



Eastern Mennonite Elementary School Handbook

Welcome to Eastern Mennonite Elementary School. We are glad that you are a part of our community. This handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the general operation policies at EMES. If you have questions, feel free to make an appointment with our principal, Maria Archer. We want you to feel welcome in our school. We hope each of you will become involved in the total life of EMES. Your participation is vital to the well-being of our school.

Mission Statement

Eastern Mennonite School joins home and church in calling students to faith in Jesus Christ, academic excellence, personal integrity, and compassionate service in the world.

Gifted Behaviors

Since we have been created uniquely in God's own image, we each have a variety of potential gifts and abilities. At Eastern Mennonite School, we seek excellence for all by helping each student to develop a range of Gifted Behaviors. These are not a set of criteria by which students are selected for special programs. Rather, gifted behaviors will be a major focus for every student's learning and growth - from elementary through high school.

These behaviors include:

- a. Cultivating a wide range of abilities and interests
- b. Applying both logical and creative thinking
- c. Displaying advanced planning
- d. Articulating clearly with verbal and written communication
- e. Using time efficiently
- f. Exhibiting self-discipline
- g. Demonstrating persistence
- h. Using advanced vocabulary
- i. Reading with comprehension and understanding
- j. Demonstrating analytical reasoning
- k. Exhibiting insight
- l. Modeling sensitivity to others
- m. Managing impulsivity
- n. Listening for understanding with empathy
- o. Managing relationships with care and compassion
- p. Displaying leadership

EMS Administrative Structure

Head of School

Paul Leaman

Director of Academics

Patsy Seitz

High School Principal

Justin King

K-8 Principal

Maria Archer

Middle School Team Leader

Rebecca Yutzy

Elementary Office Assist.

Ardith Kauffman

Director of Advancement

Andrea Wenger

Director of Business Affairs

Mike Stoltzfus

Business Office Manager

Chris Eberly

Accounting Specialist

Susan Hardy

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After School Care

The EMS After School Care Program provides parents a safe and wholesome environment for children until 5:30 p.m. each day. ASC services are preserved for EMS students in grades K-6. Students from EMES are walked every afternoon to the dining room foyer for activities and a snack. More specific information about the daily schedule and fees can be found on the After School Care Google form.

Athletics

EMES is part of the Blue Ridge Area Athletics Association. This league was formed primarily to give younger students exposure to team play. The two seasons include fall soccer and winter basketball. The focus is on the basic skills and allowing the players to experience being part of a team. Teams are coached by parents and officiated by either parents or high school students. Practices are generally once a week with games scheduled on Saturdays.

Attendance and the School Day

School Day: The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. Students may enter their classrooms at 7:50 a.m. each morning. If there is a need for an earlier drop-off time, students may arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. for a supervised quiet reading, writing, or drawing time in the Auditorium Foyer. Parents are asked to enroll their students in the before school program so that staff can plan for proper supervision.

Attendance: Regular attendance is essential to success in school for children of all ages. **Please make sure your child arrives at school promptly by 8:00 a.m.** Classes often begin each day with morning independent work; this is an important time for students to settle in and get prepared for the day. If your child arrives to school late (after 8:10 a.m.), please enter through the main office at the front of the school and sign him or her in.

Absences: When a student misses school, the parent should call the elementary office in the morning (540) 236-6001 to let the school know of the absence. Although it is difficult to recreate the lesson that a child experiences when in class, teachers will do their best to have work ready for a parent to pick up by 3:30 p.m. of the missed day. It is preferred that teachers are notified ahead of time when possible. The school calendar provides an academic break during Christmas and Spring Vacations. Families are strongly encouraged to take vacation trips during those times rather than when school is in session. However, we know that sometimes this is unavoidable. If you know your child will miss a significant amount of time because of a family trip, please let us know as soon as possible. In these cases, teachers will need at least a week ahead to prepare work to be completed outside of class.

Early Dismissals: When your child needs to leave early during the school day, please write a note to the teacher in the morning or call the office. We will do our best to have your child ready for pickup. Please enter the main office in the front of the school, sign in, and come up to the EMES office upstairs to pick up your child.

Late Arrivals: When your child arrives late, after 8:10 am, please enter at the main office downstairs, sign in, and bring your child to the EMES office upstairs.

Back to School Night

Back to School Night is organized by the PTF and includes a potluck supper. This event is an informal time when students can visit their classrooms, find their cubbies, and become reacquainted with their friends and teachers. This is a great way for new students to become familiar with the EMES environment, and for their classmates to welcome them.

Behavior Guidelines

We believe that all students have the right to a safe learning environment. Therefore, we expect each person to be treated with respect and dignity and to respect God and His creation. The teachers model positive behavior and include the students in daily discussions about what it means to be a member of a respectful community.

We believe that children need to be a part of setting class guidelines. Although the school has overarching guidelines and expectations of the community members, individual classes take time each fall to develop more specific expectations for their classroom. When students are a part of the development of guidelines, they are more invested in making sure they are followed. Throughout the year, time is taken for students to review the guidelines and evaluate the class' adherence to them.

Conflicts are a part of everyday life. The school community works at solving conflicts in school peacefully. Each class takes time throughout the school year to learn and develop skills that are needed to resolve conflicts in a restorative way. The peace building class, once a week, reinforces these skills and values.

If students fail to respect classroom or school expectations, teachers will have a private conversation with the student to help guide her/him. If the behavior continues, teachers may use a variety of strategies such as, moving the student to a different location, giving a logical consequence, or communicating with the parent. If the support of the principal is needed, a conference may be called for the student, teacher, principal, and the parent. We believe that by working together as a team, these behavioral issues can be resolved in a positive way.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special times for our students. We invite parents to eat lunch with their children on their birthday. Parents may also choose to bring a snack for their child's classmates on his/her birthday. Parents should communicate with the teacher to coordinate a time for this snack. We encourage healthful snacks during this time.

We typically don't invite siblings to birthday celebrations, so as not to interrupt their class schedules and activities. This helps to keep the focus on celebrating with the birthday child and his/her classmates. Sometimes younger siblings who are not in school yet come along, so that parents don't have to get child care.

Class Parent Representative

Each class has one or two parent representatives. These representatives assist teachers or elicit assistance from other parents with events as needed, encourage interaction of families outside the classroom, coordinate parent drivers for field trips, and help to coordinate one school-wide function or community event.

Communication

A weekly newsletter is published from the office and distributed through e-mail. It contains information for the school-wide community. In addition, each classroom teacher publishes a newsletter or calendar regularly, giving more detailed information about curriculum and class projects. The office newsletters are sent weekly by e-mail. Classroom newsletters are sent by e-mail and/or hard copy. We believe that parents play an important role in a child's education. Parents often have helpful information to share about their children. Our doors are open, and we welcome your communication with us. If you have a question or concern about your child, please contact the classroom teacher first. If the issue cannot be resolved,

then make an appointment to meet with the principal. A joint meeting by all three parties can be arranged as well.

Crises Alert

In the event of a school-wide crisis, we will communicate with families by way of our Emergency Text Alert system. There will be opportunity for families to sign up for this service at the beginning of the school year.

Curriculum Overview – see appendix A

Drama

All fourth and fifth graders participate in a Dessert Theater during the winter months. Dessert Theater is an evening performance where students perform one or two plays with their classmates and dessert is served to the audience. Practices will take place during the school day. The purpose of this event is to give students the opportunity to experience practicing and performing on stage. Informal drama presentations are integrated throughout the curriculum at all grade levels.

Dress

Students should dress comfortably and in “weather appropriate” clothing. Shorts of modest length in the fall and spring are acceptable. Writing on some t-shirts can be offensive; students and parents should keep this in mind when choosing clothing to wear to school. Students should refrain from wearing spaghetti straps or halter tops.

In order to participate in P.E. class, all students should have a pair of sneakers each day. If students don’t wear sneakers to school, they should bring a pair of sneakers to change into before P.E. class begins.

Students at EMES will play outside every day if possible; they will also have art class twice a week. Therefore, keep this in mind as your child dresses for school as clothes may get dirty with daily work and play.

Students may be asked to wear an EMS t-shirt on field trips. One will be provided to you by our Admissions Counselor as your child is enrolled. If your child needs a new shirt, please let our office assistant know, and we will get a new one to you.

During the graduation ceremony, fifth graders wear dressier clothing; other students may choose to dress more formally as well. Any question about dress can be directed to your child's teacher.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Our school day begins at 8:00 a.m. Teachers will be in the classrooms ready for students by 7:50 a.m. School dismisses at 3:00 p.m. The school will be open and ready for early student arrival at 7:30 a.m. Early students will read in the auditorium foyer until 7:50 a.m. when they can enter their classrooms. Please enroll your child through the Google form if you would like to utilize this free service.

When dropping off your child in the morning, please proceed around the auditorium parking lot and stop in front of the auditorium foyer to let her/him off. There will always be an adult or a fifth grader at the auditorium entrance to greet students each morning. **For safety reasons, please do not pass the car in front of you.**

When picking up your child at the end of the day, use the same procedure. Students will be gathered outside or in the foyer depending on the weather. As you drive around, a teacher will make sure your student gets into your car safely. Please remain in your car while the student is loaded, as to keep the line moving.

It is important to be on time for your child's pickup. If a late arrival is unavoidable, please call the school and we will send your child to the After School Program until you can pick them up. If 3:00 p.m. will be a difficult pickup time for you on a regular basis, you may want to consider the flexible pickup option for after school. See more information in the After School Program section of this handbook.

If you need to come into the building during drop-off or pickup times, please park and use the sidewalk to enter the building safely.

Please inform anyone who is picking up or dropping off your child of the drop-off and pickup procedures. This prevents any confusion. **If there is a change in who is picking up your child, please send in a note to the teacher or call the office. Emails are not checked regularly during the school day.** A note or a call ensures that the teacher knows how the child is getting home from school.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills are conducted regularly with students; a tornado drill is conducted once a year. The school has a written procedure for all emergency drills, and teachers are proficient in drill procedures.

Faith Curriculum – *see Appendix A*

Field Trips

All students will participate in field trips during the school year. Teachers will prepare students for the trip, carry out the trip with a plan, and will follow up with activities after the trip is completed. The purpose of field trips is to enhance the classroom learning and to add “real-world” experiences to the curriculum. All field trip costs are covered in the General Fee that is paid when your child enrolls.

Parents will sign a permission form at the beginning of the school year giving permission for all field trips. Parents will be notified by

newsletter or e-mail prior to each trip. Most often students will travel by bus to the field trip destination; however, there will be times when parents will be asked to drive and/or chaperone a trip. In all grades except kindergarten, we ask that younger siblings not attend field trips as this can take away from the students' experience.

Finances

Student General Fee (Returning Students)

The Student General Fee will be billed on April 1 and is due on or before April 17th. This fee is nonrefundable after April 17.

Student General Fee (New Students)

The Student General Fee is due by May 31. This fee is non-refundable after May 31. For new students accepted after May 31, the fee is due within 10 days of acceptance and is non-refundable.

Payment of Tuition

The first tuition payment is due prior to the first day of school for returning students. The remaining balance of the tuition may be paid in full before the school year begins, in 10 equal monthly payments, or at any time during the school year. A 20% minimum for tuition is required each month. Families unable to pay according to the above plan are requested to arrange special terms with the Business Office personnel or the Head of School.

Early Payment Discount

A discount is offered if tuition is paid in full by August 31 for the upcoming academic year.

Finance Charge

A monthly finance charge of 1% will be assessed after 30 days of late payment on all individual accounts.

Financial Assistance

Families who need financial assistance should fill out a financial aid form by going to our website at www.emhs.net. This form must be completed before March 15th.

Gatherings

The “Gathering” is an important time for all students and teachers to meet and fellowship together as a community. Gathering takes place once a week on Wednesday mornings. This time may include singing, faith lessons from Pastors, student sharing of Bible verses or stories, hearing from community members about their experiences, and discussing upcoming events in the school. This can also be a time for students to practice speaking or performing in front of the group.

Graduation

Graduation takes place on the last day of school at 10:30 a.m. All students participate in this ceremony in which the graduates are honored. Parents and other family members of the graduates are welcome to attend. A reception for the graduates and their families follows the ceremony.

Homework

Homework is a critical part of learning at EMES. Students in grades 2 – 5 will have regular homework each day except on Friday. The homework schedule for kindergarten and first grade students may differ. Homework serves two purposes. The first is to reinforce concepts learned during the school day. Daily homework is usually a review of a concept with which the student is already familiar. Although rote memory and memorization have a place in learning, homework is generally more problem-solving, information gathering,

or project oriented. When there is a focus on memorization, such as math facts or test preparation, teachers will indicate this clearly with the parents.

The second purpose is to help students learn effective study skills. Learning to complete daily homework, gather materials, and return homework are important skills to practice in elementary school. Younger students may require parental assistance in their homework process. Older students are asked to be more independent with their homework.

Illness or Injury at School

When the school cannot safely cope with a student illness or injury, parents will be contacted immediately, if possible. Student records are kept up to date with current telephone numbers for home, parents' work places, physician, and who to call in case of emergency. Parents should notify the school of any changes which occur throughout the year.

Inquiry Night

Inquiry Night takes place each year in February. Students in second through fifth grade develop, complete, and display projects of their interest. For the most part, these projects are completed in class and guided by the teacher; however, there may be students who need to complete some of the work at home. Students in kindergarten and first grade participate in group projects. Parents are invited to visit each project and talk with the creator. This is a great time for students to explain and discuss their procedure and results with others. This event takes place on main campus in conjunction with the middle school.

Library

We have continued to build our EMES library during these past several years. The elementary library will be located in an adjacent

room to the middle and high school library. Students will have access to these books on a regular basis. In addition, all students will travel to the Massanutten Regional Library regularly. This trip allows students access to a wider selection of books than the EMES school library can offer them. This trip also encourages regular student reading, an excitement for books, and an opportunity for research.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items will be placed in a box located upstairs near the EMES office. These items are donated to a local organization if not claimed.

Lunch

Lunch at EMES is a time for positive all-school interaction. Most often students sit with a variety of ages; however, on occasion, students sit with their classmates. Daily announcements are made and students sing or say a blessing before eating.

Students have the option of purchasing a school lunch from our dining hall on **every day except Tuesdays**. A menu will be provided each month so that families can decide on the meals they want their child to purchase. In addition, several special lunches are planned during the year. Parents and students are notified of the dates and costs of these special lunches.

Microwaves are available to all students every day. Food items needing to be heated should be clearly labeled with the amount of required heating time. **Students should supply their own flatware, plates or containers for microwaving, and napkins.**

Medicine and First Aid

If a child needs to take medicine during school hours, please put it in its original container and take it to the office. **All medicine, including cough drops and vitamins, need to be kept in the office.**

Students will receive their medicine from the office assistant so that it can be documented properly. For unexpected illness or emergency, Advil, Tylenol and Benadryl will be kept in the office. The office assistant will call a parent for permission if this medication is needed. The school maintains first aid supplies in the office for minor injuries.

The school must be made aware in writing, of any special medical problems or allergic reactions which could cause a serious medical emergency.

Parent Night

Parent Night takes place in September of each new school year. This evening is a time for parents to hear from teachers about the routines and expectations of the school year. Parents are able to see the classroom, ask questions, and learn to know other parents in the school community. This event is not a time to discuss an individual child's progress. If you wish to have a conversation with the teacher about your child, please make an appointment at a different time.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Two conference days are scheduled each year. This gives the parent an opportunity to receive specific information about his or her child's progress. These conferences are very important; parents have important insights to share about their child's learning. Teachers will communicate with parents about signing up for a conference time that suits the family's schedule. Conferences can also be scheduled at other times during the year as needed.

Parent Teacher Fellowship – PTF

The PTF operates as a support to the school's mission. As part of our mission, we value the connection between home and school. Parent volunteers are important to the success of the school. They offer time, talents, expertise, and wisdom to us and our students. We encourage

each parent to consider volunteering 10 hours each school year as a way to support the school.

The PTF executive team oversees the various activities and projects of the organization throughout the school year. The funds raised each year are used to support the school's program. All parents are members of the PTF and are invited to participate in the PTF sponsored activities throughout the year. Parents are invited to contact one of the executive team members to inquire about current needs. A survey is sent out each summer giving parents the opportunity to volunteer in specific areas.

Privacy Statement

Unless the school is notified in writing and until the school is notified in writing by a parent or legal guardian, the following are considered items of public information and may be released publicly upon request, or as needed in school publications: student name, address, phone number, age and year in school; and parents' names, address, phone number and email addresses.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent quarterly. They include checklists for skills as well as narrative comments. Fourth and fifth grade progress reports include percentages for each subject area. This is calculated by averaging a variety of scores taken throughout the quarter. During the second semester, third graders will be given test averages for some of the subject areas as well.

Conferences are held twice a year, in the fall and spring. Teachers contact parents to set up a meeting time. This is a time to celebrate your child's accomplishments and to look at areas that need improvement. Parental presence at conferences is important.

Readmission

A readmission Form will be sent to the home of each current student in February. This should be returned by March 15. The Student General Fee will be billed on the April statement and is due by April 17.

Safety

Regular fire drills are practiced during the school year. A tornado drill is practiced once each year in the spring.

In addition, teachers practice an intruder drill regularly, review safety measure often, and make sure students are carefully supervised during outside time.

School Closings

When there is inclement weather, listen to TV3 as well as various radio stations for closing announcements. The announcement will be made as “Eastern Mennonite School” and includes elementary, middle and high school. An Opt-in Text Alert Service is also available to parents. More information about this service will be available at the beginning of the school year.

Snacks

Students are encouraged to bring a healthful snack to school. All students have recess or another designated time when they may eat their snacks in the morning.

On occasion, there are special snacks served during the school day for birthdays and other celebrations. If a child has a food allergy, parents

should notify the teacher so she can be aware of this and/or have a special snack stored at school for these occasions. In general, students do not receive candy as treats during school.

Specialty Class Descriptions – *see Appendix C*

Supply Lists

Parents will receive a supply list for their children in July. Students should bring those supplies on the first day of school or on Back to School Night. Some items children will keep in their desks for their personal use. Other items will be used collectively. Items such as paper and pencils will need to be replenished during the year.

Testing

Students in fourth and fifth grades take the ACT Aspire national standardized test each spring. These test scores are used, along with quarterly progress reports, as one measure of the students' academic success. Parents receive a summary report of their child's progress in August. Any questions regarding this report should be directed to the principal, Maria Archer.

Transfers/Withdrawals

When a parent decides to transfer or needs to withdraw a student from EMES, the parent should begin the process by notifying the Elementary Principal. They should then complete the official forms and see that all outstanding bills and accounts are paid.

Visitors

We encourage current parents to visit classes at EMES. If you want to visit a class, please contact your child's teacher to arrange a convenient time.

During the school year prospective parents and students visit EMES classes. This is a wonderful chance for us to “show case” our school and program. We encourage our current students to be friendly, say hello to visitors, and to welcome prospective students to the classroom.

All visitors should check in at the main office in the front of the building before going to the elementary wing.

Yearbook

Each year a yearbook is coordinated by a parent volunteer. Photos are gathered throughout the year so they can be used in the yearbook production. Fourth and fifth graders design the yearbook cover. The cost of the yearbook is included in the General Fee paid upon enrolling.

Appendix A

EMES Curriculum Overview

Language Arts is the core of the academic curriculum at EMES because it permeates every other area of study. Students learn to write with clarity, organization, and creativity. Within the context of each piece, students learn grammar concepts in order to make their own writing more effective. Students read class novels, short stories from the textbook, non-fiction articles, as well as other kinds of writing to build upon their reading skills, to learn new vocabulary, to study effective writing techniques, and to enjoy and learn from others' stories.

EMES uses the *Everyday Mathematics* program developed at the University of Chicago. This program connects each new concept to its use in the “real world.” Students use “hands on” activities and manipulatives to reinforce the concepts. Games are played to reinforce math facts and problem-solving skills. The curriculum has review built into each new lesson so that students continue to use the new concepts every day.

The **social studies** curriculum is *Social Studies/History Alive*. This program helps students make connections between historical events and life today by integrating role-plays, small group problem-solving challenges, and simulations into each unit of study. Students begin to think about how and why people made decisions in the past and how those decisions affect communities large and small.

Like the math, the **science** curriculum incorporates experiential learning by using an inquiry approach. Students ask central questions, conduct experiments, collect data, and draw conclusions. Students also learn to gather information from a variety of sources including their own experiments, textbooks, trade books, and experts in the field. This approach to “doing” science gives students experience practicing the skills of being a scientist, not just reading about them. It also creates a culture where students are actively engaged in their own learning.

The specialty areas of study include **art, music, Spanish, physical education, and peace-building**. For a description of each area see Appendix B and Appendix C.

Appendix B

EMES Peace Building Philosophy and Program (Includes Bible study, Faith development, and Community building)

The Mennonite values of following Jesus in daily life, peacemaking, and service to others are central at EMES. Learning to understand others and to help those around us is part of living peacefully together in community. This includes the school community, local community, as well as the global community. Therefore, the focus of spiritual growth at the elementary school centers on Jesus as an example and model for our lives. By reading and hearing about Jesus' life and the stories Jesus told to others, students see this example most clearly. Students gain an understanding of God's love for them, while opening their arms to others who are different. The Peace-Building program at EMES is intended to support the teaching that the students' home churches provide for them.

EMES students meet once a week in Gathering to sing, hear stories of Jesus, share faith stories, and to hear others share how they live out their faith in the world. A theme is chosen each year, and the sharing in Gathering is focused around this theme. During certain events in the Church calendar, such as Easter and Christmas, students participate in special all-school Gatherings. In addition, each grade has a theme for the year, beginning in kindergarten with developing the understanding that all children are gifts from God and can share with others and ending in fifth grade with a study of the story of Peter's courage, humility and perseverance in spreading God's message. Students also

participate in a weekly Peace Building class where their class theme is introduced and studied. During this time, they also discern ways they can be contributing members of the community while focusing on service to others and on taking care of our world. Each classroom teacher integrates these themes into the daily routines. In all classes, students are challenged to follow Jesus' example by looking at the world from the eyes of others and finding ways they can help those around them.

Pastors from the churches that EMES students attend are invited to share in our Gathering time to contribute to the spiritual growth of the students. Students are also encouraged to participate in the Church life of their home congregations.

Students' spiritual growth is fostered each day in the classroom as they are given opportunities to talk about questions they face in everyday life and to share and develop their beliefs. Students are also encouraged to celebrate God's creation as they interact with their classmates and as they study and appreciate nature around them. Every day teachers model their faith as they create a respectful classroom where everyone is heard and honesty and integrity are valued.

Appendix C

Specialty Class Descriptions

Music

EMES's music curriculum is based on the Kodály approach, which uses excellent quality, authentic folksongs and singing games from around the world, art music, and other experiences to lead students to a love of music and a high level of musicianship, including music reading. The approach bases instruction on the developmental readiness of each child. It is singing-based but also incorporates musical instruments including recorder, which begins in 3rd grade. While the main goal of the music curriculum is to develop our students' musicianship, we also know that music reinforces other academic subjects. (The Kodály approach has been linked in several studies to a significant increase in test scores, especially in math.) We also believe in music's power to further our students' development as whole people and to bring us closer to God and to each other.

Art

We believe that art is fundamental to the complete education of a developing child. Because we are created in the image of God the Creator, we believe that the arts can be the vehicle to release that creativity in each of us. Through a variety of teaching strategies, art media and disciplines, students can explore and express their reactions to the world they live in, their family unit, and the faith they are developing. The teaching of art lends itself well to the development of gifted behaviors in students. It is especially useful in stimulating creative, lateral thinking and learning persistence.

We aim to develop and reinforce a healthy self-concept through success in the creative process and to open the door to future creative pursuits.

Physical Education

Physical activity is critical to the development and maintenance of good health in the elementary years. The goal of physical education at EMES is to develop physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthy physical activity. We know that some students are gifted in the area of physical activity and we recognize these gifts; we also believe that all students can grow to be more physically competent. Students participate in P.E. class four days a week where they learn the importance of being physically fit and living an active life. In addition, good sportsmanship is emphasized as well as fair play.

Spanish

The Spanish program at EMES embraces the concept that the world is a global community. Learning another language exposes children to other ways of looking at the world and helps them understand that they are a part of this global community. The curriculum in kindergarten through fifth grade focuses on conversational Spanish where the topics mirror students' life experiences. In addition, the older students are introduced to Spanish grammar. Spanish is spoken for most of each class period as students play games, sing songs, listen and repeat, and read and write. Through the learning of a second language our students enhance their listening ability, memory, creativity, and critical thinking skills.