

The Lunchbox Press

Sept. 2024

GODDARD CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

WWW.NASAGCDC.ORG



In just a few short weeks, we will begin our 52nd school year at NASA Goddard Child Development Center (GCDC). We are entering the year with pride and enthusiasm. We were able to accomplish so much last school year. Among those accomplishments were hiring more qualified and credentialed staff, increased content instruction, addition of Yoga instruction, revitalization of the parent committee, securing grant funding and improved communication practices.

In this edition of [The Lunchbox Press](#), we introduce our dynamic GCDC's 2024-2025 staff. It's always better when you know just a little more about the person that educates and cares for your child each day. After reading the staff bios, we hope that you'll have a better sense of our education, background, and philosophies.

You'll also find some important reminders for the school year. We know that when parents and teachers work together, children greatly benefit. We have highlighted some of our key reminders. More detailed information about the operation of our program can be found in the GCDC Parent Handbook. Parents were given instructions for downloading this document during enrollment. If you need those instructions again or would prefer a hard copy, please see a member of the administrative team.

If I could offer GCDC parents one piece of advice for the school year, it would be to become involved in your child's education at an early age. It's at this time that you teach your children how much you value their education. One of the best ways of going about this is to allow your child(ren) to see you involved in a variety of ways. Children are very literal people; they learn what's important by how we as adults invest our time. Then I encourage you to continue to invest time in your child's education for as long as they are students. This is one investment with a guaranteed payoff.

I am excited about the 2024-2025 school year and all that we have to offer your children. This is the best place for your children because we are equally focused on your child's care as well as their education.

Leona Adams
GCDC Program Director

DID YOU KNOW

You can now sign up for volunteer hours for the full school year. Some items listed in our database include:

Classroom Laundry

Painting

Event Photographer

Making Ice Packs

Shelving Library Books

Etc.....

More items will be added throughout the school year.

Sign up coming soon!

2024-2025 1st Semester at a Glance

DATE	EVENT
Aug 26-30	GCDC Closed (Teacher Inservice)
Sept 1	GCDC Closed (Federal Holiday)
Sept 2	First Day of School
Sep 9	Program Tour
Sept 17	Back to School Night 5:15pm-6:30pm
Sept 23	Fall Picture Day
Sept 27	Pre-K Zoo Trip
Oct 8	Tentative Fire Truck Visit
Oct 14	GCDC Closed (Federal Holiday)
Oct 25	PS3 Field Trip Children's Museum
Oct 29	Visit from the Petting Farm
Oct 31	Fall Festival/Harvest Hunting
Nov 11	GCDC Closed (Federal Holiday)
Nov 14	Blue Sky Puppet Show
Nov 28-29	Closed Thanksgiving Holiday
Dec 11	PS4 Field Trip National Children's Museum
Dec 16-20	Culture Celebrations
Dec 23	GCDC ½ Day (1:00-5:30)
Dec 24-1 st	GCDC Closed for Winter Break

NEWS FROM THE NASA GCDC Board of Directors

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! 🎉 We are thrilled to embark on this exciting journey with you and your children. As we step into September, we look forward to seeing the bright, smiling faces of our little ones and families. Our GCDC Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is eager to support and engage with you throughout the year. Together, we will create and share in this dynamic learning experience. Let's make this school year memorable and full of growth. Thank you for your continued support and involvement. Here's to a fantastic year ahead! ✨



HOMESWORK

Teachers in the Milky Way, Shooting Stars, and Constellations are required to assign homework each Friday. Other classrooms may assign homework as well. This homework will be a developmentally appropriate activity that:

- Helps to practice or expand concepts taught in class.
- Allows parents to become involved and better understand how well your child understands the given concept.
- Gets children in the habit of doing homework and turning it in on time.

We ask that you support your child in doing their homework and turning it in on time. We also recommend that you keep the following supplies on hand to support homework throughout the school year:

- Child-sized, blunt scissors
- Crayons (8 count primary colors, the fat ones)
- Primary Pencil (the fat one)
- Primary paper
- Glue
- Pencil box for storage of supplies



It's always a good idea to help children to form good habits at an early age. With that in mind, we suggest that you keep the supplies in a consistent place, have children do homework at the same time and place each day and you become engaged.

Homework assignments should not take more than 15-20 minutes each night. If it takes longer, you should stop and pick up the next day. If you do this throughout this school year, our children will advance at a greater rate and develop good habits that will serve them well throughout the rest of their school years.

Remember, you are your child's first teacher!

GCDC Volunteer Policy

Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, parents must provide a minimum of ten hours of volunteer work, per family, per school year (September - August). 4 hours must be completed by December 20th. 4 hours must be completed by June 27th and 2 hours must be completed by August 22nd. In addition to volunteering in the classroom, parents may volunteer in other ways in support of the program.

Volunteer Receipt: No matter the type of volunteer work performed; parents are asked to complete a volunteer receipt each time volunteer services are performed at GCDC. Blank receipts are located in the front office. We ask that you do this even after you have met your ten-hour commitment. Completed and signed receipts should be placed in the box outside the front office.

Questions About Volunteer Work: As volunteer opportunities present themselves in the classrooms, common areas and throughout GCDC, they are posted on our volunteer recruitment site, in the lunchbox press and in weekly communication with teachers.



Two snacks are provided daily. A morning snack is served between 9:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m. An afternoon snack is served between 3:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m. These snacks are nutritious and varied. Monthly snack menus are emailed out and updated at www.gcdcnasa.org. Additionally, the snack menus can be found on the Parent Board at the front door.

Each child should bring his or her lunch daily, carried in a lunch box or bag. Each item must be marked with the child's first and last name and the date. Lunch boxes/bags may not be placed in the refrigerator. GCDC has a warmer and a refrigerator to store children's food until lunch is served. The center provides milk for lunch; therefore, a beverage is not required. Each lunch must meet the GCDC meal pattern requirements. **Please do not include junk food in your child's lunch. We also ask that parents do not send food to school in fast food containers.** It is our experience that when these foods are served, it is distracting to the other children. Further, fast foods typically do not meet our nutritional requirements.

Per our licensing requirements and NAEYC accreditation standards, it is essential that we always maintain compliance with the Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) requirements. When a child's lunch does not meet the CACFP requirements, the GCDC Food Service Manager will supplement the lunch. Because this can become a major expense for GCDC, a note will be placed in the child's lunchbox notifying them of noncompliance issue and charge the account \$10.00 for each missing component.

Below please find a guide that displays what meal components children must be served daily at lunch.

Fluid Milk – Which GCDC will always offer -- 6 fluid oz for preschoolers (AM Snack & Lunch)

Meat/meat alternative - 1 ½ ounces for preschoolers

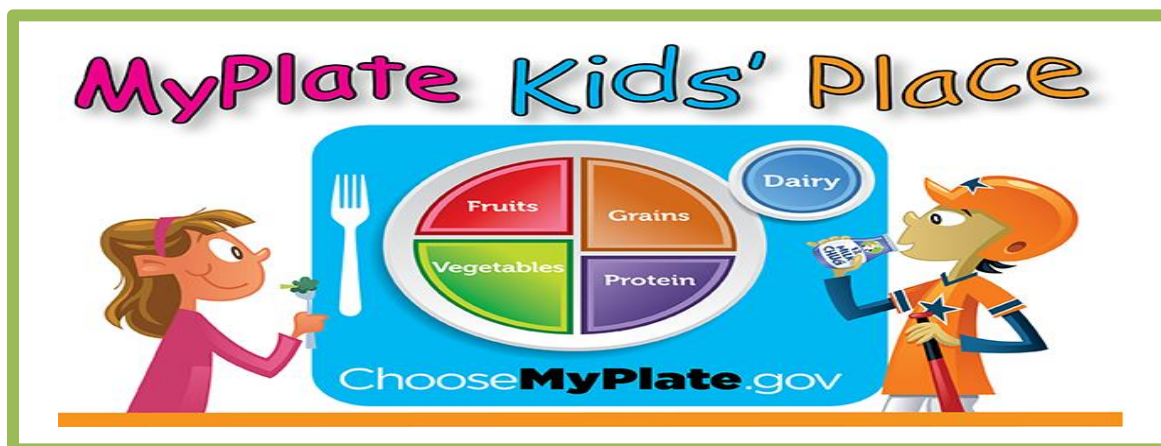
ONE vegetable AND ONE fruit choice 1/8 cup for toddlers and ¼ cup for preschoolers OR

TWO vegetables must be two different choices (no fruit) ¼ cup for toddlers and ½ cup for preschoolers.

Whole Grain - ½ slice for both toddlers and preschoolers (pasta, biscuit, roll etc.)

For healthy ideas of meals, you can pack for your child please visit:

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/blog/lets-eat-well>



Reminder from the Business Manger

As we embark upon a new school year, we want to inform our new parents and remind our current parents of some GCDC policies.

★ All parents must clock their child in/out daily using the GCDC ProCare Engage App. All parents must download ProCare Engage to their cell phone. When families are within .25 of a mile to GCDC they will be able to clock in/out.

★ GCDC hours are 7:15 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Parents who pick up their child(ren) after 5:30 p.m. will be charged a late pick-up fee.

★ Discussions with teachers are encouraged, however, they should be no longer than 2-3 minutes at drop off/pickup as teachers are still working in a ratio status. If a longer, deeper discussion is necessary please schedule a time to meet with your child's teacher that is convenient for you both. Please be conscientious and respectful of your teachers' time.

★ Accounts are billed Wednesday of each week. Payments are direct debited from your account on file by close of business each Wednesday. Declined payments will be assessed an overdue payment fee.

★ Many families participate in flexible spending accounts. Parents are encouraged to log into their ProCare Account to view and download account statements as needed. Accounts can be accessed here. www.myprocare.com

Please e-mail the Associate Business Manager smitchell@gcdc-connect.org for questions or assistance.



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James Harrington
Educational Advisor.



Fall Picture Day
September 23, 2024
9:30 A.M.



- 1 Large Pack of Markers
- 1 bottle of Glue 2 Pack Paper Towels
- 1 Composition Notebook (No Spirals)
- 2 Large containers of Lysol Wipes
- 1 Box of Kleenex Tissue
- 2 Boxes of Sandwich Size Ziplock Bag
- (1) 2 Gallon Size Ziplock
- 24 Pack of Crayons

Please refer to your class orientation guide for detailed list by classroom.

Meet The GCDC Team

We would like to introduce you to the GCDC Team.

Please visit our website at

<https://www.gcdcnasa.org/bios/> to find a brief bio on about our teachers and administrators.

Here you can learn more about our background, experience, qualifications, and professional teaching philosophies. We all have unique qualities that make us a great choice for your early education experience.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Each class at GCDC begins its day with a morning meeting or circle time. This is one of the few times that teachers engage in large group teacher directed instruction. During this time, teachers build schema for the rest of the day by introducing concepts, tell children what their goals for each center during play and review basic concepts such as letters, numbers, letter sounds, vocabulary, weather, calendar and much more. A lot happens in this short period of time! Teachers then build upon this introductory lesson throughout the day.

We have found that children who are regularly present for morning meeting or circle time often do far better on assessments. When children routinely arrive later in the day, they often miss important concepts. While our teachers work with the students to help them catch up, its simply not the same as participating in a dynamic morning meeting or circle time with their peers.

It's important to also remember that when children's schedules are disrupted and are allowed to sleep in late and then come to school, they are often more irritable. throughout the day because it's difficult for them to get back on schedule with the rest of the class. This again, results in hem not being ready to learn.

One thing that parents can do to ensure that their children get the most out of this school year is to have their children here by 9:30 a.m. each day. This ensures a less disruptive day for our teachers, better learning opportunities for your child and better preparation for a traditional school day.



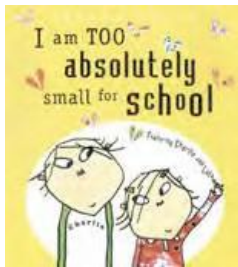
HAND WASHING POLICY

At GCDC, we implement many strategies that are designed to help minimize the spread of germs. One of these policies is that all children and staff must wash hands upon entry into the classroom each day. Parents can help by assisting their children with this process each morning. Doing

this will help to minimize the spread of germs. This will in turn reduce the number of times your child is sick and the number of days you are required to miss work as a result of your child's illness. If we all work together, we can create a healthier learning environment for everyone.



Making The Transition From Home To School A Bit Easier



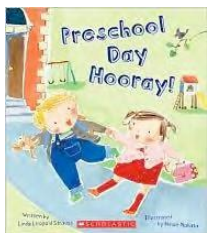
I am Too Absolutely Small For School. Young children worried about starting preschool or

kindergarten will be reassured when you read the picture book *I Am Too Absolutely Small for School* is sure she is "too absolutely small for school," but Charlie, her older brother, humorously and patiently convinces her she's not. Charlie gives Lola all kinds of funny reasons that stretch the imagination about why she needs to go to school.



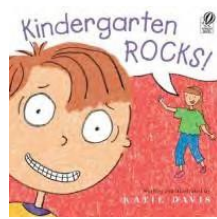
Little School is an enjoyable picture book about 20 preschoolers and the fun they have during a busy day at their

school. The story follows all 20 through their preparations for school, to a day at Little School, to their return home. This book is perfect for the child who is starting preschool, nursery school, or daycare and wants to know exactly what to expect.



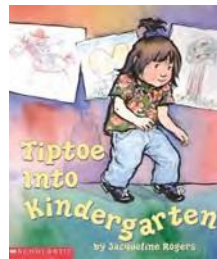
Preschool Day Hooray! If you are excited and enthusiastic about your child starting preschool, your little one is likely to follow.

suit. This book paints preschool as a fun place, one where there is lots to do and friends to be made. The rhyming text is simple, but gets the message across clearly, and the pictures are bright, colorful, and cheerful -- preschool is a great place to be, and you are really going to like it here!



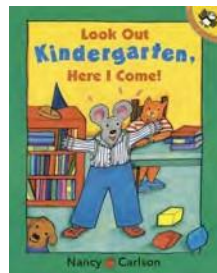
Kindergarten Rocks! Dexter already knows everything there is to know about kindergarten. His big sister,

Jessie told him all about it. So, Dexter is not scared. Not even a little bit. But his stuffed dog, Rufus, is scared. Actually, he's terrified. But Dexter, Rufus--has nothing to fear: As he'll soon find out, kindergarten *rocks!*



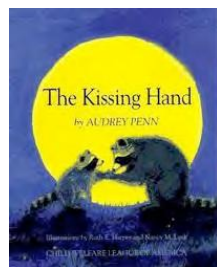
Tiptoe into Kindergarten. A young preschooler accompanies her big brother to kindergarten and discovers a fun

atmosphere, full of blocks, books, paints, and puzzles.



Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come! The first day of kindergarten is finally here, and Henry can't wait to paint pictures, sing songs, and

practice counting. When he gets to school, though, he's not so sure he's ready for kindergarten. But before long Henry discovers that the only thing he's not ready for is how much fun he's going to have at school!



The Kissing Hand. When Chester the raccoon is reluctant to go to kindergarten for the first time, his mother

teaches him a secret way to carry her love with him.



Did you know that prolonged goodbyes can make it difficult for your child to transition each day? Here are some tips for making your goodbyes a little less traumatic each morning.

- ★ Follow the same routine each day. Walk your child to the refrigerator to put away lunch, into the classroom to put away personal items and then into the opening classroom. Talk to your child throughout this time about what might be happening in class that day or the time you'll be back pick them up. Speak about time in terms they understand. The easiest way to do this is to reference to their day. For example, "I'll be back after p.m. snack."
- ★ Allow your child to "push you out the door." Once inside the opening classroom, allow your child to gently push you out of the door. This gives your child some control.
- ★ Just kiss and say goodbye. Do this once and leave. Do not prolong the goodbye. You can always call back to check on your child later.

It is our experience that children settle in rather quickly after their parents leave. The routine of the day, comfort of teachers and caring friends make this possible at GCDC. If we find your child is not transitioning in a developmentally appropriate ways, we will confer with you about possible solutions. Just remember, we have a vested interest in a happy and smooth transition for your child. We will work with you to ensure that this happens.