

HeadStart



FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

The 2020 school year is off to an unusual start, an experience like most of us have never seen. Our Head Start team has been working diligently to ensure that we can create a safe environment both for staff and eventually students when they return to in-person school. We are committed and will continue to provide high quality services to our children and families.

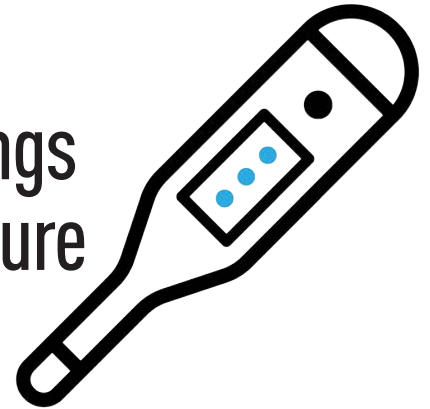
As you are aware, virtual school will continue through Oct. 16. Currently, our goal is to return to in-person instruction on Oct. 19. Of course, we are monitoring the data on the pandemic, and we will adjust as needed. In the meantime, we are working hard to provide meals to our families and instruction to our students. Additionally, we are working to create safe learning environments for the return of our students.

I urge each of you to read the articles in the newsletters that will inform you about all the changes we have made to create a safe environment for students and staff. In addition to the newsletter, we will be communicating with parents through Zoom, one-on-one meetings with teachers and small group meetings to maintain positive and proactive communication.

I thank you for your partnership in this process. We have always recognized our parents and guardians as our students' first and most important teachers. We are all in this together, and together we will make this a great school year.

— VENETIA L. PEACOCK

Preparing for daily screenings and temperature checks



When in-person classes start, new health and safety protocols will be in place to combat the spread of COVID-19. Parents should start preparing for these changes now, by understanding what they will need to do.

All students and staff members must complete an electronic screening questionnaire and undergo a temperature check prior to entering the building. Every morning, before going to school, parents will receive an email with a link to the questionnaire. Parents should click on the link and answer the questions for each child enrolled in the program. The questions ask whether a child has any symptoms and about potential exposure to COVID-19. On completing the questionnaire, parents will receive a message telling them if their child is approved to attend school. To be ready for this process, parents should make sure they have regular access to a working e-mail address.

If the child is approved to attend school, the parent will receive a QR code that is unique to their child. The QR code must be presented at school for the child's temperature to be checked. A staff member will scan the QR code and take the child's temperature using a non-contact infrared thermometer. If the child is not approved to attend school, there are certain steps that must be completed before they can return to school. Because a child may have to remain at home for multiple days before returning to school, parents should prepare now by making sure they have childcare support available.

If a child has any symptoms, exposure to COVID-19 and/or a temperature of 100.4°F or more, they will not be allowed in the building. It is important for parents to know that no students will be allowed in the building without a completed screening questionnaire and temperature check. To ensure the safety of our students, staff will undergo the same protocols.



Learning environment adapted to reduce COVID spread



Head Start students will be returning to a different learning environment when in-person classes resume. Classrooms and teaching practices have been designed to encourage social distancing among students and staff.

Early Head Start classrooms will be split in half by a divider with an identical set-up on each side. These “mirrored” classrooms each will accommodate groups of up to 4 students, who will have access to the same items and experiences throughout the day. Regular Head Start classrooms will also have a divider to split the number of children into smaller groups of up to 10 students. However, the classroom set-up as a whole will remain the same as it was, allowing both groups access to the

materials and areas at different times of the day.

The same teacher and education support staff will stay with the same group of children each day. There will be more outdoor learning and play, though only one class at a time will be allowed in the playground area. The use of indoor communal space will be limited. Festivals and special events will be canceled or postponed.

All staff will be required to wear a mask. Students will not be required to wear a mask, but if parents would like their child to wear a mask they must provide them for their child. Reusable masks will be sent home daily to be washed.

Minimum standards for cleaning and disinfecting educational facilities will be

maintained every day. Toys that can be put in the mouth will be cleaned and sanitized after each use. High touch surfaces, such as tables, doorknobs, countertops and toilets, and items in regular use will be cleaned regularly throughout the day.

In anticipation of this “new normal,” Education and Special Services Coordinator Lenora Reed advised parents to talk to their children about how things will look when in-person classes start.

“Talk to them daily about what will happen, what to expect and what they might see in the classroom,” Reed said. “This type of support to the child will help the transition process go smoother since they will have some prior knowledge of what to expect.”



Adjusted meal service still a learning experience

Nutrition Services is making changes to the way meals are served in the classroom as part of Head Start’s mission to combat the spread of COVID-19.

“Our main goal of adjusting meal service is to help decrease the amount of cross contamination between students and keeping them and their families safe,” Nutrition Services Manager Sandra Pearson said.

Instead of students serving themselves, in traditional family style meal service, teachers will serve each student all the meal components at their designated

sitting area. This time will continue to be used as a learning experience. As teachers go around the table serving students they will talk about the color, taste and texture of each food item and then join the students at the table, encouraging conversation.

Students will continue to use their own utensils to practice and strengthen their fine motor skills. Paper products will be used to streamline clean-up, giving cooks time to clean their kitchens thoroughly. Students will end meal service by washing their hands before moving to their next activity.

Meanwhile, students will still be

able to receive meals during virtual school, since the Texas Department of Agriculture accepted Head Start’s waivers to the Child and Adult Care Food Program for Virtual Learning due to COVID-19. Parents and caregivers can pick up all meals at one time on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. A survey will be sent out to parents through School Messenger to reserve meals.

“We are beyond pleased to offer students healthy, nutritious meals that meet CACFP meal pattern requirements in an alternative way during this ongoing pandemic,” Pearson said.

Coping with anxiety and stress

Children are anxious; parents are anxious; and staff are anxious. Now that school is starting in one form or another that sense of fear and apprehension may only increase. Family Services Coordinator Michele Nwokobia said it's vital that parents and staff pay attention to their own needs during this time.

"You should focus on self-care first so that you can take care of others," Nwokobia said. "Reach out to your support system – families, friends, neighbors, your church and try to get the support you need."



How to cope with stress and anxiety:

- Stay informed, but try to limit exposure to news sources.
- Make time each day to relax, whether it's exercising, stretching, meditating or reading a book.
- Model self-care practices for your child.
- Get plenty of sleep.
- Avoid excessive alcohol and drug use.
- Talk with people you trust about any concerns and how you are feeling.
- Maintain as normal routine as possible.
- Stay connected with friends, family, co-workers and neighbors.

How to help children cope with anxiety and stress:

- Reassure children that it's normal to feel upset or scared.
- Stay calm when interacting with children.
- Remind them you are taking the necessary precautions to keep them safe.
- Talk with your child regularly and assess how they are feeling.
- Watch for changes in behavior that may indicate increased stress or anxiety.
- Provide opportunities for them to connect with friends, teachers and family.

Health and safety procedures to be enhanced

When students and staff come back for in-person classes, the first thing they will have to do is undergo a daily electronic screening and a temperature check.

The new procedures are part of the enhanced health and safety measures HCDE Head Start is taking to stop the spread of COVID-19. Staff will be required to wear a mask. There will be frequent hand-washing, and everyone will be encouraged to practice social distancing. Essential visitors will be kept to a minimum, but those who do come into the centers will have to adhere to the new practices. In addition, high-use areas and surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected regularly throughout the day.

"Cleaning and disinfecting our facilities are a top priority to minimize the spread of the virus," said Lisa Boone, Assistant Director of Operations.

Procedures for student drop-off and pick-up will also change. Parents will be required to wear a mask when dropping off their children and practice social distancing of at least 6 feet. At dismissal, students will be escorted outside for parents to pick them up.



For more information about coping with stress and anxiety, visit <https://theharriscenter.org/COVID-19-Support-Line-and-Resources> or call the Mental Health Support line at 833-251-7544.



Building meaningful relationships in a virtual world

Since most interactions between families and staff will be virtual for the foreseeable future it is more important than ever to establish strong lines of communication in order to build and maintain meaningful relationships and for children to thrive.

“These relationships could become strengthened through a good system of communication between caregivers and families that occur during formal and even informal activities,” Family Services Coordinator Michele Nwokobia said.

Nwokobia said parents and caregivers who are at home with their children are in a position to demonstrate good and effective communication. And teachers and Family Service Providers will also need to communicate effectively.

How to maintain effective communication between school and home:

- Check in with each other as frequently as possible.
- Try to communicate positively.
- If there are any concerns, bring them up calmly and sensitively.
- Teachers should send home weekly news about happenings in classes, programs and the community.
- Schedule regular virtual conferences for parents and staff to discuss goals, achievements or concerns.
- Review carefully any documents that are exchanged.
- Utilize all ways to communicate, such as phone calls, e-mail, text, Zoom, Teams video and the School Communicator.

HCDE Head Start is hiring

HCDE Head Start is actively recruiting candidates for a number of positions across the region, and Head Start parents are encouraged to apply. **Vacancies include:** Early Head Start Teachers for the Baytown, Tidwell and La Porte campuses; Custodians for Humble, La Porte, and Barrett Station; a Cook for La Porte; Family Services Providers for Humble; substitutes for all campuses; part-time (20 hours per week) Non-Instructional Aides for all campuses.

A complete listing of all Head Start job opportunities can be found at <https://hcde-texas.org/head-start/> and www.Indeed.com. Due to COVID-19, virtual interviews will be scheduled for those who qualify.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

24 Staff Development Day
 29 Policy Council Meeting

OCTOBER

2 & 3 Program Governance Training
 12 Staff Development Day (CENTERS CLOSED)
 13-26 Assessments
 27 Policy Council Meeting
 30 National HS Day Celebration

NOVEMBER

11 Staff Development day (CENTERS CLOSED)
 16-19 Harvest Festival
 17 Policy Council Meeting
 20 Staff Workday
 23-27 Thanksgiving Break (CENTERS CLOSED)
 30 Parent/Teacher Conferences

DECEMBER

1-11 Parent/Teacher Conferences
 15 Policy Council Meeting
 18 Early Dismissal
 21 Winter Break (CENTERS CLOSED)

Check with each Center Manager for details of these and other happenings, as dates may vary for each center

HeadUp



FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

ESQUINA DEL DIRECTOR

Comenzamos el año escolar 2020 como nunca antes. El equipo de Head Start ha estado trabajando diligentemente para garantizar un entorno seguro tanto para el personal como para los estudiantes, cuando regresen a la escuela en persona, y para brindar servicios de alta calidad a nuestros niños y familias.

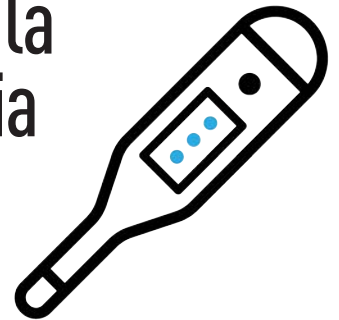
Como saben, la escuela virtual continuará hasta el 16 de octubre. Actualmente, nuestro objetivo es regresar a la instrucción en persona el 19 de octubre y, dependiendo de lo que esté sucediendo con la pandemia, haremos los ajustes necesarios. Mientras tanto, estamos trabajando arduamente para proporcionar comidas a nuestras familias e instrucción a nuestros estudiantes y para crear un ambiente de aprendizaje seguro cuando sea el momento de regresar.

Los animo a todos a mantenerse informados y leer sobre los cambios que hemos realizado en todos los aspectos de nuestro programa. Además de este boletín, nos comunicaremos con los padres a través de Zoom, reuniones individuales con los maestros y reuniones de grupos pequeños para mantener excelentes líneas de comunicación y para que todos estemos preparados para los próximos pasos.

Les agradezco su colaboración en este proceso. Siempre hemos reconocido a nuestros padres y tutores como los primeros y más importantes maestros de nuestros estudiantes. Estamos todos juntos en esto y juntos haremos de este un gran año escolar.

— VENETIA L. PEACOCK

Preparación para la examinación diaria y controles de temperatura



Cuando comiencen las clases presenciales, se implementarán nuevos protocolos de salud y seguridad para combatir la propagación del COVID-19. Los padres deben comenzar a prepararse para estos cambios ahora y entender lo que deben hacer. Todos los estudiantes y miembros del personal deben completar un cuestionario de evaluación electrónico y someterse a un control de temperatura antes de ingresar al edificio. Cada mañana, antes de ir a la escuela, los padres recibirán un correo electrónico con un enlace al cuestionario. Los padres deben hacer clic en el enlace y responder las preguntas de cada niño inscrito en el programa. Las preguntas se refieren a si un niño tiene algún síntoma y sobre la posible exposición al COVID-19. Al completar el cuestionario, los padres recibirán un mensaje informándoles si su hijo está aprobado para asistir a la escuela. Para estar preparados para este proceso, los padres deben asegurarse de tener acceso regular a una dirección de correo electrónico que funcione.

Si el niño es aprobado para asistir a la escuela, los padres recibirán un código QR que es exclusivo de su hijo. El código QR debe presentarse en la escuela para que se controle la temperatura del niño. Un miembro del personal escaneará el código QR y tomará la temperatura del niño con un termómetro infrarrojo sin contacto. Si el niño no es aprobado para asistir a la escuela, hay ciertos pasos que deben completarse antes de que pueda regresar a la escuela. Debido a que es posible que un niño tenga que permanecer en casa durante varios días antes de regresar a la escuela, los padres deben prepararse ahora asegurándose de tener disponible apoyo para el cuidado de los niños.

Si un niño tiene algún síntoma, exposición a COVID-19 y / o una temperatura de 100.4 F o más, no se le permitirá ingresar al edificio. Es importante que los padres sepan que no se permitirá la entrada a ningún estudiante al edificio sin un cuestionario de evaluación completo y un control de temperatura.



Entorno de aprendizaje adaptado para reducir la propagación del COVID-19



Para reducir la propagación del COVID-19, las aulas y las prácticas docentes se han adaptado para fomentar distanciamiento social entre estudiantes y personal. Los salones de clases de Early Head Start se dividirán en dos mediante un divisor con una disposición idéntica en cada lado. Cada una de estas aulas “reflejadas” tendrá capacidad para grupos de hasta 4 estudiantes, que tendrán acceso a los mismos elementos y experiencias. Los salones de clases regulares de Head Start también tendrán un divisor para dividir el número de niños en grupos más pequeños de hasta 10 estudiantes. Sin embargo, la configuración del aula en su conjunto seguirá siendo la misma

que antes, lo que permitirá que ambos grupos accedan a los materiales y áreas en diferentes momentos del día.

El mismo maestro y personal de apoyo educativo permanecerá con el mismo grupo de niños todos los días. Habrá más aprendizaje y juego al aire libre, y el uso del espacio común interior será limitado. Festivales y eventos especiales serán cancelados o pospuestos.

Todo el personal deberá usar una máscara. No se requerirá que los estudiantes usen una máscara, pero si los padres desean que su hijo use una máscara, deben proporcionársela a su hijo. Las mascarillas reutilizables se enviarán a casa todos los días para lavarlas.

Todos los días se mantendrán las normas mínimas de limpieza y desinfección de las instalaciones educativas. Los juguetes que se pueden poner en la boca se limpiarán y desinfectarán después de cada uso. Las superficies de alto contacto, como mesas, picaportes, encimeras e inodoros, y los artículos de alto uso se limpiarán regularmente durante el día.

Anticipándose a esta “nueva normalidad”, la Coordinadora de Educación y Servicios Especiales, Lenora Reed, aconsejó a los padres que hablen con sus hijos sobre cómo serán las cosas para disipar los temores y facilitar la transición a las clases presenciales.

Los ajustes del servicio de comidas siguen siendo una experiencia de aprendizaje

Los Servicios de Nutrición están realizando cambios en la forma en que se sirven las comidas una vez que los estudiantes regresan al aula como parte de la misión de combatir la propagación de COVID-19. Los maestros servirán a cada estudiante todos los componentes de la comida en su área de descanso designada, utilizando la nueva configuración como una experiencia de aprendizaje. Los estudiantes continuarán usando sus propios utensilios para practicar y fortalecer sus habilidades motoras finas, pero se usarán productos de papel



para agilizar la limpieza. Los estudiantes luego se lavarán las manos antes de pasar a su próxima actividad.

Los estudiantes aún podrán recibir comidas durante la escuela virtual, ya que el Departamento de Agricultura de Texas aceptó las exenciones de Head Start al Programa de Alimentos para el Cuidado de Niños y Adultos para el Aprendizaje Virtual debido a COVID-19. Los padres y cuidadores pueden recoger todas las comidas los lunes, miércoles y viernes. Se enviará una encuesta a los padres a través de School Messenger para reservar comidas.



Controlando la ansiedad y el estrés

La coordinadora de servicios familiares, Michele Nwokobia, dijo que la prioridad número uno para los padres y el personal durante este tiempo es asegurarse de que presten atención a sus propias necesidades para que puedan cuidar mejor a los demás.

Para ayudar a sobrellevar el estrés y la ansiedad, pruebe estos consejos:

- Manténgase informado, pero trate de limitar la exposición a las fuentes de noticias.
- Tome tiempo todos los días para relajarse.
- Modele prácticas de cuidado personal para su hijo.
- Duerma lo suficiente.
- Evite el consumo excesivo de alcohol y drogas.
- Hable con personas de su confianza sobre cualquier inquietud que tenga.
- Trate de mantener una rutina lo más normal posible.
- Manténgase conectado con amigos, familiares, compañeros de trabajo y vecinos.



Para obtener más información sobre cómo lidiar con el estrés y la ansiedad, visite o llame a

<https://theharriscenter.org/COVID-19-Support-Line-and-Resources>

línea de apoyo de salud mental al 833-251-7544.



Procedimientos de seguridad y salud van a mejorar

Los estudiantes y el personal tendrán que someterse a exámenes electrónicos diarios y un control de temperatura una vez que comiencen las clases en persona como parte de las medidas mejoradas de salud y seguridad que HCDE Head Start está tomando para detener la propagación de COVID-19. El personal deberá usar una máscara. Se lavarán las manos con frecuencia y pediremos que todos practiquen distanciamiento social. Los visitantes esenciales se mantendrán al mínimo, pero aquellos que ingresen a los centros deberán adherirse a las nuevas prácticas. Además, las áreas y superficies de uso intensivo se limpiarán y desinfectarán regularmente durante el día.

Los procedimientos para dejar y recoger a los estudiantes también cambiarán. Los padres deberán usar una máscara al dejar a sus hijos y practicar distanciamiento social. A la salida, los estudiantes serán acompañados afuera para que los padres los recojan.

Construyendo relaciones significativas en un mundo virtual

Dado que la mayoría de las interacciones entre las familias y el personal serán virtuales en el futuro previsible, es importante establecer líneas sólidas de comunicación para construir y mantener relaciones significativas y para que los niños prosperen, según dijo la Coordinadora de Servicios Familiares Michele Nwokobia.

Nwokobia tiene estos consejos para mantener una comunicación eficaz entre la escuela y el hogar:

- Comuníquese regularmente con el personal.
- Trate de comunicarse de manera positiva.
- Los maestros enviarán a casa noticias semanales sobre los acontecimientos en las clases, los programas y la comunidad.
- Programe conferencias virtuales regulares para discutir metas, logros o preocupaciones.
- Revise cuidadosamente cualquier documento que se intercambie.
- Utilice todas las formas de comunicación, llamadas telefónicas, correo electrónico, texto, Zoom, video de Teams y School Communicator.



HCDE Head Start está contratando

H HCDE Head Start está buscando activamente candidatos para varios puestos en la región y animamos a los padres de Head Start a postularse. **Las vacantes incluyen:** Maestros de Early Head Start para los campus de Baytown, Tidwell y La Porte; Custodios de Humble, La Porte y Barrett Station; un cocinero de La Porte; Proveedores de servicios familiares para Humble; sustitutos para todos los campus; Auxiliares no educativos a tiempo parcial (20 horas por semana) para todos los campus.

Puede encontrar una lista completa de todas las oportunidades laborales de Head Start en <https://hcde-texas.org/head-start/> y www.indeed.com. Debido a COVID-19, se programarán entrevistas virtuales para quienes califiquen.



MARQUEN SUS CALENDARIOS

SEPTIEMBRE

24Entrenamiento al personal
29Reunión del Consejo Político

OCTUBRE

2 & 3Entrenamiento del programa de gobierno
12Entrenamiento al personal (CENTROS CERRADOS)
13-26Evaluaciones
27Reunión del Consejo Político
30Celebración nacional del día de HS

NOVIEMBRE

11Entrenamiento al personal (CENTROS CERRADOS)
16-19Festival de cosecha
17Reunión del Consejo Político
20Día del trabajo del personal
23-27Día de acción de gracias (CENTROS CERRADOS)
30Conferencia de padres y maestros

DICIEMBRE

1-11Conferencia de padres y maestros
15Reunión del Consejo Político
18Salida Temprano
21Vacaciones de invierno (CENTROS CERRADOS)

Revise con el gerente de su centro ya que las fechas podrían variar.

CENTER DIRECTORY

BARRETT STATION	11901 Mulberry St., Crosby, TX 77532 Kathy Greenway, Center Mgr. 713-696-3119
BAYTOWN	317 Massey Thompkins Rd., Baytown, TX 77571 Norma Starr, Center Mgr. 713-696-3120
CHANNELVIEW	16102 Ridlon, Channelview, TX 77530 Cynthia Johnson, Center Mgr. 713-696-1852
COMPTON	9720 Spaulding St., Houston, TX 77016 Merevonna Ross-Daniel, Center Mgr. 713-635-4142
COOLWOOD	767 Coolwood Dr., Houston, TX 77013 Valerie Stephens, Center Mgr. 713-451-9024
DOGAN	4202 Liberty Rd., Houston, TX 77026 Marie Angelica Barcus, Center Mgr. 713-672-0207
FIFTH WARD	4014 Market St., Houston, TX 77020 Traci Houston, Center Mgr. 713-237-0264
FONWOOD	9709 Mesa Dr., Houston, TX 77078 Markeysha Hinderman, Center Mgr. 713-556-3830
HUMBLE	130 Atascocita, Humble, TX 77396 Lisa Ntabaazi, Center Mgr. 713-696-3121
J.D. WALKER	7613A Wade Rd., Baytown, TX 77521 Lisa Wells, Center Mgr. 713-696-3122
LA PORTE	927 South 1st St., Laporte, TX 77571 Nadia Epps, Center Mgr. 713-696-3123
PUGH	1042 Henke St., Houston, TX 77020 Catherine Jones, Center Mgr. 713-675-6222
SHEFFIELD	14300 Wallisville Rd., Houston, TX 77049 Sherry Eagleton, Center Mgr. 713-450-3813
TIDWELL	8302 John Ralston Rd., Houston, TX 77044 Carla LeVeaux, Center Mgr. 713-696-3124

HCDE Head Start Team

Superintendent

James Colbert, Jr.

Assistant Superintendent

Jonathan M. Parker

Senior Director

Venetia L. Peacock

Assistant Director Early Head Start CCP

James Stancill

Assistant Director of Operations

Lisa Boone

Assistant Director of Compliance and Family Services

Gulshan Rahman

Community Partnership Manager

Armando Rodriguez

Operations Manager

Suzanne Cates

Compliance Manager

Gino Kamaya

Education & Special Services Manager

Pamela Jones-Lee

Nutrition Services Manager

Sandra Pearson

Compliance

Adriane Marks

Ishan Rajani

Ikea Rice

Education

Ramona Burton

Yadira DeLaCruz

Maria Gomez

Patricia Kuskos

Lenora Reed

Vanessa Ward

Family Services

Daniela Gonzalez

Marisol Montalvo

Michele Nwokobia

Cesilia Pereira

Health

Amanda Vongsaly

Raúl Zavaleta

Mental Health

Vacant

Nutrition

Jade Davis

Monica Niles

Melissa Wilder

Operations

Taiwan Reliford

Laura Dugas-Kelley

Training

Chloe Nolasco

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Richard Cantu

Andrea Duhon

Amy Hinojosa

Don Sumners

Mike Wolfe

2020 Head Start Newsletter Team

Production Manager

Armando Rodriguez

Translator

Elda Rueda

Editor

Annette Baird

Designer

Jim Cunningham

AREA I HEAD START

6300 Irvington Blvd., Houston, TX 77022 **713-672-9343**

HCDE Head Start Mission and Vision: To improve school readiness for children, families and the community | To create a learning environment of excellence dedicated to positively impacting our children, families, employees, community partners and society | Para mejorar la preparación para la escuela para niños, familias y la comunidad | Para crear un ambiente de aprendizaje excelente dedicado a impactar a los niños, familias, empleados, socios de la comunidad y la sociedad.

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