



SBJC Early Childhood

Program Newsletter

 September 2023

Principal's Note

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back to an exciting new school year at the SBJC Early Learning Program! I hope this message finds you and your little ones brimming with anticipation for the adventures that await us in the coming months. As the principal of our preschool program, I am thrilled to embark on this journey with each of you, working hand in hand to create a nurturing and enriching learning environment for our young learners.

At the SBJC we believe that every child is a unique and capable individual, and we are committed to fostering their social, emotional, and cognitive growth. Our dedicated team of educators and support staff has been hard at work preparing engaging activities and curriculum that cater to the diverse needs of our students.

As we venture into the new school year, we are eager to build upon the successes of the past while embracing fresh opportunities for growth. We recognize the importance of strong partnerships between home and school, and we encourage open communication throughout the year. Your involvement and support play a pivotal role in your child's educational journey, and we value your insights and contributions immensely.

Our approach to education extends beyond the classroom walls. Through community-based instruction, we will venture into real-world settings, providing our students with valuable life experiences and practical skills. We firmly believe in fostering a sense of belonging and connection within the broader community.

Rest assured that the well-being and safety of your children remain our top priority. We have implemented comprehensive health and safety measures to ensure a secure learning environment. Our dedicated staff is fully committed to providing a nurturing and supportive space where your child can flourish.

I am truly grateful for the privilege of serving as the principal of this exceptional preschool, and I am eager to witness the growth and achievements of each and every student. Let us approach this school year with enthusiasm and determination, knowing that together, we can make a profound difference in the lives of our children.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. I look forward to a fantastic year ahead!

Warm regards,

Lorraine Rake

Principal, SBJC Early Childhood Learning Program

Upcoming Events

Parent Introduction Meeting on Clinicals (Virtual)- 9/22 10:00 AM

Parent Workshop- Understanding My Child's IEP (Virtual) 9/28 6:30PM

Family Night, Fall Festival- 10/4 6:00PM-8:00PM SBJC Lodi Campus

Coffee & Chat with the Principal 10/20 9:30AM Garfield Early Learning Center (Open to all preschool parents)

Back to School Nights:

Garfield- 9/14

Lyndhurst- 9/14

Felician- 9/21

Carlstadt- 9/20

Parent Collaboration

At the SBJC Early Childhood Learning Program, we firmly believe that parent collaboration is at the heart of fostering a thriving and inclusive learning community. We value the active involvement of parents and guardians in their child's educational journey, as we recognize that together, we can create a powerful support system. As part of our commitment to transparent and open communication, we are thrilled to offer various avenues for parents to connect, share, and engage.

One such opportunity is our "Coffee and Chat with the Principal" sessions, held three times a year. These informal gatherings provide a relaxed setting for parents to meet with me, discuss their thoughts, concerns, and aspirations, and forge a deeper understanding of our school's mission and vision.

For parents of students in our ABA classrooms, we offer monthly "Parent Clinics" where you can meet with our dedicated behaviorists. These meetings are invaluable in exchanging ideas, exploring behavior management strategies, and gaining insights into your child's individualized educational programs.

In addition to these focused interactions, we invite parents to participate in our district's parent committee meetings, convening monthly. This collaborative platform allows you to have a direct impact on our parent academy, ensuring that the parent voice is heard and respected. If you are interested in joining please email me at lrake@njsbjc.org.

Furthermore, we understand the importance of regular updates on your child's progress and development. Through Class Dojo, our preferred communication platform, parents have real-time access to classroom updates, teacher messages, and therapist insights. It is a space where we celebrate achievements, share milestones, and work together to address any challenges that may arise.

Your active involvement is a cornerstone of the strong foundation we are building at the SBJC Early Childhood Learning Program. We appreciate your dedication to your child's education and are committed to fostering a supportive and engaging partnership with each and every one of you. Together, we can unlock the full potential of our young learners, creating a positive and transformative experience for years to come. More information on all of the collaborative activities will be forthcoming.

Thank you for being an essential part of our family!

Book Corner



Books to Help Ease Back to School Anxiety

1. Title: **"The Kissing Hand"**

Author: Audrey Penn

Description: "The Kissing Hand" is a heartwarming and reassuring story that addresses separation anxiety and the challenges of starting school. Little Chester Raccoon is nervous about leaving his mom for the first time to attend school. To comfort him, his mother shares a special family tradition, the Kissing Hand, which teaches him that her love will always be with him, even when they are apart. This beautifully illustrated book emphasizes the importance of love and connection, making it an excellent choice for preschoolers.

Here are three back-to-school books that parents can read with their children to help ease the transition and build excitement for the new school year:

2. Title: **"Wemberly Worried"**- Author: Kevin Henkes

Description: In "Wemberly Worried," readers meet a young mouse named Wemberly who worries about everything, especially starting school. With a vivid imagination, she envisions the worst-case scenarios of what might happen. However, when she finally enters school, she discovers that her worries start to fade away as she makes new friends and embraces the excitement of learning. This delightful story highlights the power of friendship and how facing fears can lead to positive experiences.

3. Title: **"Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes"**

Author: Eric Litwin and James Dean

Description: "Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes" is a fun and upbeat story that follows Pete the Cat as he explores his new school with rock 'n' roll confidence. With catchy rhymes and a cool attitude, Pete takes young readers on a tour of various school places, like the library, the cafeteria, and the playground. This book helps children embrace the idea of new experiences and highlights that school can be an exciting adventure full of possibilities.

These books not only entertain but also offer valuable lessons and encouragement to young children as they prepare to go back to school. Reading these stories together can be a wonderful way for parents to address any anxieties, share in the excitement, and set the stage for a positive start to the school year.

Creative Curriculum

The South Bergen Jointure Commission Early Childhood Program uses The Creative Curriculum for Preschool. The Creative Curriculum *for Preschool* is one of the most widely used pre-K curriculum in the nation, it is also a model curriculum that is recommended by the NJ Department of Education, and the curriculum of choice for most of our sending districts. It is comprehensive and research-based and features exploration and discovery as a way of learning.

It fosters high-quality learning environments and supports deep understanding of early childhood best practices, theories, and research. Robust *Daily Resources* provide the instructional tools and materials to engage children in project-based investigations and make every moment of the day meaningful, intentional, and engaging.

The Creative Curriculum is aligned with the NJ Preschool Learning Standards that ensures in addition to meeting your child's IEP goals and objectives that we are also addressing the prerequisites required for kindergarten.

ABA in the Classroom

What is Applied Behavior Analysis?

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) are a set of principles based on the science of learning and behavior. It is research based and proven to be the most effective way to improve skills and reduce challenging behaviors for learners on the Autism Spectrum.

Good ABA programs for autism are individualized. A program is written to meet the needs of the individual learner.

The goal of any ABA program is to help each child work on skills that will help them become more independent and successful in the short term as well as in the future.

A child with autism will have many opportunities to learn and practice skills each day. This can happen in both planned and naturally occurring situations. For instance, someone learning to greet others by saying "hello" may get the chance to practice this skill in the classroom with their teacher (planned) and on the playground at recess (naturally occurring).

The learner receives an abundance of positive reinforcement for demonstrating useful skills and socially appropriate behaviors. The emphasis is on positive social interactions and enjoyable learning.

The learner receives no reinforcement for behaviors that pose harm or prevent learning.

Class Dojo

At the preschool level the instructional platform and parent communication app that is utilized is Class Dojo: <https://www.classdojo.com/>. Class Dojo is a secure online platform where teachers will be able to check-in with their students on a daily basis via video, assign work. Staff, teachers and parents also use this platform to send announcements and messages. Classroom teachers will send parent invites.

Below are some parent training resources that will help you become familiar with this platform:

Presentation: [Introduction PowerPoint: English](#)

If you would like this PowerPoint in Spanish please reach out to your child's teacher.

Documents: [ClassDojo Parent HelpDesk Page](#)

Answers to many questions on this page and directions to the different features.