

Daily Class Schedule

Head Start Performance Standard

§ 1302.31 (c) (d) (e)

Policy

Teachers will create a daily schedule which provides a consistent, balanced program of child-initiated and adult facilitated activities. The daily schedule will include time for individual activities and small group activities, meals, outdoor time, routines, and transitions. The daily schedule will change according to the needs of the children and updated as changes occur, except occasional changes due to special events (e.g. a visit from the local fire dept.). A digital copy of the schedule will be kept in the classroom folder on the S: drive and a hard copy posted on the parent board. Children will have a picture schedule posted at children's eye level in the classroom.

Procedure

Duration Pre-K Guidelines

The daily schedule will include:

- A minimum of 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours for each class day.
- A minimum 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours between breakfast and lunch or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours between lunch and afternoon snack.
- A minimum of 20 minutes each day for meals and a minimum of 10 minutes for snacks to allow children enough time to eat without feeling rushed. Teachers will have a planned transition activity to engage children who have finished eating (such as music and movement, story time, or book baskets as appropriate for the mealtime environment). Accommodations will be made for any child(ren) who need more time to finish eating. Refer to **CACFP Requirement Policy and Procedure** for more information.
- A minimum of 60 minutes for uninterrupted, **Child-Initiated Free Choice Time**, with freedom to explore and interact with peers. Small group activities guided or facilitated by an adult will be incorporated into this time. See the **Lesson Plans Center-Based Policy and Procedure** for more information about small groups.
- Limited but well-planned transitions with learning opportunities as part of the schedule.
- An alternating pattern of active and quiet play.
- A balance of large-muscle and small-muscle activities.
- May include one or two whole group meetings for community building and reflection.
 - Whole group meetings will be less than 20 minutes.
- Sixty minutes of outdoor and/or vigorous indoor activity is required throughout the day. The schedule must include a minimum of 45 minutes planned outdoor play. This time may be divided into 2 or 3 time periods, such as 30 minutes earlier in the day and an additional 15 minutes toward the end of the day. Program Area Supervisors will work with the public schools to accommodate this requirement.
 - If 60 minutes outdoors is not possible, Teachers may substitute up to 15 minutes of vigorous indoor activities, such as music and movement or play in the gym.

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- Indoor play in gyms or other indoor play spaces, where available, **may not** replace outdoor play, except in the case of weather extremes. Staff may include regular time in the gym or other indoor play space as part of the daily schedule, provided there is enough time in the day to meet all other required elements of the daily schedule for the specified amount of time.
- If the weather is extreme, a short walk outside for fresh air is acceptable with a minimum of 15 minutes of planned indoor gross motor activity. See **Child Care Weather Watch** in the Health Folder on the Intranet for guidance in determining weather extremes.
- Tooth brushing (See Oral Health Practices Policy and Procedure).
- Minimum of 30-minute rest period, which may extend up to two hours for those children who are sleeping. Scheduled rest times will occur after lunch and before afternoon snack. Children who are awake after 30 minutes may do quiet activities on their mats or in designated areas of the classroom, allowing their peers to sleep. Teachers may use this time with children to work on individual education or Individual Family Service Plan goals. See **Rest Time Policy and Procedure**.
- At least 10 minutes for snack.
- After snack, teachers will offer limited choices until it is time to leave the center. Limited choices are restricted to 15 minutes or less.

Full Day/Full Year Head Start and Early Head Start

The afternoon after snack is a continuation of the learning day, with the same schedule elements of the morning. Teachers may offer limited choices for the last 15 minutes of the day until it is time for the center to close.

Infants will be allowed to sleep on demand. As toddlers age, most or all of them will generally be on the same nap schedule. They will be allowed to wake in their own time. The daily schedule will be revised as needed to accommodate the sleep schedules of the children. See **Rest Time Policy and Procedures** for more information.