

Early Learning Model: Licensed Preschool

Robyn Patch

University of Mary

Early Learning Model: Licensed Preschool

Description and Goals

Type of Program

The type of early learning program that have chosen to design a startup model for is a preschool. According to the North Dakota Department of Human Services, “Preschools provide educational and socialization experiences for children age 2 years to kindergarten and may operate sessions for no more than 3 hours per day (Early Childhood, 2016). This program schedule will run in conjunction with the Bismarck Public Schools calendar (late august to late may). For the sake of this startup, I will be calling my program “Shooting Star.” The preschool will be themed with outer space and exploration materials.

Ages Served

I will serve children between the ages of 3 and 5 broken up into different classes. The first class will be called the “Explorers.” This class will be made up of 3-4 years who meet twice weekly for three hours. The second class I will call the “Astronauts.” This will be an enriched class made up of 3-4 year olds that meets three days a week for three hours at a time. The third class, the “Rocketeers,” will be targeted at kindergarten readiness and will be comprised of 4-5 year olds who meet four times each week for three hours at a time. A sample of Shooting Star’s weekly schedule can be seen in Table 1.

There may be variation in the number of children in each class based on enrollment; however, the maximum enrollment number for each class will Explorers: 15, Astronaut: 15, and Rocketeers: 18. This makes the maximum total enrollment number 48.

Licensing Process

The first step toward opening this licensed preschool is for me to become a licensed early childhood teachers (Requirements, 2018). To do this, I must complete my bachelor's degree in early childhood education and all other requirements to receive my ND teaching License. Next, I must ensure that the physical space and staff meet the requirements to be licensed.

In a North Dakota licensed preschool, "If all children in care are children three years of age to four years of age, one staff member may care for eleven children... If all children in care are children four years of age to five years of age, one staff member may care for thirteen children" (Group Child Care, 2011, p. 7). Based on my projected student enrollment, I will need to be the lead teacher in the room and hire at least one additional staff member.

As for the physical space, "Adequate space must include a minimum of thirty-five square feet [3.25 square meters] of indoor space per child" (Group Child Care, 2011, p. 16). Based on my largest possible class size, 18, I will need at least 630 square feet of useable space for Shooting Star Preschool to meet the licensing requirements.

At this point, I will need to plan and organize cite inspections and visits to ensure that all requirements are met. Next, I will submit a licensing application as well as appropriate fees and necessary documents that ensure my program meets the requirements (Sciarra, Lynch, Adams, & Dorsey, 2016). After processing and approval, I must display my licensing paperwork within the building.

Program Goals

Shooting Star Preschool will be a safe, community oriented preschool that aims at serving children through providing social and educational experiences. The mission of this program will be "to team up with families and the community to provide enriched, developmentally

appropriate social and educational experiences that promote kindergarten readiness as well as individual learning.”

This program will be nonbiased and accept children and families from all racial, ethnic, and financial backgrounds. I aim at helping students and families with various needs provide the necessary opportunities for their young children. To best help families with low SES or children with disabilities of any kind, Shooting Star Preschool will partner with community resources such as Pathfinder Services of ND, Family Voices of ND, Community Options, and others. By utilizing the strengths and opportunities that these resources provide, Shooting Star Preschool and families can benefit immensely.

Floorplan

In order for Shooting Star Preschool to be licensed, it “shall provide adequate indoor and outdoor space for the daily activities of all children” (Group Child Care, 2011, p. 16). As previously stated, I must have at least 630 square feet of indoor, usable space for the students. By usable space, all the area taken up by closets, bathrooms, hallways, bookshelves, or any other obstruction that cannot be utilized by the students must be excluded. In the space that will be utilized by the preschool there will be one main, locked entrance that can be opened with the use of a key card. The entrance leads to a hallway with the main classroom on the left, and the gym on the right. The hallway also leads to adult restrooms and an exterior entrance towards the outdoor play area.

In the Shooting Star Preschool, there will be one classroom which includes three large windows, one main entrance, interior door, one emergency exit door, two private, child sized toilet stalls, one sink and one storage closet. The room’s dimensions are 26’ x 25’ leading to a total square footage of 676 square feet. However, after the consideration of the bathrooms, the

closet, and unusable space take up by bookshelves, storage units, and other materials, the usable square footage would be reduced to approximately 630 square feet.

Although this alone meets the requirements for ND licensing, I plan to have additional indoor usable space by including a gym/recreational area in my floorplan. This gym/recreational area will include one main entrance, interior door, one exterior door, two windows, and one storage closet. The dimensions of the gym will be 30' x 40' leading to a total of 1,200 square feet. For the most part, I will keep this area free from furniture and other inhibiting objects. This will be an area for my students to enhance their large motor development through games and activities.

I chose to include this recreational area in my floor plan to allow for more open, large group movement spaces for my students. This will be necessary in the winter months due to the possible limited ability to utilize the outdoor space. Additionally, this large open area will be utilized during family night activities, large motor games, and other special events. I believe that this indoor gym/ recreational area will be an asset to the Shooting Star Preschool. To see a visual diagram of the indoor floorplan of Shooting Star Preschool, see *Figure 1*.

As well as having ample usable indoor space, Shooting Star Preschool will have an outdoor play area consisting of developmentally appropriate play sets and handicap accessible equipment. Additionally, there will be an area of 200 square feet of grass space surrounded by tree area. This outdoor area will allow students to play and practice their social competence as well as their large motor skills. The green space will allow the students to experience nature and natural materials.

Operating Budget

Income

The income for Shooting Star Preschool will come from student tuition, grants, and fund raisers. All tuition will be paid by parents monthly. The tuition differs for each class due to the amount of time the students attend preschool weekly. For the explorers, tuition is \$200/month. For the astronauts, tuition is \$230/month. Tuition of the rocketeers is \$260/month. For each student, there is a \$100 enrollment fee.

Each year, Shooting Star Preschool will host fundraisers to help with annual expenses. Due to repetitive fundraisers such as bake sales, sponsor donations, and others, I expect to raise around \$5,000 each year. Thirdly, I will apply for grants each year to help support Shooting Star Preschool. I expect to raise approximately \$5,000 from grants annually to assist with the costs of the preschool. In total, the annual income for Shooting Star Preschool will be approximately \$114,970.

Expenses

The expenses for Shooting Star Preschool include salaries, professional services, annual trainings, occupancy costs, utilizes, internet/phone services, insurance, supplies, equipment replacements, food, advertisement, licensing fees, and transportation costs. These have varying expenses but are within the annual income. Additional funds will be used as petty cash. To see a detailed outline of the operating annual budget, please see Table 2.

Policy Handbook

Below I have inserted my policy manual. All the italicized text is what is included in it; though, the actual policy manual will not be printed in italics.

Policies for Shooting Star Preschool

Director: Robyn Patch

Contact Phone Number: 701-400-5020

Child Care Philosophy

At Shooting Star Preschool, we believe that young children learn and develop socially, physically, and cognitively through play based activities. We aim at providing safe spaces and ample opportunities for children to play and explore the world around them and beyond.

Mission Statement

The mission of Shooting Star Preschool is to team up with families and the community to provide enriched, developmentally appropriate social and educational experiences that promote kindergarten readiness as well as individual learning.

Curriculum

Shooting Star Preschool curriculum is designed and planned by the program director in accordance with the North Dakota Early Learning Standards. The curriculum is designed to give children rich experiences in the areas of math, science, social studies, music, movement, art, and language. The curriculum promotes developmental growth in a variety of areas including cognitive and social. We believe that young children learn best through play based, developmentally appropriate activities.

Schedule

Shooting Star Preschool is open from 8:30 to 3:30 Monday-Thursday and 8:30- 11:30 on Fridays. See a schedule of classes below.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<i>8:30-11:30am</i>	<i>Astronauts (3-4 year olds)</i>	<i>Explorers (3-4 year olds)</i>	<i>Astronauts (3-4 year olds)</i>	<i>Explorers (3-4 year olds)</i>	<i>Astronauts (3-4 year olds)</i>
<i>12:30-3:30pm</i>	<i>Rocketeers</i>	<i>Rocketeers</i>	<i>Rocketeers</i>	<i>Rocketeers</i>	

	(4-5 year olds)	(4-5 year olds)	(4-5 year olds)	(4-5 year olds)	
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Tuition and Fees

Tuition is due monthly on the first school day of each month whether your child is in attendance or not. One week before the tuition due date, a tuition envelope will be sent home in your child's take home folder. Please return the envelope in the folder. Cash and checks are acceptable forms of payment. All checks can be written out to Shooting Star Preschool. Please put your child's name on the memo line.

A \$10.00 late fee will be applied for every day tuition is late. Consistent late or nonpayment of tuition (3 or more consecutive months) will result in the mandatory withdrawal of your child.

Transportation

Shooting Star Preschool does not transport children to or from school. For scheduled field trips parents and guardians will be asked to transport their child to and from the field trip location rather than the school building. I will not transport children in my vehicle.

Water Hazards

There is not a swimming or wading pool at Shooting Star Preschool; however, there may be water sensory tables as well as planned aquatic outdoor events or swimming field trips. Parent permission forms must be completed and returned before any child will be able to participate in any aquatic activity. Children will be kept in sight during all aquatic activities.

Sick Children

Please do not allow your child to attend preschool if he or she is feeling ill. This is done for the safety of all the children and staff members at Shooting Star Preschool. If your child has a fever

of 100 degrees or above or is having any other wellness issue at preschool, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child immediately.

Accountability Procedures

If your child will not be attending Shooting Star Preschool or will be arriving at any time other than the start of the class, parents or guardians are required to notify the director at a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the start of class. To ensure the safety of the child, parents or guardians will receive a call if the child does not arrive at the expected time. If the parents or guardians do not answer, the emergency contacts will be called. In the case that the emergency contacts do not answer, the police will be notified.

Food and Nutrition

I do not participate in a food program. Shooting Star Preschool does not operate over meal times, meals will not be provided and students should not bring a meal to school. However, each class does have a snack time in which a snack from home must be provided every day. We ask that your child brings a nutritious snack such as fresh or dried fruits and veggies, nuts, yogurt, cheese, crackers, or other healthy options. There will be a few snacks available in case a child comes without a snack occasionally. Please let the director know of any food allergies that your child may have.

Guidance and Discipline Policy

Discipline at Shooting Star Preschool must be justified and must be appropriate for the child's developmental stage. Disciplinary options may include: separation from the problem, diversion, talking with the child about the situation, praising appropriate choices and behavior. A child will

never be humiliated, physically harmed, or subjected to unreasonable fear at Shooting Star Preschool.

Injuries and Accidents Policy

Parents or guardians will be given a written notice of any first aid that is administered to their child within 24 hours of the incident. In the case of any serious injury that requires emergency care beyond first aid, parents or guardians will be notified immediately.

Any serious injury requiring hospitalization or death of a child at Shooting Star Preschool will be reported to the Burleigh County Social Services director within 24 hours.

Licensing and Liability Insurance

Shooting Star Preschool is licensed by the State of North Dakota. Also, all staff members must be qualified by the North Dakota Preschool Educational Facilities Early Childhood Services, chapter 75-03-11. To insure the safety as well as the best quality care and education for your child, all teachers must continue their education annually to fulfill requirements.

Shooting Star Preschool does carry business liability insurance.

Hiring Policy

Shooting Star Preschool does not employ and will refuse to hire any applicant who has been found guilty of, pled guilty to, or pled no contest to any offense described in North Dakota Century Code chapter 75-03-27. Background checks will be conducted on all applicants.

All employees must be CPR and first-aid certified and be a licensed early childhood teacher by the state of North Dakota.

Mandated Reporter

By law, any employee of Shooting Star Preschool is a mandated reporter, if he/she knows or has reason to believe that a child is being neglected or physically, emotionally, or sexually abused,

shall immediately report the information to Burleigh County Social Services, Bismarck Police Department, Burleigh County Sheriff or any local authorities. Required by North Dakota Century Code section 50-25.1-03

Grievance Procedure

Please contact the director, Robyn Patch, about any concerns or complaints that arise about Shooting Star Preschool. I will be happy to hear and address your concerns in attempt to improve Shooting Star Preschool.

By signing below, parents/guardians and provider agree to abide by the written policies as stated in this handbook.

_____	_____	_____
<i>Parent/Guardian Name (print)</i>	<i>Parent's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

_____	_____	_____
<i>Parent/Guardian Name (print)</i>	<i>Parent's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

Kindergarten Transition Plan

One third of the students at Shooting Star Preschool will transition to kindergarten the following year. The others will continue at preschool. The Rocketeers are the group of children ages 4-5 who attend preschool from 12:30-3:30 Monday through Friday. They will be the ones

who will be moving on to kindergarten. To effectively and easily transition them, we need to consider changes such as schedule, expectations, rules, socialization opportunities, physical space, people and others. Additionally, along with these changes, children may experience fear and hesitation when transitioning from preschool to kindergarten.

First, the people who will be involved in the transition plan to help student move from preschool to kindergarten will be the student, the parents or guardians, the preschool teacher, and the possible kindergarten teacher. These people must all be informed of the transition plan as well as any concerns or fears of the child during the transition. All these adults can make a difference in how effectively the student will transition. Specifically, “families play a central role during the transition period and beyond” (Australian, 2013, p. 6)

The main goal of the transition plan is to ensure that students who will be moving in to kindergarten in the fall are prepared socially and academically. Additionally, the transition plan aims at

The current practices of the transition plan include having monthly goals for the student and families who are a part of the transition plan. For example, in September, parents will be asked to identify the school that their child may be attending the following year while the student will be able to identify their future school as well. In October, kindergarten teachers will be invited to the preschool to share with the students some of the similarities between preschool and kindergarten and the student will be able to explain some of them afterward. This will help the students get to know some of their potential teachers and learn about kindergarten. Later in the year, the students will have an opportunity to take a field trip to play at the playground of an elementary school as well look at a kindergarten classroom. All these current practices will help

students become familiar with kindergarten before they attend it. This will help decrease fears while increasing excitement and promote readiness.

In order to prepare the students socially and academically, some of the practices that are a part of the transition plan target these areas specifically. One of the current practices is to have preschool students be introduced to kindergarten concepts in a broader fashion. In preschool, the students will learn about numbers, patterns, letters, words, science concepts, and other academic information. This will help prepare them for the learning expectations in kindergarten as well as familiarize them on some of the content. From a social standpoint, students will be given opportunities to talk, form relationships, practice turn taking and other skills in a way that will prepare them for the social settings of kindergarten.

Along with the monthly goals that are a part of the transition plan, the students will be evaluated for kindergarten readiness monthly. At the end of the month, all the people who are a part of the transition team will score the student on how well the goal was met or not met by checking one of the corresponding boxes in table 3.

If a student does not meet the goal according to the perspective of at least 3 of the adults on the transition team, the student will continue working on the goal in the next month and then it will be reevaluated again.

Overall, the transition plan will help students be prepared socially, academically, and emotionally for kindergarten. The transition team, goals, current practices, and evaluation methods will set students up for success throughout the transition process.

References

- Australian Psychological Society. (2013). Transition matters: A resource about starting school for early childhood educators and school staff. Retrieved from https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/sites/default/files/public/KMP20130228_TransitionMatters_0.pdf
- Early Childhood Services in North Dakota. (2016). ND Department of Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childcare/info/>
- Group Child Care Early Childhood Services, North Dakota Administrative Code, Chapter 75-03-09. (2011).
- Requirements for Early Childhood Education Jobs in North Dakota. (2018). PreSchoolTeachers.org. Retrieved from <https://www.preschoolteacher.org/north-dakota/>
- Sciarra, D. J., Lynch, E. M., Adams, S. M., & Dorsey, A. G. (2016). *Developing & administering a child care educational program*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Tables

Table 1

Weekly Schedule

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30- 11:30am	Astronauts (3-4 year olds)	Explorers (3-4 year olds)	Astronauts (3-4 year olds)	Explorers (3-4 year olds)	Astronauts (3-4 year olds)
12:30- 3:30pm	Rocketeers (4-5 year olds)	Rocketeers (4-5 year olds)	Rocketeers (4-5 year olds)	Rocketeers (4-5 year olds)	

Note: This schedule runs in conjunction with the school days of Bismarck Public Schools.

Table 2

Annual Operational Budget

Income Item		Description	Income
Tuition			
	Explorer	15 students x \$200/month x 9 months +\$100 enrollment fee	\$28,500
	Astronaut	15 students x \$230/month x 9 months +\$100 enrollment fee	\$32,550
	Rocketeer	18 students x \$260/month x 9 months +\$100 enrollment fee	\$43,920
Grants		From various sponsors. Potential from Child Care Aware, Dept. of Human Services, workforce development, ect.	\$5,000
Fundraisers		Annual fundraising events through summer (bake sale, donations, etc.)	\$5,000
TOTAL INCOME			\$ 114,970

Expense Items		Description	Expense
Salaries			
	Administrator/Head Teacher	Director of the program as well as the head teacher and planner.	\$40,000
	Secondary Teacher	A licensed early childhood teacher who leads small groups and works alongside the head teacher.	\$32,000
	Substitute	May temporarily take the place of the head teacher or secondary teacher for vacation or sick periods.	\$1,500
Professional Services		accounting services etc.	\$2,000
Annual Training/Resources		Include workshop fees and association fees. Should include substitutes	\$300

Occupancy	All costs arising from use of facility such as rent, taxes, snow removal, lawn services, etc.	\$24,000	
Utilities	Water, heating, air, electric, etc.	\$4,500	
Phone/Internet Access	Includes Wi-Fi and landline	\$540	
Insurance	Small business liability insurance	\$900	
Supplies			
	Environment	Adequate supplies are critical for a quality program – children need to paint, draw, and create.	\$3,200
	Cleaning/Paper/Kitchen	(Consumables)	\$1,000
	Office	(Consumables) & Printing	\$800
Replacement of Equipment			
	Indoor Environment	Replacing books or worn down equipment	\$750
	Outdoor Play	Replacing broken swing set, caring for greenspace	\$750
Food	Miscellaneous snacks	\$500	
Advertising	Child openings	\$300	
Licensing Fees/Inspections	Licensing, fire and health inspections	\$575	
Transportation	Licenses, vehicle insurance, repairs and/or gas	\$600	
Petty Cash	To be used of saved by program administrator	\$755	
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$114,970	

Note: This table covers all the budgeted income and expenses that occur annually for Shooting Star Preschool.

Table 3

Transition Plan Goal Evaluation Method

Evaluator	Student did not meet the goal	Student met parts of the goal	Student met the goal
Preschool Teacher			
Kindergarten Teacher			
Parent 1			
Parent 2			

Note: Each student will be evaluated with one of these tables for each goal each month.

Shooting Star Preschool Floorplan:

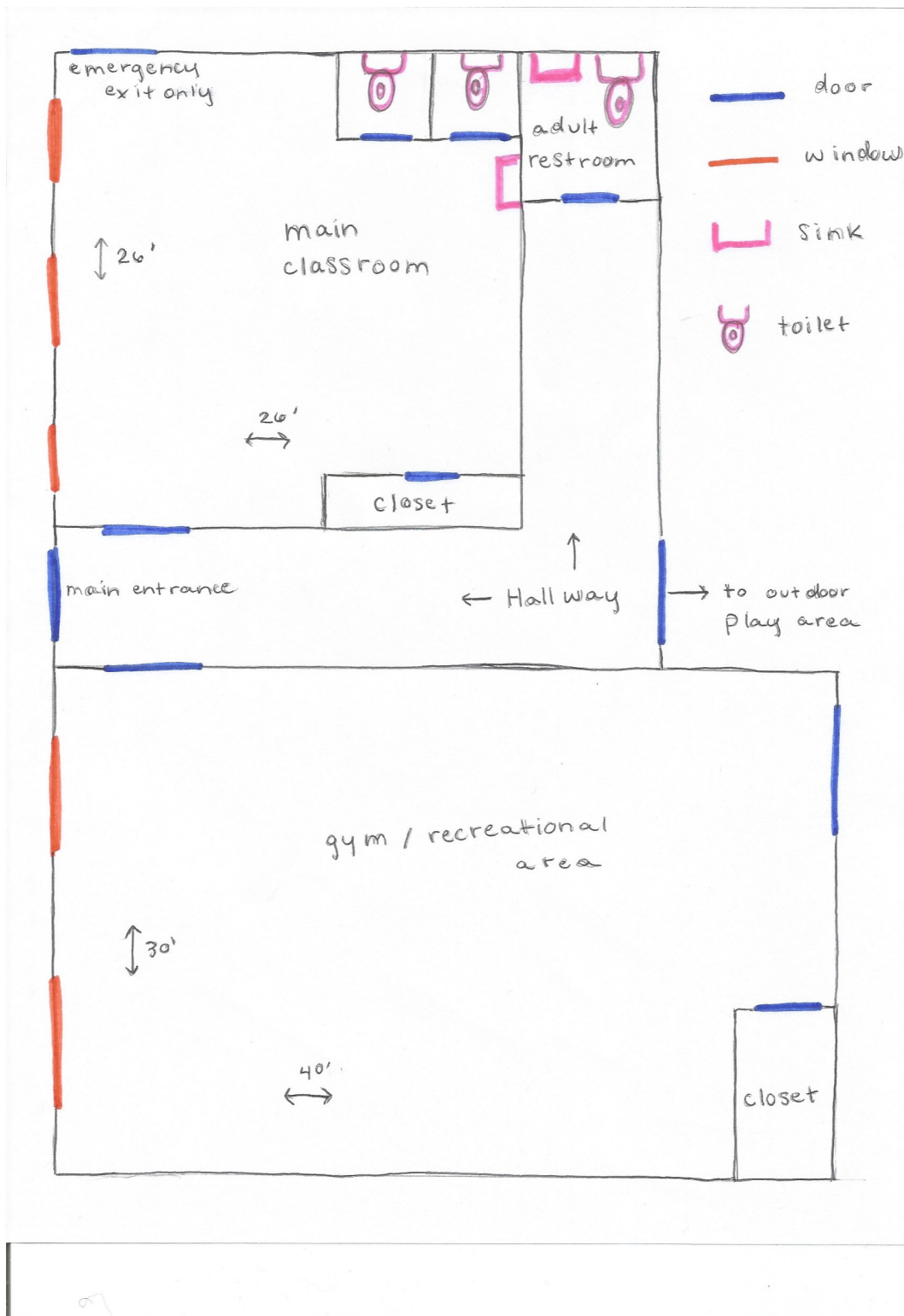


Figure 1.