

STEPPING STONES LEARNING ACADEMY



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OVERVIEW

ADMINISTRATION	ABOUT US
Linda Brannock, M.Ed. <i>Owner/Administrator</i>	Stepping Stones Learning Academy , approved by the Maryland Department of Education and Office of Child Care, is a coeducational private school and child care facility located in Fruitland, Maryland. It opened its doors in August 1999 serving grades kindergarten and first. The following year it expanded its service to include pre-kindergarten and second grade. Currently, the facility services grades pre-kindergarten (age four) through twelfth. SSLA is continuously growing and expanding program offerings to ensure that it remains academically competitive.
Christina Ennis, M.Ed. <i>Administrator Reading Specialist</i>	OUR MISSION:
Christina Schreiber <i>Elementary Education Supervisor</i>	To provide a safe, nurturing, but rigorous academic/learning environment that helps children develop to their fullest potential. We believe parents should be an integral part of their children's education and encourage them to become involved in the classroom.
Randall Brannock <i>Chief Financial Officer</i>	MISSION STATEMENT: To foster educational and developmental achievement with Collaboration Accountability Respect Excellence
ACCREDITATION	ACADEMICS AT A GLANCE
SSLA is nationally accredited through the National Independent Private School Association (NIPSA). SSLA is regionally accredited through the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA). Accreditation is a distinction available to both public and private educational institutions. It is an achievement denoting high and rigorous academic standards. Currently, only the local private schools hold this distinction.	Stepping Stones Learning Academy strives to provide a challenging academic program for students that will prepare them for both secondary and post-secondary education. The elementary curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all children and all types of learners. It promotes not only cognitive development but also social, emotional as well as physical-motor. The secondary curriculum offers advanced level courses and dual enrollment options with Wor-Wic Community College. All grades are encouraged to incorporate technology and engage in differentiated, cooperative and cross-curricular instruction, especially in the elementary curriculum. In addition, SSLA is dedicated to providing all of our students with experiential learning opportunities through hands-on learning activities, labs and field trips. Some of our more notable experiences include: caving in Sweetwater, Tennessee, whitewater rafting near Fayetteville, West Virginia, exploring Mt. Rushmore at Keystone, South Dakota, swimming with dolphins in Orlando, Florida and gem mining in North Carolina.

TEACHING STRATEGIES	ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION												
<p><i>1. General</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to vary lessons and activities from teacher directed to child initiated to provide planned activities but be flexible enough to capitalize on spontaneous learning opportunities b. to vary activities from passive to active exploration c. to limit quantity of passive time expected at one sitting d. to provide “hands-on,” concrete materials which will offer first hand experiences and manipulation opportunities which increases the relevancy of concept/skill to the child <p><i>2. Social Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to provide daily opportunities for large and small group interaction as well as individual time b. to provide opportunities for cooperative learning activities which are designed to help create a positive interactive classroom environment and promote social skills <p><i>3. Emotional Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to provide opportunities for the child to express and reflect on his feelings b. to take the given opportunities to help a child with his emotions in an appropriate manner c. to provide daily opportunities for aesthetic expression, appreciation, and creativity through art, music, and movement <p><i>4. Physical-Motor Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to provide planned activities but be flexible enough to capitalize on spontaneous learning opportunities b. to vary activities from passive to active exploration c. to limit quantity of passive time expected at one sitting d. to provide “hands-on,” concrete materials which will offer first hand experiences and manipulation opportunities which increases the relevancy of concept/skill to the child e. to provide opportunities for gross motor development and coordination f. to provide opportunities for fine motor development and coordination <p><i>5. Cognitive Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to provide a variety of “hands-on” activities and experiences that increases concepts in language arts, math, science, and social studies b. to integrate subject areas through use of thematic approach c. to provide units of study and activities that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) increase self-awareness 2) increase awareness of others 3) increase awareness of the world around them 4) capitalize on the natural interest of the child to learn d. to provide activities that promote problem-solving and higher level thinking 	<p>Enrollment is considered continual until a formal withdrawal or dismissal is made from the program.</p> <p>Students can only be admitted into the program upon the completion of all forms included in the enrollment packet. If a student is transferring from another school or facility, then all required forms must be received from the former school or facility prior to admission. Any forms or information not received must be completed and turned in by parents.</p> <p>During registration, parents have the responsibility to provide the school with any information regarding allergies, special diet, asthma, health and medical concerns, or behavioral concerns. Failure to do so hinders the school's ability to determine whether our program can accommodate the needs of the student, and may result in a student being dismissed from the program.</p> <p>Staff will post all allergies on the refrigerator and/or in the classroom so that all staff are made aware of the special health care needs of the children.</p> <p>Although Stepping Stones does admit children into the program with disabilities and special medical conditions, it reserves the right to deny admissions if the needs are too extensive to be met by the physical and medical abilities of its staff.</p> <p>CLASS SIZE</p> <p>15:1 Student/Teacher ratio</p> <p>SECONDARY GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS</p> <p>In accordance with the Maryland State Department of Education guidelines, a secondary program must have students successfully complete a minimum of 21 credits in order to graduate.</p> <p>A credit for a course is earned upon successful completion and demonstration of course content knowledge. Failure during fourth quarter or a cumulative grade below 60% will result in credit not being given for an individual course.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">4 credits of English</td> <td style="width: 50%;">4 credits of History</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 credits of Science</td> <td>4 credits of Mathematics</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 credits of a Foreign Language</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 credit of Health/Physical Education</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 credit of Technology Education</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 credit of Fine Arts</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	4 credits of English	4 credits of History	4 credits of Science	4 credits of Mathematics	2 credits of a Foreign Language		1 credit of Health/Physical Education		1 credit of Technology Education		1 credit of Fine Arts	
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STEPPING STONES LEARNING ACADEMY



ADMISSION POLICIES

Stepping Stones Learning Academy admits any student, regardless of race, gender, nationality, and or religion, into the elementary and/or secondary educational program provided that all state child care regulations and school policies have been met. SSLA does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, nationality or religion in the hiring of staff.

Enrollment at SSLA is a privilege, not a right. All students, parents and staff are expected to display positive attitudes toward the school and recognize that a positive school environment is as important for personal well-being as it is for academics. SSLA is motivated to do all that is possible to ensure the success of every student, but the same should be said for both students and parents.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

- 1) Willingness by both the student(s) and the parent(s) to be motivated and an integral part of the educational program here at SSLA
- 2) Completed enrollment forms, signed by parent(s), including pertinent health records (health inventory and shot record, lead screening for students under age six) and transfer of records form
- 3) In good financial standing with previous private school or day care facility attended
- 4) Payment of SSLA's registration/supply fee

* It is expected that all students entering the pre-kindergarten program be toilet trained. All students should be able to use the bathroom independently. While accidents do occur on occasion, a regular pattern of this behavior is problematic and will be addressed with parents. Training pants/Pull-ups are not permitted. SSLA reserves the right to have the student withdrawn until training is complete.

POLICIES FOR ADMISSION

- 1) Applications for admittance will be accepted throughout the year.
- 2) Acceptance is based on space availability and academic/social readiness (for younger students).
- 3) Students entering the pre-kindergarten program should be 4 years of age by September 1st.
- 4) Please refer to our Inclusion/Accessibility Policy for further admission policies regarding special needs students.

INCLUSION/ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Stepping Stones does admit children into the program with emotional, cognitive, and physical disabilities as well as special medical conditions, but reserves the right to deny admissions or dismiss from the program if the needs are too extensive to be met by the physical and medical abilities of its staff.

Having both handicapped ramps and bathrooms, Stepping Stones is fully accessible to anyone with mobility issues.

Stepping Stones believes that parents/guardians are an essential component in the establishment of best care and education for their child. Parents and staff work together to determine when and what types of modifications are needed to ensure the emotional, social, and cognitive success of the individual child.

Whenever feasible, the program and materials will be modified or adapted to meet the varying abilities, learning styles, and needs of each unique child. In addition, Stepping Stones and its staff will, when able, meet IEP and 504 accommodations that may not already be met through our reduced class size and flexible scheduling.

Below is a list of community resources available for a child who may have special needs:

- 1) Maryland Department of Mental Health and Hygiene: <http://specialneeds.dhmh.maryland.gov/>
- 2) Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Lower Eastern Shore: 410-543-2447
- 3) Deaf Independent Living Association: 410-742-5052
- 4) Dove Pointe: 410-341-4472
- 5) Lower Shore Childcare Resource Center: 410-543-6650
- 6) The Family Connection Center: 410-546-8415

EXTENDED CARE

Before School Care: For an additional fee, students may come to the before-school program from 7 am to 8:30 am. This is also offered to Fruitland Primary and Intermediate students. The bus to Fruitland picks up these students from Walden Drive. Secondary students who begin classes before 8:30 do not need to pay an additional fee.

After School Care: For an additional fee, students may come to the after-school program from 3:45 pm to 5:30 pm. This is also offered to Fruitland Primary and Intermediate students as well Magnet students. The bus to Fruitland drops off these students from Walden Drive. Snack is provided during this time as well as time for students to work on homework.

WITHDRAW & TERMINATION POLICY

Parents who are choosing to withdraw their child from Stepping Stones must give a two week notice in writing or be subject to an additional two weeks tuition fee.

Termination of Services:

1. Failure to meet financial obligations could result in immediate termination of services.
2. Accounts more than two weeks in arrears could be subject to termination.
3. Should termination of services result from failure to meet financial obligation, child care and school records as well as tax information will be withheld until such time that account balance has been settled.
4. On rare occasions, students do not adjust to our program and structure. If all attempts to help the child adjust becomes futile, parents will be given 2 weeks notice to find an alternative center or school.

STEPPING STONES LEARNING ACADEMY



TUITION, FEES & FINANCIAL POLICIES 2022-2023

The President and Vice President of Stepping Stones Learning Academy set tuition annually based on past expenses, realistic projections and other relevant economic factors. The goal is to have a balanced budget that is able to fund a challenging academic program at the lowest possible cost to our families. As such, the following fees and policies have been outlined below:

TUITION

School Hours Only (Pre-K to 12th)	\$5577/yr
School Hours + Extended Care (Pre-K to 12th)	\$6708/yr
Before OR After Care (Fruitland Bus Students)	\$60/week
Before AND After Care (Fruitland Bus Students)	\$75/week

ADDITIONAL FEES

Registration/Supply Fee: \$215 per student. This fee covers all school supplies. SSLA does not charge for textbooks as we currently receive the Non-public School Textbook Grant through the Maryland State Department of Education.

Technology Maintenance Fee: \$40 per student in grades 4th-12th only.

Optional school lunch: Varies per month. SSLA offers lunch options to students Monday, Wednesday and Friday. A monthly calendar of what is available is sent home at the beginning of each month.

TUITION PAYMENT OPTIONS

SSLA has several different payment options from which to choose, please contact the office for current payment schedules.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Currently, SSLA offers limited financial assistance, which will be re-evaluated on an annual basis. Please see the office manager for a financial assistance application.

ACCOUNT STATEMENTS

Account statements are emailed every two weeks to those who have an outstanding balance on their account. Statements can be requested, however, at any time. Please see the office manager for this request.

RELEASE OF STUDENT RECORDS

No student records will be released to any person or institution if there is an outstanding balance. All tuition and fees must be paid in full.

TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER PRIVATE SCHOOL/DAY CARE

If your student is transferring from another educational/day care facility, including our sister school Stepping Stones Early Learning Center, SSLA may call the previous school to verify your payment history. If you have an outstanding debt at that facility, SSLA reserves the right to place admittance on hold or deny admission all together until your debt is paid. SSLA may ask you to meet with the office manager to discuss payment details before admission of your student(s).

FAILURE TO MEET FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Please refer to the Termination of Services located in the ADMISSION POLICIES SECTION

STEPPING STONES LEARNING ACADEMY



EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES & POLICIES

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

As an educational facility it is important not to focus strictly on the cognitive development of children but on the overall development of each child. Thus, it becomes vital to understand the growth and development of young children in each of the developmental domains. There are many theories that attempt to chart and explain the development of children. Here at Stepping Stones Learning Academy, we believe that no one theory can accurately explain how children grow, think, and develop. Therefore, we attempt to establish our program based on sound research and multiple theories.

First, there are certain environmental factors that must be in place before children can gain independence, initiate and propel their own learning, and develop a strong cognitive knowledge base. All children have basic needs that must be met. Children must feel comfortable, safe, and secure. Once their physical and security needs have been met, the children can then focus on the emotional and social needs of belongingness and acceptance. The satisfying of the physical, psychological, and social needs will enable a child to move from a stage of trust to that of independence and initiation. Now, the child is able to concentrate his efforts on cognitive development.

With the on-going research in brain development come changes in theories about child development and teaching methodology. However, certain factors and beliefs will remain constant. Children are all unique beings that develop at different rates and times, have different learning styles, and possess different types of intelligence. Each child is characterized by individual strengths and weaknesses. It is this unique individuality of children that must be remembered and utilized when developing a program.

We believe that children learn the best when exposed to a multitude and variety of “hands-on” activities and concrete, multi-modality experiences. Through self-motivated exploration and learning, higher level thinking and problem solving can be promoted, eventually leading to more abstract thinking. It is also important to remember that social learning plays a vital role in development and learning. Children not only develop social relationships with adults and peers but also gain knowledge through role-modeling/imitation and cooperative learning activities.

Thus, if given a nurturing and supportive environment and the opportunity to utilize their natural curiosity, desire to learn, abundance of energy, and social-ness, children can excel to their fullest potential in all developmental domains.

OUR MISSION:

To provide a safe, nurturing, but rigorous academic/learning environment that helps children develop to their fullest potential. We believe parents should be an integral part of their children’s education and encourage them to become involved in the classroom.

MISSION STATEMENT: To foster educational and developmental achievement with
Collaboration
Accountability
Respect
Excellence

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **Curriculum Design Goals:**

A curriculum shall be developed or chosen that will:

1. meet the needs of the individual child by providing activities and experiences that will enhance the physical-motor, perceptual-cognitive, speech and language, and emotional and social development
2. recognize each child as an unique individual with different abilities, interests and learning styles, and thus provide activities that are responsive to those differences
3. to provide activities and experiences that will enhance the development of the child's self- esteem and instill positive feelings toward learning
4. to utilize a thematic approach which integrates subject areas

- **Instructional Goals:**

Environment: The environment shall be developed, prepared, and organized so that it:

1. reflects the philosophy that children are active learners who learn by interacting with their environment
2. invites and encourages a child to investigate, explore, create, and image through the use of a variety of materials and learning centers
3. allows for children to utilize a multi-modality approach to learning
4. empowers the child with a sense of responsibility for enhancing his own learning and further pursuing knowledge and interests beyond that introduced in formal class instruction
5. enhances problem-solving and creative thinking skills

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSES

SIXTH GRADE	SEVENTH GRADE	EIGHTH GRADE
English	English	English
Pre-Algebra II	Algebra I Part 1	Algebra I Part 2
Earth Science	Physical Science	Life Science
Ancient World History	Medieval History	Modern World History
Journalism 6	Journalism 7	Journalism 8
Spanish 1A	Spanish 1B	Spanish I
Electives: Art, Music, Gym, Dance	Electives: Art, Music, Gym, Dance	Electives: Art, Music, Gym, Dance

HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

FRESHMAN (9)	SOPHOMORE (10)	JUNIOR (11)	SENIOR (12)
English 9: Modern World Literature (1)	English 10: American Literature (1)	English 11: British Literature (1)	English 12: Literature & Film (1)
Biology (1)	Chemistry (1)	Physics (1)	Environmental Science (1)
American Government (1)	U.S History (1)	European History (1)	Anthropology (1)
Algebra I or Algebra II (1)	Algebra II or Geometry (1)	Geometry or Statistics (1)	Statistics or College Algebra (1)
Spanish I or Spanish II (1)	Spanish II or Spanish III (1)	Introduction to Psychology (1)	Dual enrollment options with Wor-Wic
Health & Physical Education (1)	Journalism & Advanced Composition (1)	Creative Writing (1/2)	
Art History (1/2)	Technology A: Home Economics (1/2)	SAT Prep (1/2)	
General Music (1/2)	Technology B: Wood Working & Processes (1/2)	DUAL Enrollment options with Wor-Wic	

ATTENDANCE

Regular and prompt attendance has been positively correlated with academic success. It is essential that students be in class in order to learn and grow cognitively, socially, and emotionally. If there are extenuating circumstances or health issues preventing the students from attending school, doctor's notes need to be provided to the office. Even as a private institution, we are required to report instances of severe truancy to the proper authorities.

Secondary students must arrive on time to all of their classes. Assignments are due at the beginning of those classes and will only be accepted late at the discretion of the teacher. Students who are at least 16 years of age may only have up to 10 unexcused absences or risk failing for the year.

If a student will have an extended absence due to a family vacation, a form will need to be filled out and filed with the office at least 2 weeks prior, so that teachers can be notified and work can be collected before the student will be absent. Failure to do so may result in zeros being given for missing/incomplete assignments.

BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Disciplinary Policy:

Discipline can be defined as the training or teaching that develops self-control and character resulting in appropriate conduct and behavior.

It develops through the standards we establish, our expectations of the children, and the methods by which we help children to understand the rules and their importance.

It is the policy of this school to help children develop the skills needed in order to develop responsibility and self-discipline. Activities, routines, and instructional procedures are designed to help guide children in making the right choices and to understand and accept the consequences of their own behavior.

Discipline cannot be established within the classroom unless the following criteria have been met:

1. rules and guidelines for the classroom and school are fair and consistent
2. rules and guidelines have been carefully explained to the children
3. teacher's expectations are developmentally appropriate
4. adults serve as positive role models
5. children are given supportive supervision and positive guidance
6. adults and children respect each other
7. environment and activities are developmentally appropriate

Corrective discipline:

In cases where corrective discipline may be needed due to inappropriate behavior, the following steps will be taken:

Teachers will...

1. talk quietly and privately to the child in regards to infractions of the rules to insure understanding
2. give verbal warning or reminder
3. remove the child from the area, group, or equipment

In cases where the child may not have emotional control or may be having trouble dealing appropriately with classmates, the child will be asked to leave to go to a designated quiet area or "time-out" area until which time he/she feels they can rejoin the class. At no time should the other children or teacher be subjected to the stress that can be created by an out of control child; therefore, an office personnel will be called to help alleviate the stress, mediate and diffuse the situation, and supervise the child until which time self-control is re-established. Before the child is allowed to rejoin the group, he/she must discuss the inappropriateness of their behavior and suggest alternative ways to behave the next time a similar situation should occur.

In the secondary program, students may be given consequences such as lunch detentions, Saturday schools, and or loss of behavior incentive activities. Secondary program families should also refer to their agenda for more detailed information.

The school will make every effort to handle situations as they occur. However, if infractions of the rules become repetitive, dangerous or aggressive towards others, and/or disruptive to the educational program, we will make every effort to communicate with parents in order to develop a cooperative partnership and a plan to help the child comply with the rules and policies of the school. Even so, Stepping Stones reserves the right to dismiss a student from the program if it has become apparent that the program is not the right fit for the student.

Early Intervention:

When students exhibit challenging behaviors that jeopardize the educational program, the safety and care of others, or the safety and well-being of self, parents will be called in for a conference. A behavioral management or intervention plan can be developed, providing that the parents act as a supportive role to both the child and the school staff. When necessary, community resources and professionals are called in as advisors. In certain cases, it may be necessary to have the student withdraw from Stepping Stones.

Communication Expectations:

We believe that many behavior and academic concerns can be mitigated through consistent communication between families, teachers, and students. Teachers can be contacted via email or Class Dojo. We also strongly encourage families to use Gradelink to monitor academic progress. Students in middle and high school will be given their own login credentials in addition to that of the parents.

Additionally, conferences may be scheduled at any time by contacting your child's teacher via email or Class Dojo.

Stepping Stones does, however, reserve the right to dismiss any student, at any time, due to dangerous, aggressive or volatile behavior. Our priority is always to maintain the safety of all students and staff as well as maintain the integrity of our program.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

- 1) Demonstrate academic integrity
- 2) Demonstrate the ability to think critically, creatively and constructively
- 3) Demonstrate personal motivation to grow and succeed academically, socially and emotionally
- 4) Demonstrate the ability to become an independent and lifelong learner
- 5) Demonstrate respect for him/herself, classmates, teachers and the school facility
- 6) Demonstrate the ability to be a responsible citizen and actively participate in classroom/school activities

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Parents are expected to:

- 1) Become an integral part of their student's education
- 2) Communicate effectively and frequently with staff
- 3) Support efforts of teachers
- 4) Fulfill all financial obligations

STAFF EXPECTATIONS

Staff are expected to:

- 1) Communicate effectively and frequently with students and parents
- 2) Provide all students with the opportunity to succeed
- 3) Display professionalism at all times

STEPPING STONES LEARNING ACADEMY



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & POLICIES

HEALTH CARE POLICIES

Immunization:

As your child receives his or her immunizations, it is important to remember to give a copy of those immunizations to the center/school so that health records can be kept updated and current.

Sick child:

In the event that your child becomes ill while at the center/school, you or an authorized person will be contacted immediately to make arrangements for pick up. The teacher will note symptoms and time of contact, as well as time of actual departure.

Children must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication prior to returning to the center. If the child is sick for more than 3 days, a doctor's note may be required prior to return.

No child may remain in attendance with a contagious communicable disease such as chicken pox, strep, and hand foot and mouth disease.

Special Health Care Needs:

During registration, parents have the responsibility to provide the center/school with any information regarding allergies, special diet, asthma, or any other health and medical concerns.

Staff will post all allergies on the refrigerator and/or in the classroom so that all staff are made aware of the special health care needs of the children.

Although Stepping Stones does admit children into the program with disabilities and special medical conditions, it reserves the right to deny admissions if the needs are too extensive to be met by the physical and medical abilities of its staff.

Medication:

Stepping Stones Learning Academy: During the school year between the hours of 8:30 am – 3:30 pm, certain medications can be administered by certified personnel. Emergency medication such as epi-pens and asthma inhalers will be kept at the school and only administered upon direction by 911 or EMT.

Communicable diseases:

If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness, please contact the center/school as soon as possible. The child may return with a note from his/her physician.

All parents will be notified once a contagious disease is reported. The center will distribute a fact sheet about the illness whenever possible.

Staff will do its part in helping to reduce the spread of illness/disease by following hand washing and sanitizing procedures.

CLOTHING

All children should wear appropriate clothing and footwear as well as appropriate outdoor clothing allowing for participation in all aspects of the program. Though there is no school uniform, students of all grades need to wear clothes that promote a positive image. No shirts with questionable images, shorts/pants hanging below the waist, skirts or dresses that are too short or any clothing that shows undergarments.

Students in pre-kindergarten & kindergarten should provide extra clothing in case of toileting mishaps, sickness, and/or messy accidents.

LUNCHES/NUTRITIONAL POLICY

Parents must provide their child with a nutritional lunch each day. All classrooms have refrigerators and microwaves. However, remember to limit the number of heat-up lunches that you send. Please do not send frozen items that take several minutes to cook.

Both SSLA and SSELCC make their own policy regarding whether it will offer students an opportunity to purchase lunch during the week.

Please note that **Stepping Stones Learning Academy and Stepping Stones Early Learning Center are nut/peanut free environments**. Since young children can actually develop a life threatening allergy to nut and peanut products, it is important that everyone do their part to try to keep all our students safe and healthy.

ARRIVAL AND PICK UP

If you have sent someone other than the people you authorized on the emergency card to pick-up your child, please notify the office or your child's teacher. Please advise that person that he or she may have to present a driver's license to verify identity.

The child should be escorted inside and handed to a supervising staff. Please do not allow them to walk in alone. Also, please do not leave cars running and unattended.

Car Seats: By law, all children under the age of 8 or under 65 pounds must be either in a car seat or in a booster seat. We are obligated to restrict the pick-up of children by authorized people if they do not have the appropriate car/booster seat.

Under the influence: We have a legal obligation to protect any child from an adult who is picking up a child from our facility and is believed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

EXTENDED FIELD TRIPS

Stepping Stones encourages hands-on learning experiences and therefore, provides extended learning/field trip opportunities for our older students at the end of the year. If financial obligations for the academic school year have not been met, students will not be allowed to attend any of the extended field trip opportunities.

TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or personal items unless asked for or approved by the teacher. Teachers can not be expected to keep track of each child's personal belongings.

CLASSROOM PETS

Many of our classrooms have classroom pets that range from fish, frogs and turtles, to occasionally a rabbit or guinea pig. If your child suffers from an allergy to a classroom pet, please let your child's teacher know.

PERFUMES AND COLOGNES

Due to a high number of children with asthma, please do not allow your child to wear highly scented deodorants, lotions, or perfumes and colognes of any kind.

SUNTAN LOTION

During the late spring and summer months, parents need to apply suntan lotion to the child in the morning. Parents should also send in suntan lotion so that staff can reapply it in the afternoon.

VOLUNTEERS

In partnership with our local colleges and universities, we often have interns in the classroom throughout the year. Their activities range from observing to conducting lessons. All volunteers are supervised by school staff.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Delays:

Should Wicomico County issue a school delay for fog, SSLA will open and run its academic program as regularly scheduled. Students who arrive late to school within the delay time frame, however, will not be marked tardy.

Stepping Stones reserves the right to follow early morning delays at their discretion. Staff, students and parents will be notified via email and or the school website.

Closings:

Should Wicomico County close schools due to inclement weather, SSLA will remain open, if possible, for childcare services. No regular classes will be in session. If, however, Wicomico County remains closed for an extended period of time, SSLA reserves the right to resume the regular school schedule. Parents will be notified, with as much notice as possible, via email and the school website.

EMERGENCY/CRISIS PLAN PROCEDURE

Responsibilities:

CENTER/SCHOOL: Stepping Stones will retain the responsibility of all children on the premises until they are released to a parent, guardian, or other authorized person, or until they have been transported to an official evacuation center, in which case selected staff will remain with the children until they have been released to the custody of a parent or guardian.

STAFF: All staff will remain on the premises and maintain the supervision of the children or assume whatever tasks deemed necessary by person(s) in charge and may not leave premises until person(s) in charge give them official permission to do so. During a crisis, staff must follow crisis management procedure unless directed by the person(s) in charge to do otherwise.

PARENTS: When deemed necessary for the safety of the children, parents will be telephoned to pick up their child(ren). Mass evacuation or early closings due to severe inclement weather will result in radio, television, and social media announcements. Parents are asked to not inundate the center/school with phone calls, but rather to listen to the local radio and television stations as well as check their email/social media.

In Case of Fire, Natural Disaster, or Bomb Threat:

1. Children and staff will evacuate the facility immediately.
2. Staff will close all windows/doors, take emergency and attendance folders, follow evacuation plans, and take count of all students.
3. Staff will remain outside or at designated areas until authorized officials have deemed it safe to return.
4. Call 911 if necessary.
5. If unable to return to the building or evacuation to alternate emergency location is necessary, parents will be contacted for immediate pick-up at the emergency location.

In Case of Severe Inclement Weather:

In the event of a hurricane or heavy snow storm, Stepping Stones will make announcements on local radio and television stations regarding closings. Parents will also be called if possible. Staff/child ratios will be maintained until all children have been picked up.

In the Case of County School Lock-Down:

In the event that law enforcement agencies have called for “school lock-down” due to possible criminal activity in the area, staff and children will lock all doors and windows and remain inside the building/room until officials have stated that it is safe to resume normal activity. Doors are required to remain locked until law enforcement has deemed it safe to resume normal activity.

In Case of Power Outage:

Stepping Stones is equipped with emergency lights in each room. If power is out for an extended period of time and room temperature becomes too cold or hot. Parents will be notified.

In Case of Medical Emergency:

Stepping Stones staff has both CPR and First aid training. However, in cases of medical emergency, 911 will be called as well as parents/guardians. Student/child will be transported to local hospital if necessary. If a child must be transported by ambulance prior to the arrival of the parent, a Stepping Stones staff will accompany the child to hospital until parent or guardian arrives.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF CLOSINGS

- 1) WBOC NEWS
- 2) Stepping Stones Learning Academy Facebook Page
- 3) Gradelink Email
- 4) www.steppingstones.education

Alternate Location Evacuation:

SSLA – evacuate to Salisbury Dance Academy on Camden Ave. in Fruitland

(If another evacuation location is deemed necessary, parents will be called to notify of that location.)

REGULATORY OFFICES

Maryland State Department of Education
Nonpublic School Branch & Office of Child Care
200 West Baltimore St.
Baltimore, MD 21201
<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/>

STEPPING STONES LEARNING ACADEMY



PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read all the information in this packet including the enrollment procedures, admission policies, tuition/fees/financial policies, educational policies and additional school policies.
2. I agree to uphold the standards set by SSLA and understand that neither they nor I will tolerate profanity, obscenity in words or actions, academic dishonesty or disrespect to the staff of the school.
3. I agree to uphold and support the excellent academic standards set by the school by encouraging my child to succeed academically and modeling that academics are a priority.
4. I understand that my child's needs must fit the educational capabilities of the school.
5. I understand that my financial obligations to the school need to be met on the due dates and understand that it may be necessary to withdraw my child if prior and acceptable arrangements are not made on a past due account. I also understand that no school records will be received or transferred to another school until all debts to Stepping Stones have been paid.
6. I understand that SSLA reserves the right to dismiss any student who fails to comply with the established regulations and discipline.
7. I understand that SSLA reserves the right to change any policy herein, at any time, at the sole discretion of the President and Vice President when it determines that the change is in the best interest of the school. Any change in policy will be given in writing to parents and staff.
8. I understand that the parent and teachers should work together to support academic success and as such I will contact the teacher and discuss any areas of concern before discussing the problem with others. I will encourage and support my student's teacher(s).
9. I agree to provide a completed/updated Emergency Form, Health Form and any copies/updates to my child's Immunization Record.

Print Name

Signature

Date