



## Family & Program Handbook



# Brillante Early Learning Center Family & Program Handbook

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at Explora

### Program Information

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Name: Brillante Early Learning Center

Location: Explora Science Center & Children’s Museum  
1701 Mountain Road NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87104

Phone: 505-600-6072

Director: Sarah McKinney

Email: [brillante@explora.us](mailto:brillante@explora.us)

505-600-6159

Website: <https://brillante.explora.us/>

[smckinney@explora.us](mailto:smckinney@explora.us)

### Hours of Operation:

Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 5:30 pm

Saturday, 9:30 am to 12:00 pm

#### Lab A Classroom

Phone: 505-600-1118

Email: [brillante@explora.us](mailto:brillante@explora.us)

#### Lab B Classroom

Phone: TBD

Email: TBD

### Program Description and Services:

Brillante Early Learning Center at Explora provides childcare and educational experiences to children ages 2- to 5-years-old. Our program offers full-day, Monday through Friday schedules with a limited number of flexible enrollment options to be inclusive of our diverse community. We are currently offering priority enrollment to CNM-student families and Explora staff. Brillante is located in Explora Science Center & Children’s Museum and provides a play- and exploration-based, STEAM-rich learning environment for children and families. Our program provides opportunities for family support with a focus on engaging with their children in science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) learning. We have a partnership with CNM to mentor and serve as a practicum placement for students in their Early Childhood Multicultural Education program and mentorship site for the Early Childhood Mentors Network. We also offer a Saturday drop-in study hours program for CNM student families.

The Brillante classroom at Explora is a pilot program for the bigger Brillante Early Learning Center, currently under development. As a pilot program, many of our policies and procedures are also under development. We look forward to learning with the children and families in our program to develop a curriculum and policies that meet our needs as a community. As we make updates to this Family Handbook, we will provide written notice to families of new policies and changes before they take effect.

### Licensing Information

Brillante Early Learning Center is licensed by the state of New Mexico's Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD). Our license number is: 25746759.

### Mission Statement

The mission of Brillante Early Learning Center is to support our community by increasing the local capacity for accessible high-quality early learning and care for student and working families, building the early childhood workforce, and serving as a hub for family and community resources.

### Philosophy Statement & Core Values

Brillante Early Learning Center is committed to being a relevant, thriving program that supports our children, families, educators, and our community. We are guided by five core values—equity; partnership; wellness; play and exploration; and purposeful environments.

*Equity:* We believe diversity strengthens our children, families, educators, and community. We value inclusion and full participation of those with varied abilities and identities, while honoring cultural and linguistic diversity. We are committed to creating opportunities for equity and eliminating barriers to prosperity and access for people from historically-excluded and marginalized populations and acknowledge the power of starting young to create opportunity for all children.

*Partnership:* Our core value of partnership grows from our commitment to learning alongside children, whom we uplift as respected, intelligent, creative members of our community and who play a critical role in their own learning and relationships. Brillante is a place where children, families, and educators can participate together through listening, dialogue, and exchange to shape rich learning opportunities and provide support. We are especially committed to meaningful partnership with families. The staff at Brillante seeks partnerships for the greater good as we work to achieve positive, collective, systemic impact.

*Wellness:* Brillante is committed to building a thriving early childhood ecosystem, where people feel safe, healthy, supported, and whole. We value the physical, emotional, social, and cultural well-being of our children, families, staff, and community. We acknowledge children's rights to outdoor play and healthy food. We also work to uphold the wellness of our families by serving as a resource for support and the wellness of our staff through workforce and professional development and compensation.

*Play & Exploration:* At Brillante we understand that learning, and STEAM learning in particular, is critical to the health of our communities and that play and exploration are critical to learning. We want children at Brillante to have experiences that are not only developmentally appropriate but also memorable, playful, and joyful. We value curiosity, creativity, flexibility, and innovation.

*Purposeful Environments:* The spaces we share play a critical role in learning. As educators we will facilitate environments where there is order and beauty in the arrangement of space, equipment, and materials. We value the natural world and the right of children to play and explore outdoors. We see early childhood as a space that bridges home and the bigger, wider world, systems, and relationships of which children are a part. We strive to create accessible, functional, nurturing, and aesthetic spaces that reflect our core values.

### Curriculum Statement

At Brillante Early Learning Center, we believe in the potential of STEAM learning to empower children and families while also recognizing the interdisciplinary and social nature of learning and development in early childhood. Our curriculum is emergent, meaning that rather than following a set of themes, units, or manuals, we develop our curriculum based on the interests, joys, and needs of our students.

We are influenced by the early childhood schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, research in the field of neuroscience, and constructivist practice. Our curriculum is guided by the following shared understandings and practices:

1. Children come to school full of wisdom and experience, ready to use their creativity, curiosity, and imaginations to make meaning of their lives and the world around them.
2. Children, families, educators, and community members bring strength and local wisdom that contribute to rich environments and meaningful learning experiences.
3. Learning is made visible in many ways, and children use words, drawing, numbers, painting, sculpture, music, and more to express what they know, understand, wonder, and feel. Educators value documentation to explore, demonstrate, and understand children's learning experiences, processes, and outcomes.
4. Children learn through their curiosity and open-ended exploration with a materials-rich curriculum, focused on STEAM, literacy, and the natural world. Children develop through interaction and relationships with other people, ideas, objects, and symbols.
5. Educators engage in collaborative reflection, discussion, and dialogue, based on observation of children at play and exploration. Ongoing professional development for teachers and pre-service teachers is embedded into the school ecosystem, in partnership with higher education institutions.
6. Children and adults collaborate as researchers and co-creators of learning.
7. Family participation in the life of the school is essential and takes many forms. Families bring vitality and richness by contributing diverse life experiences and wisdom.

For more information about the Reggio Emilia Approach, visit:

- A video about Reggio Emilia-inspired education:  
<https://youtu.be/7n2hCebmT4c?si=azBaNb2VlmoKg3ER>

- Values and Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach: <https://learningmaterialswork.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ValuesAndPrinciples.pdf>
- The North American Reggio Emilia Alliance: <https://www.reggioalliance.org/>

## Accreditation

Brillante Early Learning Center is actively pursuing accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to secure 5-star licensure, the highest level awarded by the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD). NAEYC-accredited programs demonstrate high-quality standards in the following areas:

- Relationships: The program promotes positive relationships between all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth and belonging as part of a community and to foster each child's ability to contribute as a responsible community member.
- Curriculum: The program implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and that promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.
- Teaching: The program uses a variety of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective teaching approaches that enhance each child's learning and development in the context of the program's curriculum goals.
- Assessment of Child Progress: The program uses a variety of formal and informal assessment approaches to provide information on children's learning and development. These assessments occur in the context of reciprocal communications between teachers and families, and with sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which children are developing. The program uses assessment results to inform decisions about the children in their care, to improve teaching practices, and to drive program improvement.
- Health: The program promotes the nutrition and health of children and protects children and staff from illness.
- Staff Competencies, Preparation, and Support: The program employs and supports a teaching and administrative staff that have the qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
- Families: The program establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture.
- Community Relationships Program Standard: The program establishes relationships with and uses the resources of the children's communities to support the achievement of program goals.
- Physical Environment: The program has a safe and healthful environment that provides appropriate and well maintained indoor and outdoor physical environments. The environment includes facilities, equipment, and materials to facilitate child and staff learning and development.
- Leadership and Management: The program effectively implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

To learn more about the NAEYC accreditation process, visit <https://www.naeyc.org/accreditation>.

As a brand new program, we will open as a 2-Star center under NM's FOCUS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and immediately begin work to achieve the highest levels of state and national accreditation.

### School Calendar

Our current school calendar is shared with families upon enrollment and is always available upon request. The calendar is also available on our website and posted in the classroom.

### Daily Classroom Schedule

Classroom schedules are posted in the classroom and will be shared with families by the classroom teachers.

An example classroom schedule is:

7:30 - 8:30	Families drop-off; Play outside in Nature's Notes
8:30 - 9:00	Breakfast
9:00 - 11:30	Choice time, outside play, and small group work
11:30 - 11:45	Meeting
11:45 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 1:00	Story time and transition to rest
1:00 - 2:30	Rest time, quiet play
2:30 - 4:45	Afternoon snack and choice time and museum exploration
4:45 - 5:30	Families pick-up

### Weather-Related Closures

We follow the weather-related school closings, delays, and early dismissals of Albuquerque Public Schools. When Albuquerque Public Schools are closed, delayed, or scheduled for early dismissal due to weather, Brillante will be as well. We do not provide refunds or make-up days based on weather-related closures.

### Contacting the Classroom & Brillante Staff

You can reach the teaching staff by calling your child's classroom directly (see page 2). If you need to contact your child's teachers urgently and are unable to reach them on the classroom phone, please call Explora's main line at 505-600-6072 and ask to get a message to the Brillante teachers. Our staff will deliver a message in-person or via walkie. If you have a non-urgent message, please email your child's classroom. The teaching teams check their email account several times throughout the day.

To contact Sarah McKinney, the Director of Brillante Early Learning Center, directly, email [smckinney@explora.us](mailto:smckinney@explora.us) or call 505-600-6159.

### Attendance & Tardiness Policy

Regular attendance and arriving at school on time supports children's social connections, sense of routine and security, and engagement with their classroom community and the curriculum. We encourage all families to bring their children to school regularly and on time to join their classmates for breakfast and play at the beginning of the day. Please communicate with your

child's teachers when they can expect your child to be dropped off and picked up, so that we can have students ready and plan staffing accordingly.

The core part of our PreK day is from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. As a NMPreK-funded program, we are required to "demonstrate support of families to ensure their child attends regularly (at least 85% of the time)." We expect families to do their best to get their children to school by 8:30. Attendance during the early care (7:30-8:30) and after-care (3:30-5:30) parts of the day is more flexible based on the needs of your family.

Our program and facilities close at 5:30. Out of respect for our staff, please pick-up your child in time to transition out of the building by 5:30. If there is a pattern of late pickups, families are expected to meet with the director and educators to establish a plan going forward.

### Pick-Up & Drop-Off

Weather permitting, drop-off and pick-up will often happen on the Nature's Notes playground via the green door on the northeast side of Explora. If you arrive and the class is not playing in Nature's Notes, you may use your key fob to enter through the green door and go directly to the classroom for drop-off or pick-up there. Families must comply with the use agreement for key fob entrance, which details what to do in the event of a lost fob, hours of entrance, and an agreement to not share your fob. If you are picking-up or dropping-off during Explora's open hours (10:00-5:00), you are also welcome to come to the classroom through Explora's main entrance. When you arrive, please let the front desk staff know that you are a Brillante family there for drop off/pickup.

It is helpful if you can communicate plans to drop-off or pick-up outside of the regular hours with the teaching staff. Classroom staff will only release children to parents/guardians and individuals indicated as an authorized pick-up on your child's enrollment paperwork, with photo ID verification.

### Notification of Absences

If a child will be absent from school for a period of time, please notify their teacher prior to their absence. To report an absence, email the classroom teacher(s) directly. You will receive a contact from Brillante staff when your child is not attending regularly, and we have not heard from you.

Make up days for absences are not offered.

### General Health & Illness Policies

Children must be kept at home if they are not well enough to participate in school activities, including outdoor play. Families will be called to pick up their child if he/she shows any of these listed symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.3° or higher
- Skin rash
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting
- Evidence of lice
- Signs of any communicable disease
- Discomfort that impedes a child's participation



If your child has any of these symptoms, please let us know right away, as it helps us prevent the spread of illness in the classroom. If a child becomes ill at school, the staff will make an effort to give them a restful space away from other children until they can be picked up by a parent or authorized pick-up person.

Children must be free from symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school. A note from a physician may be required before children with some illnesses are permitted to return, based upon the discretion of the director. If children have been exposed to a communicable disease (e.g., flu, pertussis, chickenpox), a health alert notice will be shared with families. Families will be notified of any evidence of lice or bed bugs, and our staff will work to create a plan to address the problem.

Brillante will comply with state and local COVID-19 and communicable disease guidance, including policies set by ECECD for child care licensing. If any individual in our community has a confirmed case of COVID-19, we will follow local regulations to prevent the spread of the virus and support the health and safety of other community members.

All children enrolled at Brillante Early Learning Center must have on file an up-to-date immunization record, or a public health division approved exemption from this requirement.

#### Administration of Medication, Vitamins, or Special Diets

For a Brillante staff member to administer a medication, vitamin, or special diet, the parent/guardian must complete an Administration of Medication Form, signed by a licensed medical provider. Exceptions will be made for vegetarian or vegan diets. The “Administration of Medication Form” must be completed every twelve months, or whenever changes take place. All medications will be kept in a locked box with documentation in the classroom.

In addition to the “Administration of Medication Form” on file, all medications must be labeled with:

- Child’s name
- Date
- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Time to be given
- Routes of administration

#### COVID-19 Precautions

All Brillante staff complete state-required training on COVID-safe practices and general health and safety precautions. Masks are currently optional, but always welcome for those who choose to wear them.

Brillante Early Learning Center complies with the guidance issued by the Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD), New Mexico Department of Health (DOH), and the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC). The current required practices, issued on April 3, 2023, are as follows:

- Licensed providers may operate at group sizes and ratios according to their licensed Star level.
- Training on health and safety practices is required for all staff, including cooks and

transportation staff.

- Good hygiene practices are required, including frequent handwashing/sanitizing
- Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned often throughout the day and disinfected at the end of each day.

The state has also issued the following guidance for best practice.

For anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 regardless of vaccination status:

- Stay home and isolate for 5 days. Day 0 is the day of symptom onset, or the day the positive test was taken (for asymptomatic persons).
- You DO NOT need to get an additional PCR test if you have had a positive at-home rapid test. Any positive test is considered positive.
- Children under two are the exception to masking guidance and should not mask.
- If you have a fever, or other persistent symptoms, continue to stay home in isolation until your fever is gone for 24 hours and other symptoms are resolving.
- To prevent the spread of COVID, tell anyone you have recently had close contact with and encourage them to get tested, monitor for symptoms, and reduce exposure to other people.

For anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 regardless of your vaccination status:

- Get either an at-home rapid test or PCR test if possible and stay at home until you know your test result.
- If you test positive, follow the guidelines for a positive test result.
- If you test negative on a rapid test but still have symptoms, continue to stay at home and get a PCR test OR a second at-home rapid test in 1-2 days.
- If you test positive on the PCR or second at-home rapid test, follow guidelines for a COVID-positive test.

Antigen Test Guidance

- If test is positive, follow CDC guidance for people with COVID-19 (isolation)
- If you have COVID symptoms and test is negative, test again in 48 hours. If still negative, test again after another 48 hours or get a lab-based tests.
- If you do not have COVID symptoms but believe you have been exposed and test is negative, test again in 48 hours, and then again 48 hours after the second test for a total of 3 tests.
- If test is positive on any repeat test, follow CDC guidance for people with COVID.

For more information, resources, and updated guidance visit:

<https://www.nmecccd.org/covid-19/>

### Accidents & Emergency Preparedness

All Brillante staff members complete First-Aid and CPR training and maintain up-to-date knowledge of our accident and emergency preparedness procedures.

If a child has a *minor accident* such as falling and scraping a knee or elbow, Brillante staff will administer the proper first aid treatment and complete an Explora Incident Report. One copy of the Incident Report will be sent home at pick-up and a second will be placed in the child's file.

We notify parents immediately if there has been a head injury, including a head bump. In this situation, teachers will apply ice and have the child checked by an administrator on duty.

If a child has a *serious accident or becomes seriously ill* while attending our program, we would stabilize the child, assess the situation, call 911 if necessary, and then notify the parents/guardians and Explora administration. If the primary guardian(s) cannot be reached, we will try to reach the child's emergency contact(s). A designated staff member will remain with the child until emergency personnel arrive. A second staff person will be sent to the front desk to await and direct emergency medical personnel. If a child must be transported to the hospital, they will be taken to the hospital that is designated in their enrollment paperwork. If parents have not arrived and medical emergency personnel determine that the child must be transported immediately to the hospital, a designated staff member will be assigned to travel with your child and wait until a parent/guardian arrives. The staff member will carry appropriate paperwork from your child's file to the hospital.

In the case of a *dental accident*, we would notify the parents/guardians if a child's permanent tooth is chipped, fractured, or knocked out. In case of a chip or fracture, Brillante staff will rinse the child's mouth with water and apply a cold compress. We will make every effort to locate the broken tooth fragment. For a tooth completely removed from the socket, Brillante staff will attempt to find and rinse the tooth in clean, cool water and place the tooth in a clean container with cold milk or water. Staff will not endeavor to replace the tooth in the socket.

In the event that a *child is found missing* from our program, staff will first immediately notify the on-site teaching team and director. We will then follow the Explora procedure for lost or missing children and visitors, which is initiated by contacting Visitor Experience managers on Channel 12 or the front desk by calling (505)600-6072 and alerting them that a Brillante child is missing and following instructions. We will complete an incident report and communicate an incident of a child found missing with the child's family.

In the case of a *fire or emergency that requires evacuation from the building*, the fire alarm will sound. The teaching staff would turn their walkies to Channel 15 and guide the children to evacuate to designated waiting areas indicated by Explora's emergency evacuation procedures, "Explora Emergency Evacuation Procedures" (available upon request). From the Brillante classroom or the Nature's Notes playground, they would evacuate to the fence along the south side of the play area outside of the classroom, where the children would sit along the fence and stay clear of the building. During any evacuation, teachers would take the emergency backpack, which contains supplies and contact information for students, and the sign-in binder as long as it is safe to grab them. The teachers would conduct a head count to ensure that all children are present and communicate the number of children and adults present directly to the director or administrator on-site via text message. Teachers and children wait for clearance on walkie Channel 15 before they return to the building.

In the case of an *emergency that requires evacuation from the Explora property to an off-site space*, staff will safely direct students to the NM Museum of Natural History and Science across 18th Street or the Albuquerque Museum at 2000 Mountain Road NW. Staff members

would take the emergency backpack and sign-in binder with student contact info and would stay in direct contact with the director, and once in a safe location, contact families via phone.

In the case of an emergency that requires the children and teachers to lockdown inside of the Explora building, staff members would shelter-in-place with students in the classroom bathroom, which is stocked with a lockdown kit and door stopper. Staff members would lock the classroom doors, pull curtains, and secure the bathroom door. They would turn off walkies and communicate via text with the director and on Explora's emergency Google Space messaging chat to maintain a silent, out-of-sight lockdown space. These procedures are also detailed in "Explora's Active Shooter Procedures" (also available upon request).

Fire drills are conducted once a month per state licensing regulations and are unannounced. Lockdown drills are conducted once quarterly. They can happen anytime during the day.

### Confidentiality Policy

Family, student, and staff information is confidential. Any information derived by working with the program regarding students, families, or other staff members should not be discussed or transferred outside of the program without express written consent.

A locked file is maintained on each child to include such items as enrollment paperwork, contact information, assessment and screening results, and educational records. Parents/guardians may have access to these reports by contacting the director. A release form must be signed by the parent/guardian to release information from a child's file to another school, agency, or individual.

### Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Procedure

Brillante Early Learning Center staff are required by law to immediately report suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect to the New Mexico Child Youth and Family Department. New Mexico law also states that any individual who suspects that child abuse or neglect has occurred is responsible for taking action. To report child abuse or neglect call 1-855-333-SAFE.

### Enrollment Procedures

Enrollment procedures and documents are detailed in the "Enrollment Process" document that is shared with families when they accept a spot offered by Brillante Early Learning Center. Our waitlist is open and available upon request, however at this time we are offering priority enrollment to Explora staff members and CNM student families.

### Disenrollment Procedures & Expulsion Policy

For families disenrolling from Brillante Early Learning Center, we request at least a 2 week, written notice. This is so that we may help your child prepare for their transition and welcome new families on board.

While we work hard to serve all students and families who come to our program, under rare circumstances, we may ask a family to leave our program. Circumstances that may warrant this

kind of disenrollment include failure to pay tuition, excessive absences or late pick-ups, a failure to comply with the policies set forth in this handbook, or our inability to safely accommodate particular needs. To the best of our ability, families will be given 30 days of notice so they are able to seek other care. We are well connected to several other outstanding early childhood programs and will support families' efforts to find a new program in a timely fashion.

### Concerns & Complaints

We always encourage communication between our classroom teaching staff and families. If a family has a concern that cannot be addressed at the classroom level, please contact the director, Sarah McKinney at (505)600-6159 or [smckinney@explora.us](mailto:smckinney@explora.us), and she will follow up with you promptly. We are committed to addressing and learning from feedback and concerns.

### Tuition & Tuition Assistance

The following policy reflects tuition for the 2024-2025 operating year (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024). We offer two schedule options: M-F 8:30-3:30 and M-F 7:30-5:30.

#### *Lab A Classroom*

In the Lab A classroom, the core part of our PreK day—from 8:30 to 3:30—is funded by the NMPreK program. Our program is free to all students during these hours. We offer extended hours for a full day of care, from 7:30 to 5:30. For families on a full-time Child Care Assistance contract, the 7:30-5:30 schedule is fully covered by Child Care Assistance. For families paying privately, tuition for the 7:30-5:30 schedule is \$400 per month.

#### *Lab B Classroom*

In the Lab B Classroom, both schedule options can be fully covered by Child Care Assistance. The private pay rates are \$1000 per month for 7:30-5:30 and \$700 per month for 8:30-3:30.

For families who will pay privately, on the 5th of the month, you will receive an invoice for the amount indicated on your enrollment contract. Tuition is due by the 15th of the month. No credit given for planned/unplanned absences. All payments are final.

We strive to provide high-quality, accessible care and early learning, especially for those who have traditionally not had access to it. Families who are unable to afford tuition are encouraged to apply for child care assistance through the Early Childhood Education and Care Department and remain in communication with the director. Families with unforeseen financial circumstances are encouraged to meet with the director to discuss payment options.

Late or no payment in addition to no communication will result in the loss of your child's spot at Brillante Early Learning Center.

### Guidance Policy

The ultimate goal of guidance and supervision at Brillante is self-control and social connection, making it possible for a child to direct their own behavior appropriately and be in relationship with others. The role of the teachers is to help children take steps toward responsible

self-direction, as they are ready. Fundamental to this process is the child's feelings about him or herself. Our teachers seek to enhance a child's self image, and never use threats or shame or label a child "bad." We want every child to feel accepted and successful.

Expectations for behavior and rules in our classroom will be reasonable and clear, established for your child's safety and to protect the rights of others. When ground rules are broken, they are clearly and firmly restated. When a child infringes on the rights of another, the other child is encouraged to talk about how that makes him or her feel. Teachers support these interactions by ensuring that children participate in the conversation, and, when necessary, explaining or interpreting how others feel when something happens. Teachers will work together with children to create a plan to repair relationships and make better choices going forward.

We do not use physical or emotional punishment.

At Brillante Early Learning Center, many other positive guidance techniques are used, such as:

- Structuring the environment to support appropriate behavior;
- Modeling appropriate behavior;
- Redirection;
- Carefully timed teacher intervention;
- Logical, natural consequences; and
- Encouraging problem solving to resolve conflicts.

To support children's development of self-esteem, we:

- Actively listen,
- Refrain from judgmental statements,
- Respond to ideas,
- Recognize effort,
- Use proper names and verbally interact with each child,
- Engage in interactions that are supportive, and
- Interact with children at their eye level.

To encourage children's autonomy, we:

- Provide children with opportunities to make choices;
- Allow children to complete tasks independently;
- Create opportunities for decision-making, problem-solving, and working together; and
- Teach children strategies for self-regulating and/or self-monitoring.

To promote children's emotional regulation and executive functioning, we:

- Help children identify appropriate choices and
- Support children's efforts to solve problems.

### Equal Access & Inclusivity

Brillante Early Learning Center promotes equal access of services for all children and families and prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, and age.

At Brillante Early Learning Center, we believe diversity strengthens our children, families, educators, and community. We value inclusion and the full participation of those with varied abilities and identities, while honoring cultural and linguistic diversity. We are committed to creating opportunities for equity and eliminating barriers to prosperity and access for people from historically-excluded and marginalized populations and acknowledge the power of starting young to create opportunity for all children. We aim to ensure everyone within our community feels proud of their identities, has opportunities to share and nurture their culture with our school community, and engages meaningfully with cultures and languages that differ from their own.

Upon request, we are happy to pursue translation services.

### Inclusive Practices for Children with Disabilities & Developmental Delays

Brillante Early Learning Center is an inclusive program, meaning that we serve the educational needs of each student in classrooms with their peers with a mix of learners and developmental stages, regardless of background or dis/ability. We do not have enrollment criteria based on ability/disability and are committed to serving all children who enroll with us to the best of our capacity. This is more than just a classroom placement philosophy. Feeling confident and connected with peers and educators is key to learning for all people, and we work hard to make sure that each student is an engaged, thriving, and happy member of our classroom community.

Our program has staff with expertise in early childhood special education, and we are committed to working with families and support and service providers to make appropriate accommodations and modifications to ensure the full participation of all of our students. With written consent, families can request a Brillante staff member to participate in their child's IEP or IFSP process, and we will incorporate children's individual plans and goals into our curriculum to the best of our ability. We are happy to work with families and service providers to incorporate services such as Speech/Language, Occupational, or Physical Therapy into children's school day.

### Referrals for Early Intervention & Support Services

We work with New Mexico's Child Find program and other community partners and resources to ensure that children and families are connected to the early intervention and support services to best meet their needs. As a NMPreK program, we document that every family has been offered health, vision, and hearing screenings. If you need resources to access these services, we can arrange them with you.

## School Clothes

Families are encouraged to send their child to school in comfortable clothing that can handle a little dirt, paint, or project splatter. We ask that families send 1 to 3 extra changes of seasonally appropriate clothes and shoes to be kept at school in case their child needs to change. Families are expected to check their child's belongings at least once a week to ensure their child has everything they need.

## Rest Time

Young children benefit from a period of quiet rest everyday. For our students who need to sleep, we provide a peaceful, darkened, well-supervised napping time. Children transition to rest time following lunch and are supported by teachers to relax and fall asleep. Children generally nap from 1:00pm to 2:30pm. Teachers gently support children to adopt this sleep schedule and allow them to wake naturally and transition back to wakeful activities after resting. If your child needs a longer or shorter nap than this schedule permits, please talk to your teacher.

Children may bring to school one small stuffed animal and/or a blanket for rest time. These items must fit in the child's cubby, and families must take them home to wash weekly on Fridays. Each child will be provided with their own rest mat that will be labeled with their name and cleaned regularly.

For children who have outgrown their nap, we provide a period of afternoon time when children enjoy some much needed quiet time. Children are given comfortable, individual resting spots. The lights are dimmed and children listen to relaxing music or an audiobook, or do quiet table-top activities or outdoor play in a small group.

## Meals & Snacks

Brillante Early Learning Center contracts with Rhubarb & Elliot (<https://www.rhubarbandelliott.com/>) to provide free, healthy breakfasts and lunches for all students. Our program will also offer morning and afternoon snacks that will be planned and prepared by our teachers in-house. Menus for meals and snacks will be posted in the classroom.

Families are welcome to send healthy meals or snacks from home that children may eat during class meal or snack times. Please label all lunch boxes and containers with the child's name.

Sometimes children within our program have severe allergies. We will make all families aware of any accommodations that we make in collaboration with the child's family accordingly.

## Family Engagement

We have many opportunities for your family to engage with our classroom community throughout the year. At the start of each school year, we look forward to visiting with you at family orientation, open classroom, and home visits in August. We have family-teacher conferences scheduled twice a year, with a third optional conference date. Please refer to the



current school calendar for specific dates. Families are welcome to request additional conferences at any time.

We would love your input about what other kinds of activities, gatherings, and opportunities you would like to see!

### Family Volunteering in the Classroom

Brillante Early Learning Center has an open door policy. Family members are welcome at any time. To reduce classroom disruptions and ensure you make the best use of your visit, we urge families to consider volunteering at times that have been pre-arranged with your child's teacher. This allows us to think about how to best incorporate your visit into the classroom's curriculum. Example volunteer opportunities include facilitating a special cooking project, reading a book, singing a song, organizing a unique art activity, or sharing a unique interest or passion that may inspire children.

### Field Trips

The decision to take the class on community walks and field trips will be made by teachers based upon student interest, curriculum, and weather. All children going on field trips must have written permission from their parent/guardian. All field trips adhere to New Mexico state licensing ratio requirements.

One of our greatest learning resources is our surrounding community. We are within walking distance to museums, Tiguex Park, the Sawmill District, and Old Town Plaza. Upon enrollment, all families will be asked to sign a walking field trip consent. This permission covers visits to Explora Science Center & Children's Museum (outside of our licensed classroom and playground spaces) with the understanding that we will often visit Explora exhibits and spaces outside of our classroom. Families will be notified when a field trip is planned outside of the Explora premises.