

# Early Childhood Preschool Program



Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center  
LISTEN, LEARN, COMMUNICATE

## BHSC Preschool Student Handbook 2022-2023

### President's Welcome!

Dear Families,

Choosing a Day Care, Pre-K, or an Early Childhood Program is one of the most important decisions that you will have to make in the life of your child.

I want to thank you for choosing Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center to help meet your child's Pre-K needs. I promise you that our dedicated and supportive staff will work with you and your child to help prepare them for their school age programming. We are always ready to serve as partners with you in your child's education.

Parenting is demanding work that requires your full attention and participation. We hope that we can not only be a help to your child but also an aid to you, as we join together in focusing on the best interests of your son or daughter.

You are always welcome here at BHSC and I encourage you to be involved with your classroom team who are all dedicated to supporting your child and family.



There is no job more important in the world than raising a child to become a responsible adult. We are honored that you have chosen us to join you in taking these first steps in this exciting journey.

Please feel free to share your feedback with us regarding your child and the program. Your input will help us create the best Pre-K opportunities available in WNY for children with special needs. I know that

together we will make a difference in your child's life.

Thank you once again for

choosing to work with Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center.

Sincerely,

*Joseph J. Cozzo*

President/CEO  
Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center

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#### Vision:

*Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center will be recognized by both patients and medical professionals as a world class resource for excellence in clinical and educational outcomes for children and adults.*

#### Mission:

*Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center enriches lives through our caring collaborations, innovative programs and dynamic approaches that successfully impact educational, therapeutic and communication needs of children, adults and families*

# From the Early Childhood Program Director

Dear Families,

It is with pleasure that I welcome you and your child to Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center's Early Childhood Program! We thank you for trusting in us and choosing BHSC to work with you and your child.

We realize that Early Childhood is a critical time in a child's life. During this time, children demonstrate remarkable physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. The interdisciplinary team of professionals working with your child focuses on the individual strengths and areas of need while working on the goals as mandated on your child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).

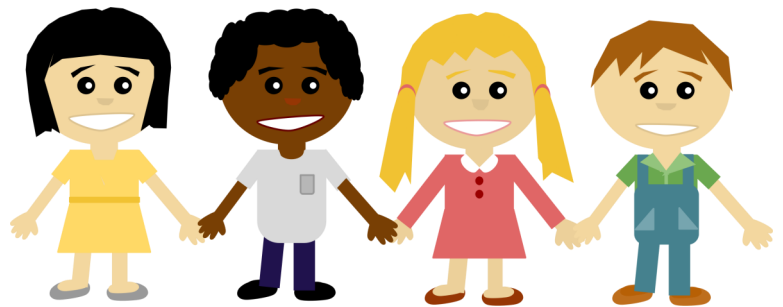
Our program is family centered and utilizes developmentally appropriate philosophies and curriculums that align with NYS Next Generation Standards with highly qualified and trained staff. BHSC strives to provide an early childhood educational program that balances developmental needs, individual differences, and interpersonal relationships. We also emphasize teaching early literacy skills to help each child reach the early milestones necessary for healthy emotional and intellectual growth to help them reach their fullest potential.

We strive for open communication with all our families. Our open door policy at BHSC is currently on hold until we can put the pandemic behind us, however, we want families involved to the greatest extent possible. Please communicate your needs with us. We want your child's first educational experience to be successful and the first step towards a journey of happiness and prosperous learning!

Best Regards,

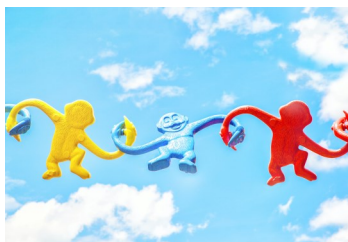
*Lynn C. Shea*

Early Childhood Program Director  
885-8871 Ext. 2233



## Classroom Program Information

- BHSC is New York State Education Approved Special Education Program and licensed through the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS).
- You can find the OCFS regulations at the following website: [ocfs.ny.gov/](http://ocfs.ny.gov/)
- Child admission/services and disenrollment are based on the Child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) written through your child's school district and Committee on Preschool Education (CPSE)
- Each BHSC location has a specific emergency plan in place. Medical emergencies and evacuation procedures are posted in each classroom and office. Families will be notified as per the Emergency Evaluation Plan.
- BHSC will run monthly fire drills and shelter in place drills at least two time per year.



### The Daily Routine Includes:

- Play/Walk outside
- Breakfast/Lunch/Snack
- Circle Time (songs, finger plays, theme-based books)
- Centers (thematic games, sensory activities, craft/art projects)
- At least one of the following: group music, playground, gross motor activities (gym)
- Throughout the day your child will also receive the therapies that are listed on their IEP (Speech, OT, PT, Music, Social Work/ Counseling)
- Rest Period/Quiet time

# BHSC Early Childhood Programs



## Preschool Program

The preschool program serves children ages 3 to 5 years old with speech-language, developmental, social emotional, and/or cognitive delays, as well as those exhibiting characteristics of Autism, in center-based classrooms. Each classroom is staffed with a special education teacher and a classroom aide. Speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, music therapy and family support are provided as indicated on the child's IEP.

### **Self-Contained Ratio Classrooms**

6:1:1—6 students to 1 special education teacher and 1 teacher aide.

8:1:1—8 students to 1 special education teacher, and 1 teacher aide.

8:1:2— 8 students to 1 special education teacher, 2 teacher aides.

12:1:2—12 students to 1 special education teacher, 2 teacher aides.

### **Oral Deaf Education Program (North Street)**

The Oral Deaf Education Program is a preschool program for children age's birth to 5 years who are deaf or hard of hearing. The preschool and early intervention programs follow a [Listening and Spoken Language Model](#) and implement the [Moog curriculum](#) for teaching deaf children to talk. Daily small group therapy sessions are provided to teach students multiple skills related to auditory training, vocabulary and syntax, language, and communication.

The classroom team consists of a Teacher of the Deaf, Teacher assistant, Speech-Language pathologist, and audiologist. The goal is for children to become proficient enough in spoken language to use it as their primary means of communicating through this collaborative approach. Upon completion of the program, our goal is to successfully mainstream children into classes with hearing peers.

### **DIR Floortime® Approach**

ECP implements a Floortime/DIR (Developmental, Individual-differences, Relationship-based) approach for teaching children skills in all developmental areas with a focus on peer and adult social interactions.

[Home of DIRFloortime® \(Floortime\) \(icdl.com\)](#)

## Curriculum

### **Next Generation Learning Standards**

All students are provided access to content-rich programming and instructional practices that support the students' achievement of the NYS Prekindergarten Next Generation Learning Standards.

All our ECP locations follow a standards-based curriculum developed by the NYC Department of Education, integrating thematic, **Interdisciplinary Units of Study** that focus on play with embedded learning opportunities.

<https://infohub.nyced.org/working-with-the-doe/early-childhood/early-childhood-educators/supporting-quality-care-and-instruction/instructional-resources>

### **Second Step Curriculum**

Second Step Curriculum is a set of lessons and activities that help your child learn social emotional skills. Lessons include puppets, songs, posters, books, and other materials children love. Children learn new social emotional skills and practice them all through the day. They learn: to attend to their own feelings and the feelings of others, ways to calm themselves when upset, and how to be a good friend, play fairly, and problem solve using their own thinking.

<https://www.secondstep.org/>

### **Pyramid Model Philosophy**

The Pyramid Model is a positive behavioral intervention and support (PBIS) framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development. All ECP staff are trained in Pyramid Model practices. All of our philosophies and curriculum fit within the Pyramid Model.

<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Pyramid/overview/index.html>

# Communication

In our Early Childhood Program, each classroom team strongly focuses on working with your family to foster and support your child's development. Here are the platforms that we will use (in addition to phone calls) to communicate with you:



- **The Remind App:** A classroom text messaging service your child's teacher and team will utilize to keep you updated on your child. Information on how to download the App and join the BHSC team will be provided by your classroom team. Please be sure to check updates as they come through.
- **Zoom:** This will be the platform used for all remote learning and teletherapy if necessary. Your classroom team will send you invites that you will receive via email in order to join these sessions.
- **Microsoft 365/TEAMS:** Teachers and therapist will be able to communicate through this platform. You will receive an invite to join via email.

Regular communication is essential in order for your child to get the most out of his/her pre-school experience. The following are important reminders regarding communication with your child's classroom team:

- On the rare occasion that you arrive to school later than 8:15AM, please contact your child's classroom team via the phone number and extension they have provided. A classroom team member will then meet you at the door to complete a COVID-19 screening and then bring your child to their classroom.
  - If your child will be absent for the day, please alert your child's team/teacher by 8:00AM.
  - Please notify us if your child will be late to school due to doctor's appointments, car problems, etc. This way we will know to expect your child.
- Please let us know if your child will be absent for a long period of time (e.g. vacation, extended illness, etc.).
- Please be sure to include a written excuse anytime your child is out sick for 5 consecutive days. This protocol is different this year due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and CDC guidelines for quarantining.
- **It is very important that your child's classroom staff be able to contact you at all times. Please be sure to keep updated contact information on file with your child's teacher.**
- **Only those individuals listed on your child's Emergency Contact Form (BLUE CARD) will be allowed to pick your child up from school.**
- It is imperative that we have the supporting documentation regarding your child's guardianship (e.g. custodial paperwork, orders of protection, etc.).
- **Please send in a book bag with your child every day as information will be sent home on a regular basis.**
- Please let us know if there are any changes in your family or major events.



## Phone Calls



- The best time to speak to your child's teacher is **before arrival time or after dismissal.**
- Please feel free to contact your child's classroom team or related service providers to discuss any questions concerns you may have about your child.

# From the Nurse's Office

## Accidents/Injuries

Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center takes great care to provide a safe environment.

- Family/Caregivers will be notified of all accidents either by phone or a written note in the student's notebook.
- In emergency situations, a student may be transported to Oshei Children's Hospital of Buffalo by ambulance.
- We will attempt to contact a child's family or emergency contacts immediately. If your child injures himself or herself at home (bruises, cuts, burns, etc.) please notify the teacher via note or phone call.



## Illness

At BHSC we know that children are going to get sick at some point in their school attendance.

- To keep all children and staff as healthy as possible, we ask that you keep your child home if they are exhibiting signs of illness.
- Refer to our Medical Alert Letter and the CDC Pre-K toolkit regarding COVID-19.
- In the event that your child did become ill while at school, you will be required to arrange for them to be picked up.
- Children should be free from fever (without medication), vomiting or diarrhea for a minimum 24 hours before returning to school.
- When a contagious disease (e.g. ringworm, pink eye, strep throat, COVID-19) is diagnosed or suspected, a note from your child's physician will be requested so that your child may be permitted to return to school.
- The note must state that the child is no longer contagious and can participate fully in daycare. (This is a Daycare OCFS Regulation).



## Head Lice Policy

Head lice is a very common occurrence in young children. This has nothing to do with cleanliness. At BHSC we are concerned about the well being of each child. If live lice are found on a child, the child's primary contact is notified and asked to pick their child up from school.

- Information will be given to the caregiver/family regarding treatment options.
- Upon return to school, the child will be checked for live lice and/or nits and may stay at school if there are no live lice present.
- To avoid re-infestation, it is important to inspect, comb, and treat all family members for two weeks (life cycle of lice).
- It is important for caregivers to comb through their child's hair twice a day for at least 2 weeks. Be assured that we will do everything possible to prevent infestation at our Center.
- We do have a list of local resources that offer preventative and treatment services and/or products. Along with information to bust myths regarding lice infestations and how it spreads.

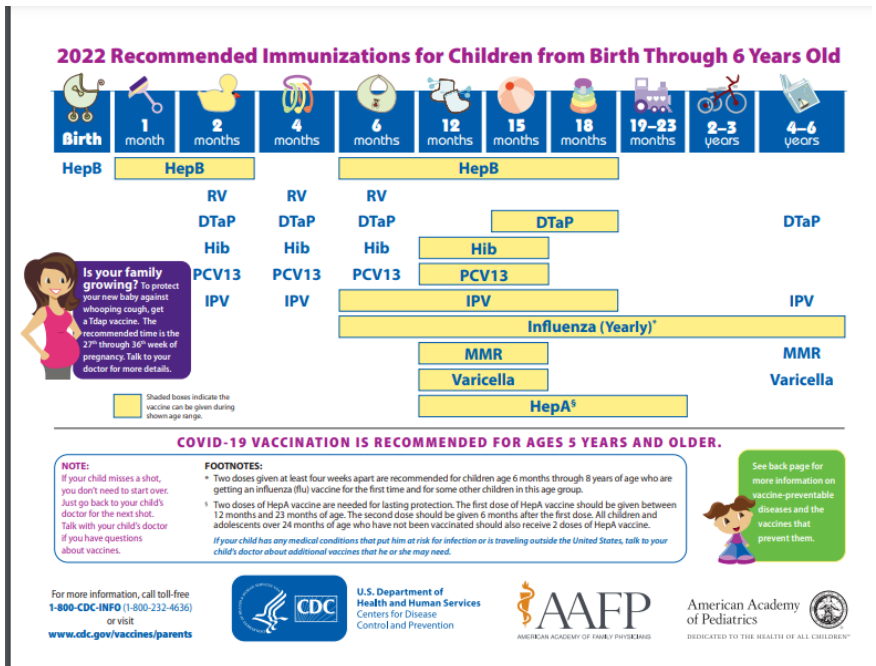


# Immunizations

## Immunizations

New York State requires that we have verification of completed immunization in order for your child to enter our program. Below are the *minimum* requirements for preschoolers:

- Polio (3 doses)
- DPT (4 doses)
- Hib (1-4 doses)
- Hepatitis B (3 doses)
- MMR (1 dose)
- Chickenpox (1 dose)
- Pneumococcal (1-4 doses)



BHSC will review requests for Medical exemptions from immunizations. For more information on immunizations and vaccine-preventable diseases please visit [2021 Combined Recommended Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 0 through 18 years \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz/downloads/pdf/2021-combined-recommended-immunization-schedule-for-persons-aged-0-through-18-years.pdf)

## Medications

If a child requires medication (prescription or over-the-counter) during school, it may be given only if the following conditions have been met:

1. Written authorization from the child's physician and primary caregiver on appropriate forms. Medications such as Tylenol or Motrin need to be prescribed when being given in school.
2. All medication must be in the original pharmacy labeled container.
3. Since State law prohibits any medication to be transported on the bus, all medication must be brought to school by the family.
4. Students are not to carry any kind of medication.

All medication will be kept in the Nurse's Office, except EpiPens which will be kept with appropriate staff working with your child.



All medication must be picked up at the end of the school year. Any medication has not been picked up will be disposed of according to Health Department Standards.

BHSC has staff who are specifically trained in administering medication, by completing the American Red Cross MAT Certification. These staff members will assure that your child safely receives medication as authorized by the physician.

# Breakfast Lunch Program



Breakfast and lunch are provided daily to students at all full day programs at no cost to families. A menu may be provided by your child’s teacher. All meals options follow the recommended USDA Nutrition Guidelines (see below). The catering companies vary based on site locations.

Buffalo Hearing and Speech also provides snacks to students in the afternoon. Alternative meal items or meals for children with specific dietary needs are available when the Center is provided with a note from the doctor.

If you choose, you may send in a prepared, ready to serve lunch for your child. **We are unable to refrigerate or cook/heat your child’s food.** Please be mindful of classroom allergies when packing child’s meal.



Ask each site about their policy on tree nuts and other allergies. If there is a child with a tree nut allergy BHSC will use alternatives, such as Sun Butter, to replace peanut butter at mealtimes. The catering company provides alternative meals such as vegetarian and gluten free when requested and can accommodate for other food related allergies.

Breakfast	Ages 3-5
Milk	¾ cup (6 oz.)
Vegetables, fruit, or both	½ cup
Grains	½ oz. eq.*

Lunch	Ages 3-5
Milk	¾ cup (6 oz.)
Meat / Meat Alt.	1 ½ oz.
Vegetables	¼ cup
Fruit	¼ cup
Grains	½ oz. eq.*

# Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (CPI)



# CPI®

Buffalo Hearing & Speech utilizes a Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Plan, developed by the Crisis Prevention Institute. The program focuses on preventative strategies, de-escalation skills, and using communication skills to respond to a crisis. Employees in each site are required to participate in the training and follow the CPI model.

- The philosophy of CPI is ***Care, Welfare, Safety and Security.***
- The program is modeled after the CPI Crisis Development Model which recognizes that individuals go through various stages during a crisis. The model educates staff members on how to recognize each behavioral level and how to respond appropriately.
- Staff are trained to respond effectively to the warning signs when a student is showing signs of dysregulation. CPI teaches staff to recognize the physical and emotional cues and respond to the student to decrease disruptive and aggressive behaviors.
- Physical holds and interventions only occur when safety is a concern.





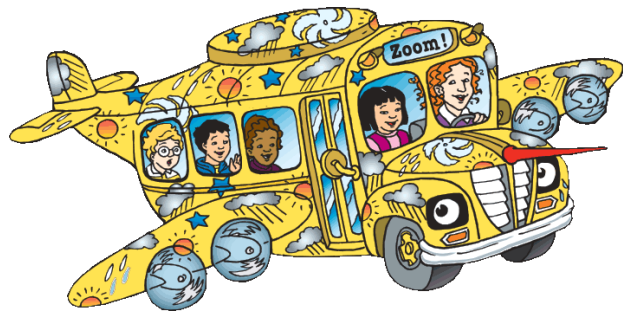
## Field Trips

Field Trips are another way for our children to grow and gain experiences. We encourage families to be a part of your child's school experience.

BHSC will evaluate current guidance from the local health department regarding COVID-19 status to determine whether it is safe to plan field trips.

All Field Trips are pre-approved by the Early Childhood Program Director and require numerous steps to ensure safety including:

- ◆ Car Seat for students if required by NYS guidelines, first aid kits with each classroom, emergency contact information for each child along with Health Care plans.
- ◆ Transportation is provided for children and staff through a contracted bus company.
- ◆ While we encourage you to join us, we ask that you provide your own transportation to and from the field trip. You may always arrive at school prior to our departure and follow the bus.
- ◆ Information will be provided prior to the field trip with all the necessary information well in advance so you are aware that your child will be out of the building that day.



## Weather Related School Closing Procedures

It is important that families are familiar with the school closing policy for Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center Early Childhood Programs. In the event of bad weather, please tune to a radio or television station that carries school closing information for your school district. (WGRZ-Channel 2, WIVB-Channel 4, WKBW- Channel 7).

If you are unable to obtain information, please call our main office at 885-8318.

**The general policy is that if the school district that your child's program is located in is CLOSED, then our child's program will be CLOSED and bussing will be cancelled.**

Please note that the transportation company will not bus children if the child's home school district is closed due to weather conditions.

For example, if BHSC North Street is open because Buffalo Public Schools are open but you live in Lackawanna and Lackawanna schools are closed, the bus may not pick your child up. However, it is always your choice to transport your child to and from BHSC when BHSC is open and your district is not.



If your child is picked up at a daycare or Head Start program, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with the daycare program regarding your child's change in schedule.

# Emergency School Closing Procedures

In the event that BHSC Early Childhood Program closes during the day while program is in session and the decision is made to send children home early, the primary caregivers or emergency contacts will be notified.

**\*\*\*\*\*NO CHILD WILL BE PUT ON A BUS UNTIL \*\*\*\*\*  
CONFIRMATION BY A RECEIVING ADULT OCCURS.**

- ◆ In the event of an emergency closing during school hours, and a caregiver/emergency contact person cannot be reached, the child will remain at the program and staff will continue to pursue contact.
- ◆ When an authorized adult is reached it will be strongly suggested that he or she travel to pick up the child.



**\*\*\*\*\*IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION\*\*\*\*\*  
BE KEPT UP TO DATE AT ALL TIMES. BLUE CARDS ARE UPDATED EVERY 6  
MONTHS.**

## Other Related Emergencies

In the event that a building needs to be evacuated, each BHSC Program site has two alternative evacuation sites where the staff and children can remain safely until the building is considered safe for return.

Under circumstances where the building is considered unsafe for staff and children to return, all caregivers will be notified of the alternate location and the dismissal information. If transported by bus, the bussing company will be notified.

## COVID-19 Related Closures/Quarantines

BHSC is committed to following the CDC COVID-19 recommendations in order to maintain a safe environment for our students and staff. BHSC will monitor notifications from the New York State Department of Health, Governor's Office, Local County Department of Health along with the conditions in our schools as determined by internal data and keep families updated on any changes.

If you have a question regarding our COVID-19 policies, procedures, and/or protocols please reach out to Lynn Shea at (716)-885-8318 ext. 2233



# 2022-2023 Busing Information

## New Students

- Busing requests take a minimum of 2 weeks to process.
- Busing requests must be submitted to First Student by your site's program coordinator by the first week of August.

## COVID-19 Busing Safety Protocols

There will be only one child per seat on the bus.

The bus will be cleaned after each daily run.

The bus driver and aide will wear a mask at all times.

Caregivers **MUST** wear a mask when they bring their child to the bus. **The driver will not open the bus door if the adult is not wearing a mask.**



Children may wear a mask and we encourage you to work with your child to wear one if possible. Children will **NOT** be refused bus service if they cannot wear a mask. If your child does wear a mask please insure that it is attached to a lanyard so that if he/she removes it the mask remains with them.

When the masked adult brings the child to the bus, the driver will open the bus door. The aide will step down and take your child's temperature. If your child's temperature is **LESS THAN 100 degrees. HE/SHE WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE BUS.**

If your child's temperature is **100 DEGREES OR HIGHER THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED ON THE BUS.**

### **ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS.**

The Erie County Department of Health **REQUIRES** the temperature check. First Student **CAN-NOT** allow children on the bus with temperatures **ABOVE** 100 degrees.

If a caregiver attempts to argue with the bus staff, the bus staff have been instructed to close the bus door and drive away. No child should be witness to angry words spoken by any adult.

**BE ADVISED THAT ARGUING WITH BUS STAFF WILL RESULT IN TERMINATION OF BUS SERVICE.**

## Transportation and Weather Reminder to Families

Transportation will be cancelled for your child if:

1. The school district in which your child's program is located is closed.
2. The school district in which your child is picked up is closed.
3. The school district in which the transporter is located is closed.
4. School districts which the bus must travel through are closed.





Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center  
LISTEN, LEARN, COMMUNICATE

### Center-Based Classrooms

North Street Early Childhood Program  
50 E. North Street  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
(716)885-8318

Evans Street Early Childhood Program  
445 Evans Street  
Williamsville, NY 14221  
(716)885-8318

John Pound Early Childhood Center  
51 High Street  
Lockport, NY 14094  
(716)478-4751

Sweet Home Early Childhood Center  
700 Sweet Home Road  
Amherst, NY 14226  
(716)836-7556

William T. Hoag Educational Center  
42 Sunset Blvd.  
Angola, NY 14006  
(716)885-8318

Wheelock Primary School  
75 Chestnut Street, Suite 500  
Fredonia, NY 14063  
(716)672-2731

[www.askbhsc.org](http://www.askbhsc.org)



Find us on:  
**facebook**

## Contact Information

**Classroom:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Site:** \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Classroom Aide: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

### Other Team Members

School Building Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Program Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Social Worker: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Transportation Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Speech Language Pathologist: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Occupational Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Physical Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Music Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

School Nurse : \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ EXT: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@askbhsc.org