



Sidney Albert
Albany JCC

**RAYMOND & RUTH D. LAVEN
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER**

**PARENT HANDBOOK
2019-2020**



Welcome to the **2019-2020** School Year! The Early Childhood Staff, Administrative team, and I are excited to have your child in our program.

Please check out our website, *www.albanyjcc.org* and Facebook Parent Groups at: *ParentsandfriendsofAlbanyJCC/Laven Earlychildhoodcenter* for updates on all JCC programs. We will send out email reminders on events and programs throughout the school year.

Please review the enclosed Handbook with additional information about your child's program. This handbook is designed to inform families of the Raymond & Ruth D. Laven Early Childhood Center policies and procedures that are implemented in support of children's healthy development and to enable a successful home to school partnership. Please always feel free to contact us for any questions, concerns, highlights to share, etc.

Thank you all for sharing your child with us and Happy School Year!

Mission Statement

The Sidney Albert Albany Jewish Community Center provides a nurturing environment where individuals and families can grow and develop in mind, body and spirit. We serve the spectrum of family life, from infants through seniors, through programs related to education, physical fitness, and communal life. Our core values are rooted in Jewish principles, and we welcome members of the community at large, regardless of their faith or background.

At the Raymond & Ruth D. Lavin Early Childhood Center, we nurture each child in a loving environment that promotes his or her social, emotional and intellectual well-being. Through developmentally appropriate activities we encourage individualization and incorporate Jewish values and traditions. We believe our Center is an important first step in each child's lifelong learning experience.

The Creative Curriculum

At the Lavin Early Childhood Center, we use The Creative Curriculum to guide our planning and decision making process for children. The Creative Curriculum is based on five fundamental principles:

1. Positive interactions and relationships with adults providing a critical foundation for successful learning.
2. Social-emotional competence is a significant factor in school success.
3. Constructive, purposeful play supports essential learning.
4. The physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions.
5. Teacher-family partnerships promote development and learning.

If you would like more information on our curriculum please visit www.creativecurriculum.net

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday 7:00am-6:00pm

Raymond & Ruth D. Laven Early Childhood Center 2019-2020 Closings

September 2nd	Labor Day
September 30th	1st Day of Rosh Hashanah
October 1st	2nd Day of Rosh Hashanah
October 8th	Yom Kippur
October 14th	Columbus Day
November 11th	Veteran's Day
November 28th	Thanksgiving
November 29th	Day after Thanksgiving
December 25th	Christmas
January 1st	New Year's Day
January 20th	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 17th	President's Day
May 25th	Memorial Day
July 3rd	Independence Day (Observance)
*August 27th	Staff Development Day *
*August 28th	Staff Development Day *

****Staff Development Day***

2019-2020 Raymond & Ruth D. Laven Early Childhood Scheduling Options

- Five days** - Monday through Friday
- Four Days** - To be Determined
- Three Days** - Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- Two Days** - Tuesday and Thursday

Albany JCC accepts Albany County DSS Assistance pending approval letter from DSS

We offer Ten Percent Sibling Discount off of JCC Afterschool and Vacation Camp rates. Please reach out to the Director of Youth Services and Camp for additional information on this.

Andrew Katz, Director of Youth Services & Camp: Ext. 113

Benjamin Daniels, Assistant Director of Youth Services & Camp: Ext. 108

Inclusion of Children with Special Needs:

JCC Early Childhood Center is welcoming of all children to our program. Children with special needs or Medical Concerns (i.e. allergies), indicated on registration forms, must have a New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYS OCFS) Individual Health Care Plan completed by parent and on site at our program. Emergency Medications such as an inhaler or Epi-pen can be administered by a staff with CPR and 1st Aid and Medication Administration Training (MAT). A NYS Med Consent Form must be completed by parent and doctor. As long as these NYS forms are present at program, the child may be included with Early Childhood Programs.

General Information:

The center is licensed by the NYS Office for Children and Family Services (OCFS).

All required enrollment paperwork must be received by the first day of care.

Children 18 months and older are offered a rest time from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm daily. Infants are able to sleep as needed. If your infant needs to fall asleep in a swing/bouncer a doctor's note is required.

The Albany JCC Early Childhood Center is a peanut and tree nut free establishment.

Other than the infant room we cannot refrigerate or reheat your child's lunch

All belongings must be labeled with the child's name. The Albany JCC is not responsible for lost or stolen items

Glass bottles or containers are not permitted in the classroom

Daily supervised outdoor play is required for all children in care, except during inclement weather or unless otherwise ordered by a health care provider.

If child is healthy enough to come to school, then they should be healthy enough to participate in all programming, unless written instruction from a health care provider states otherwise.

Paperwork for the application of sunscreen and over the counter topical lotions must be reissued every six months.

Use of alcohol and/or tobacco products by staff is strictly prohibited. **If staff observe any parents or approved pick up adults come to program inebriated (drunk or intoxicated via alcohol or drugs), staff will let their Supervisor know immediately and then call the Police (911 or 518-438-4000). JCC Staff are not allowed to withhold the child from the approved pick up adult.**

*On Snow Days when Albany Schools are closed or delayed due to inclement weather, the early childhood department will not open until ten AM. Delays and/or closings will be displayed on TV channels 6, 8,9,10, and 13 through the School Closing Network. You will also be notified through our ONE Call Now emergency notification system.

We reserve the right to dis-enroll a child from our programming at any time with or without notice at our discretion.

Staff Information

All JCC Staff go through four background checks before starting at the Early Childhood center. A physical/TB test, a fingerprint clearance, a Staff Exclusion List for Special Needs children child abuse/maltreatment, and a State Central Registry clearance for child abuse/maltreatment. Three references, two professional and one personal, are checked.

Early Childhood Structure

The *Early Childhood Director* is responsible for all Raymond & Ruth D. Laven Early Childhood operations, and establishes the policies and procedures reflective of research-based ECE best practice and OCFS licensing regulation, and conducts activities for ongoing program quality assessment, evaluation, and improvement. This position reports directly to the Executive Director.

The *Assistant Director of Early Childhood* is a key programmatic and administrative position providing program and managerial support to the Director to ensure proper administration of all policies and procedures. This position reports directly to the Early Childhood Director.

The *Enrollment Specialist* is responsible for support necessary with administrative operations, including enrollment and scheduling.

The *Administrative Assistant* provides the child care center with the support necessary to ensure systems, materials, and supplies are in place to enable the site's function and operation.

The *Lead Teacher* provides care and education to the children, designs and implements classroom activities that reflect the values and goals of the Albany JCC, documents children's learning, and provides parents with ongoing communication to support a successful partnership.

The *Associate Teacher* provides care and nurture to the children, working collegially with the Lead Teacher to implement classroom activities.

The *Floating Teacher* provides care and nurture to the children in this flexible role designed to support teacher absences from the classroom.

Youth Interns Career Education and job training is an important component of the Albany JCC relationship to the community. These partnerships are a wonderful way to connect the work of our future Early Childhood educators to employment development opportunities. The Albany JCC may provide opportunities for site visits, observations, and training that would engage these persons to eventually obtain employment opportunities in the field of Child Development/Early Childhood Education.

Emergencies, Accidents, Illnesses, Injuries, Reporting of Child Abuse

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, staff/children are to follow the emergency procedure that is posted in each room. Staff and children will **follow the Shelter in Place Guidelines from NYS OCFS**. Re-locate children and staff to an area that can be locked or barricaded, and that does not have windows. Shelter in Place Drills occur twice a year in our programs. If we are evacuating from site, we follow the rooms' evacuation route, each classroom has a re-location area posted on the Parent Board.

Fire Drills and Site Safety Checks occur once a month, and are documented. This is good practice for the Children and staff!

- All injuries or any other marks that occur on a child during child care hours or if a child is injured but it is not a visible injury or a head injury or any time ice, a band aid, or TLC is given for an injury, Parents will be notified by either incident reports which are signed by the staff who witnessed the incident, the Director, and the child's parents or guardians and/or by phone call.
- State law requires that no foods be served to children unless the server wears a plastic glove. All staff and children must wash hands before and after snack, as well before and after outside play time or art, science, cooking activities.
- Childcare Staff are included in New York State's Mandated Reporter Requirements. We must report any suspected child abuse or maltreatment if and when necessary. Our staff, as child care workers, are required by NYS law to report any and all suspicions or incidents of abuse or neglect of children immediately to their Director. If a staff member or Parent/Family Member feels that the Director is not doing their duty by reporting these instances, the staff member should call the NYS Child Abuse Hotline. The incident will be documented, phone call made to CPS, and then the child, if still in program, will be kept comfortable by Program Staff. Staff will use discretion and not discuss their findings with other staff, parents, or children.

Important Phone Numbers

Albany JCC Main Phone: (518) 438-6651 Fax: (518) 459-0924

Early Childhood Main Phone: (518) 689-0039

Cynthia Hebert, Early Childhood Director: Ext. 333

Kelly Glaski, Assistant Early Childhood Director: Ext. 119

Thomas Wachunas, Interim Executive Director: Ext. 103

Martina Hull, Human Resources Director: Ext. 104

Jerrinna Young, Membership Director: Ext. 127

Arrivals and Departures

Each day children must be **signed in and signed out by parents with time recorded**. Only those adults who are on an approved pick up lists may pick children up. If the child is to be picked up by someone other than the parent or guardian, a note is to be sent in with the name of that person. They will be expected to provide a government issued photo ID. If a staff member does not recognize an adult picking up a child, s/he must check the approved list and ask the adult for photo identification. Children may not be dropped off during nap time (between 12:45 pm and 3:00 pm).

We welcome all families to visit our Early Childhood Center prior their child starting in our program. We have an Open Door Policy for Parents/Families, meaning you are welcome to visit our program at any point. All parents/families are welcome to provide feedback about our programs via surveys, emails, calls, or in person conversations. If a Parent/Family Conference is required, we will provide staff documentation to you pertaining to any incidents related to the child. We welcome any suggestions about adding on Community Partnerships for either special events or a more regular program. These special events can occur at any point during the school year.

Parents must provide the Albany JCC Early Childhood center with all court documents pertaining to custody and support and visitation matters involving the child.

The center's late pick-up fee is \$1.00 for every minute past 6:00 pm. It is expected that all children will be picked up by 6:00 pm. Should something arise such as a traffic accident or inclement weather and you know that you will be late, please contact the center immediately at 518-689-0039.

Child Supervision

In the event that a staff member is absent, children will have competent supervision at all times. Staff members have been trained to promote physical, intellectual, social, cultural and emotional well-being.

A staff person who is qualified to perform the duties of an absent staff member will be provided to comply with applicable ratios.

Children are to be directly supervised at all times. Staff will count the number of children before, during and after all activity, transitions or moves.

Ratios are;

1:4 for Infants 8 weeks to 18 months Max group size 8

1:5 for 18 months to 36 months Max group size 12

1:7 for 3 years Max group size 18

1:8 for 4 years Max group size 21

1:9 for 5 years Max group size 24

Health Care Policy

*****Please be advised that all children must have all immunizations up to date according to the age of the child or a written letter from the child's health care provider stating that the child's immunizations are in process according to requirements of New York State Public Health Law. If these requirements are not met the child will be removed from the program until Immunizations are administered. *****

- If a child becomes ill, and is running a fever of 101 degrees or higher, vomiting, or has 3 or more loose stools, or any suspicious rashes on the body, the parent will be contacted and is expected to pick him/her up within an hours' time.
- Children must be fever free with no Tylenol or Motrin for 24 hours before returning to the program. If child is going to be absent the center must be notified.
- Any child with a contagious disease (i.e. pink eye, strep throat or contagious rashes) may not attend the program while they are ill. The child must be on medication for at least 24 hours. Other parents must be notified that such a case has been reported and a note from the child's medical provider stating clearance to return to school is needed.
- The administration of any medication, prescription or nonprescription, requires a Physician's note to administer and the NYS specific 2-sided form with permission to administer medication. The medication must be in its original container with the prescription label and have the child's name written on the box and the product. All medication is left in the Associate director's office, and will be administered by a MAT trained teacher or director.
- The center will conduct a daily health check documenting any signs or symptoms of illness, changes in behavior or any new or strange marks or bruises.

Dress for Success

Children should wear washable play clothes that support their full range of movement. Closed toe and heel shoes with socks are strongly advised. Outdoor wear must support children to play outside in temperatures ranging from 32 to 95 degrees and in conditions including snow, frost, and light rain and wind. OCFS licensing prohibits children from wearing necklaces (including amber teething beads) or any loose item like a pacifier leash or clip on their clothing. No heavy blankets are permitted for infants. Receiving blankets are acceptable.

Biting Policy

We plan activities and supervise children carefully to prevent inappropriate behavior such as biting. Many toddlers cannot verbalize their feelings and use biting as a form of communication. We provide activities to reduce frustration and have many toys so that children can engage in play without conflict. We maintain NYS mandated ratios in each classroom so that staff members can interact with children in their care. If a bite occurs the bite will be cleaned with soap and water. Parents will be notified and an incident report will be filled out. If biting does not subside with classroom intervention a plan of action will be implemented in cooperation with the family. If the problem still persists we will have another family conference to discuss next steps.

Toilet Learning

Toilet learning is a developmental process; children are ready to learn when they are healthy, well nourished, and not pressured to achieve at a level above their capability. Parents are requested to partner with teachers, communicating frequently, so that the home-to-child care approach is coordinated and consistent. As in many areas of child development, children must reach a certain age to begin (often between 18 and 30 months of age) or be in the proper setting or situation before they are ready to learn. Parents will provide diapers, and any needed creams and lotions for their child and will sign the appropriate authorization form to allow teachers to apply it. The product must be in its original container and labeled with the child's first and last name.

Nutrition Policy

Our snack program follows the CACFP (Child and Adult care food program, a USDA program under the auspices of the NYS Health Dept.) food guidelines: hand washing before and after snack for staff and children; staff will use gloves when prepping food items or assisting with serving; children and staff will use measuring cups for portioning purposes; snack items that are approved can be found in the CACFP food manual; children must be offered 2 out of 5 components (1 cup 1% or Skim milk, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vegetable, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fruit or 1 cup 100% juice, 1 serving whole grains/breads, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup or 1 oz. meat/yogurt/ 2 oz. cheese). The Center provides a healthy breakfast snack between 9:30 am and 10:00 am and an afternoon snack between 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm. **All foods are Kosher and peanut and tree nut free**

Albany JCC Early Childhood Center does not provide children with nutritious meals therefore children cannot be in care for more than ten (10) hours.

Birthdays/Celebrations

There are many ways to celebrate your child's birthday! Please discuss the birthday celebration in the classroom with the teachers in advance of the day of the event. Celebration suggestions include: create a special activity in honor of the child (favorite story, music or craft) or providing goodies to share. Many of our children have varying nutritional needs. Please note that all food items must be Kosher and peanut and tree free.

Swim Policy

Swimming lessons are offered for children 3 years of age and older. Those under the age of 3 require a parent/guardian present. Children who are not completely potty trained must wear a swim diaper to be provided by the parents. Those children who are not potty trained and do not come with a swim diaper will not be allowed to take part in a swimming activity if part of their day. Older children are encouraged to use the restroom before entering the pool.

Agreements

I have read the Raymond & Ruth D. Laven Early Childhood Parent Handbook, and agree to comply with the policies and procedures contained therein. (Please initial)

___ I have been provided a copy of and thoroughly read the Parent Handbook.

___ I read and understand, and agree to comply with the policies and procedures which inform the Albany JCC services providing licensed child care.

___ I understand and agree that neither Albany JCC, nor any of their officers, agents, or employees are liable for bodily injuries or illnesses suffered by my child(ren) or damages to personal belongings, unless the injury, illness, or property damage was the direct result of willful negligence on the part of those operating the Center.

___ I understand and agree to provide Albany JCC with 30 days written notice of my child's disenrollment or the financial equivalency.

___ I understand that Albany JCC has the right and the responsibility to modify practice to conform with changes to NYS Office of Children and Family Services Regulations.

___ I understand that Albany JCC reserves the right to update this handbook at any time, to ensure compliance with policies and practices.

___ I understand that Albany JCC reserves the right to dis-enroll a child from our programming at any time with or without notice at our discretion.

(Optional)

___ I give permission for my child's image to be used in photographs within the classroom's documentation of learning (e.g., bulletin boards, crafts, booklets).

___ I give permission for my child's image to be used on the Albany JCC website and Albany JCC publications.

Parent Signature

___/___/___
Date

A copy of this form will be maintained in your child's file