

From the Desk of



Velma Meek M. Ed, Site Director

Hello Families,

My name is Velma Meek. I'm the Site Director of the Dolton Early Learning Center. Many of you I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet, I look forward to meeting you this school year. I have been in the Early Childhood field teaching for over 25 years. I received my Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood from Kendall College and my Masters' Degree in Early Childhood Administration from National Louis University. I am passionate about building a solid foundation for our children in social-emotional development and watching children grow and learn through play.

I would like to welcome everyone to the Dolton Early Learning Center 2021/2022 school year. It is an honor and privilege to partner with you to give our families and children quality service. It has been a memorable year for us all, and we are making every effort to move forward. We are happy to announce that we will be open five days a week for this new school year. Although we are faced with many unknown challenges, we here at IAFC know the importance of nurturing and caring for our children and families. We want to assure you that we are continuing to take all precautions to keep your children safe, by social distancing, washing hands frequently, and wearing masks. We are here for you. Please do not hesitate to call the office if you need any assistance. Thank you for choosing the Dolton Early Learning Center.

Classroom or Home Educators' Notes

Hello families,

This is a reminder that the teachers will be calling you to do a verbal home visit with you. Don't forget to schedule your home visit. This is a time to meet your child's teacher and ask questions.

Dolton would like to welcome our new Teacher Assistants, Crystal Jackson who will work in room 2, and Karen Lewis who will work in the infant room. Welcome aboard!

Staff will be in constant communication with you to share resources and keep you informed of engagement activities.

Classroom Teachers

Rm 1 - Little Explorers, Denise Mangrum, and Karen Lewis
Rm 2 - Little Adventures, Marcia Phillips and Kiersten Smith
Rm 3 - Little Wanderers, Felicia Cotton and Crystal Jackson
Rm 4 - Inventors, Constance Ely and Corey Harding
Rm 5 - Voyagers, Tasha McDuffie and Latasha Davis
Rm 6 - Navigators, Ida Frye-Hoover and Carolina Rodriguez
FES - Sharon Gipson and Delean Shumpert

Staff will constantly communicate with you to share resources and to inform you of engagement opportunities.

UPCOMING EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Hearing and Vision - TBA
9/6/2021 Close in observance of Labor Day
9/9/21 Parent Committee Meeting/Parent Orientation 2:30 pm

You will receive reminders of these events and will receive information of any other events not indicated here.

Notes from:

Catalina Torres, Parent Involvement Coordinator

Family Engagement is basic in our Early Learning Programs. At Illinois Action for Children, the Family Engagement Component Area remained intact, meaning families are still engaged in parental activities, such as e-learning and at-home activities with their child, parent meetings, workshops, family fun nights, parent cafés, and at-home learning activities. Family Engagement also includes working in partnership with Family Engagement Specialists and Parent Educators in the completion of a Family Assessment, establishing a Family Goal Partnership, distribution of resources and services to assist families in meeting their needs and interests, and accomplishing your goals. If you at any time have any needs or interests, please contact your Family Engagement Specialist or your Parent Educator, and they will guide you with resources and services.

Staff is implementing “The Pyramid Model” across all our early learning programs in partnership with families. The Pyramid Model is a framework for teaching social-emotional skills to young children: Social-Emotional brain development occurs between 0-5 years old and positive social-emotional skills are the greatest predictors of success in school or life. By using The Pyramid Model strategies at school and home, children will be taught the social-emotional skills they need to succeed. Our schools will follow behavior expectations for everyone who is in our schools: children, staff, and families. The program-wide expectations include: Be Respectful; Be Kind; Be a Good Citizen; and Be a Participating Family.

You will be hearing a lot more about the Pyramid Model and receiving a lot more information about it soon.

Please plan to participate in Parent Committee Meetings, Parental Activities, and complete and return At-Home Activities weekly throughout the school year.

Around Town/Resources

Join Security Opportunities for Success (SOS) and receive job training at no cost. Certifications offered: Biohazard-COVID-19 clean up, Construction Flagger, Construction Forklift, Environmental Abatement (Asbestos, Lead, RRP and Mold), Home Inspection Certification, OSHA and Safety Trainings, and Unarmed Security. For more details and enrollment assessment call 708-251-4965. For more information and other services visit WWW.CORNERSTONE-CDC.ORG.

Food Pantries:

Bloom Township 425 South Hasted St., Chicago Heights, IL (708) 754-9400

Thornton Township 15340 Page St., Harvey, IL (708) 596-6040 ext 3180

South Suburban Family Shelter provides crisis intervention, resources, short-term emergency shelter for victims and survivors seeking immediate safety (708) 335-3028. They also offer Community Education, Counseling Services, Court Advocacy, Domestic Violence Advocacy, a Partner Abuse Intervention Program, and a Housing Program. Visit www.ssfs1.org for more information.

Pathlights offers services to grandparents raising grandchildren. Among others, they provide free consultation, education, encouragement, and in some cases, emergency funding. To learn more about this and other services they offer, call (708) 361-0219 or visit www.pathlights.org.

CEDA offers Family Support and Community Engagement and assistance with water bills, telephone bills, child care for essential workers, medical supplies and prescription costs, and emotional counseling services.

Call (312) 795-8948 or visit www.cedaorg.net for more information.

Contact your Family Engagement Specialist/Parent Educator for further resources.

