



## **Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)**

### **Peer Model Policy**

*Peer models are children, ages 3 to 5 years, who are not kindergarten eligible. Peer models have developmentally appropriate behaviors and skills and can demonstrate those skills for students with developmental needs.*

## **What can my child gain from participating as a Peer Model in Special Education Early Childhood (ECSE) Developmental Preschool?**

In addition to participation in a high quality, language rich classroom with research based Early Childhood Curriculum, there are many benefits to including typically developing peers and students with disabilities. Below are just a few of the benefits according to the Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs (9/2014):

- Typically developing children can show positive developmental, social and attitudinal outcomes from inclusive experiences.
- They are capable of demonstrating greater compassion and empathy.
- They have a more positive perception of children with disabilities.
- They can develop a better understanding of diversity and disability.
- There are more opportunities for individualized learning, supporting developmental growth.
- There are benefits from working with developmental specialists who can identify and address student needs that may otherwise not be identified

## **Criteria informing decisions for admission and continued participation of a peer model.**

The ECSE educational team will make final decisions, based on the best matches for program needs; as well as the following criteria:

### **It is expected that the typical peer will:**

- Be a positive language model
- Be a positive play model
- Demonstrate age appropriate positive behaviors consistently
- Attend regularly (student will not miss more than 5 days in a 12 week period)
- Be completely toilet trained

### **Typical peer exit from the ECSE program may be based on:**

- Class Size
- Behavior management issues (pattern of 5 or more minor behavioral instances/ or 1 severe behavioral instance in a 12 week period)
- Student no longer meets the expected criteria for a typical peer
- Non payment of Tuition Fees or Parent Volunteer Hour