director's office, currently located in the northern corner of the Lambs classroom. Children will be provided a soft chair and a quiet activity while waiting for parents or pickup persons.

## Medication Administration

Regina Early Childhood Center will administer medication, prescription or over the counter, with the written authorization of a parent or guardian as well as from the prescribing physician. A medication form must be completed that includes the medication name, dosage, route of administration, time of administration desired, date to be administered, and any special instructions. All information must match with the medication label or prescription instructions. Medications will not be administered without the medication form fully completed. The medication must not be expired and will be stored in a locked container in the Director's office until administered by a staff member trained in medication administration.

If possible, we ask that parents try to schedule medication doses to be completed outside of school hours. Regina will not administer the first dose of any medication in case of reaction. Students will be monitored by a staff member after medication is administered. All medication will be returned home after the period of time written on the medication form. To ensure compliance with DHS and Iowa Health Department procedures:

Over the Counter Medication must come in the original container and must not have expired. Medication must have written dosage for the age of the student being administered the dose. Regina will not supply Ibuprofen or Tylenol. Prescription medications must be brought in the original labeled prescription container. For long-term medications, please do not send more than one month's supply at a time. For medical devices like Epi Pens or Inhalers, Regina must have a copy of the written instructions or indications for use that include signs and symptoms for when the

medication is necessary. Parents must demonstrate the device's use to all staff who will be using the device. Training will be provided annually or as needed with employee or device change.

All Epi Pens and inhalers will travel with the student's class in each classroom backpack along with include instructions for use.

## **Tobacco Use and Prohibited Substances**

Regina Catholic Education Center prohibits the use of tobacco and nicotine products including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, snuff, vape, pipes, snus, Electronic Smoking Devices, and nicotine products that are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration for smoking cessation. This regulation applies to students, employees, and visitors. These policies apply at all times and both indoors and outdoors on Regina school grounds. Those who fail to comply with these policies are required to dispose of their tobacco product or vacate Regina school grounds. Our ECC staff members are prohibited from wearing clothing that smells of smoke when working.

## Safety

At Regina, safety is at the heart of everything we do. The Early Childhood Center was completely renovated as the final phase of Regina's Capital Campaign and opened in August of 2023. Along with updated classrooms and technology, several safety features were installed. The exterior of our building is equipped with 24-7 video surveillance cameras and exterior doors that are locked on a timer. Security camera records are for Regina's internal use only in the event that recordings must be referenced.

The entrance to Regina Early Childhood Center remains locked with the exception of specific times of day: 7:30 AM – 8:30 AM for drop-off, 11:25 AM – 11:45 AM for preschool pickup, and 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM for PM pickup. If you need to access the ECC outside of these windows of time, you must enter through the Elementary School entrance where you are buzzed in through a locked door by an Elementary staff member.

## Procure Parent Engagement App

Regina Early Childhood Center uses the Procure Parent Engagement App for tuition payment, security, record-keeping, and family communication. The Procure system creates a time-stamped record of when your child is signed-in and out of the Center each day. In the registration packet, you will receive a form that requires you to set up automatic withdrawal payments through Procure. Each parent will also receive a unique 10-character code to register their child in the Procure Parent Engagement mobile app. Once your child is registered, you can edit their profile (i.e., allergies, medications) and authorized pickup persons. Our staff use Procure in the classroom for photo sharing, messaging, and communication about lesson plans and class activities.

Inside the Early Childhood Center hallway, there is a second set of locked doors that provides an extra layer of security for our youngest students. Next to the door, there is an electronic sign-in station mounted to the wall. Each authorized pickup person is assigned a unique four-digit PIN number and a unique four-digit PASSCODE that is required for signing in and out each student every day. You must enter the pin and passcode for the door to unlock.

Procedures for drop-off and pick-up are as follows:

1. Enter your pin/passcode at the sign-in station inside the Early Childhood Center entrance door. Press “Sign-in” or “Sign-out.”
2. The hallway door will unlock.
3. Walk your child into their classroom to meet their teacher.

\*Please note, drop off occurs between 7:30-8:30 each day. All families (including Lambs) will drop at the Early Childhood Center door utilizing their pin/passcode.

To pick up your student:

1. Enter your pin/passcode at the sign-in station inside the Early Childhood Center entrance door. Press “Sign-in” or “Sign-out.”
2. The hallway door will unlock.
3. Pick up your child from their classroom. For PM program, you may pick up outside on the playground or in the Lions classroom.

If you do not remember your pin and passcode, you may contact the Elementary office or the Director. Parents may add/remove authorized pickup persons at any time by notifying the Director.

## Dietary Modifications

Regina Early Childhood Center serves a morning snack, hot lunch, and an afternoon snack as included in the monthly tuition fee. All meals served align with the State of Iowa's Child and Adult Care Food Program standards for healthy foods. We are consistently working to incorporate cultural foods into our meals that reflect the traditions of our students. All of our meals are served family style - this means that students get practice setting the table, serving themselves, and pouring their own milk. Lunch time begins at 12:00 PM and typically lasts around 45 minutes to provide children enough time to serve themselves and eat without pressure. Snack and lunch menus are sent home the week prior to a new month beginning.

At Regina, families have the ability to bring homemade snacks and treats for special events and birthdays. We encourage parents to be mindful of the food allergies that exist within their student's classroom.

If a dietary modification is necessary based upon an individual student's needs, Regina will make every effort to accommodate the child's needs in cooperation with the student's family and medical provider. If food must be provided from home, it should be stored in a safe container, such as a lunch box, and must meet the CACFP nutritional requirements for the intended meal. Each student with a dietary modification must complete a Dietary Modification Form to keep in the student's file. Students with food allergies must provide the school a valid Allergy Action Plan completed by the student's healthcare provider.

## Emergency Procedures

To obtain DHS licensure, Regina Early Childhood Center is required to create and maintain an emergency response preparedness plan. This plan includes emergency contact information, a risk assessment, evacuation and lockdown procedures, and parent reunification plans.

In the event of an emergency, students and adults will evacuate to one of the designated safe areas on Regina's campus unless instructed to evacuate off site by emergency personnel. Parents will be notified via phone call and text the reunification location and procedure in the event of an emergency. In all emergency situations, our

emergency backpacks with emergency contact information, student medications, Center cell phone, and first aid kits will remain with students.

Each month, our Center conducts fire and tornado practice drills. Twice per year, we practice intruder situations. These drills are helpful for students to learn where the exits are and where the safe location is in the event of an emergency.