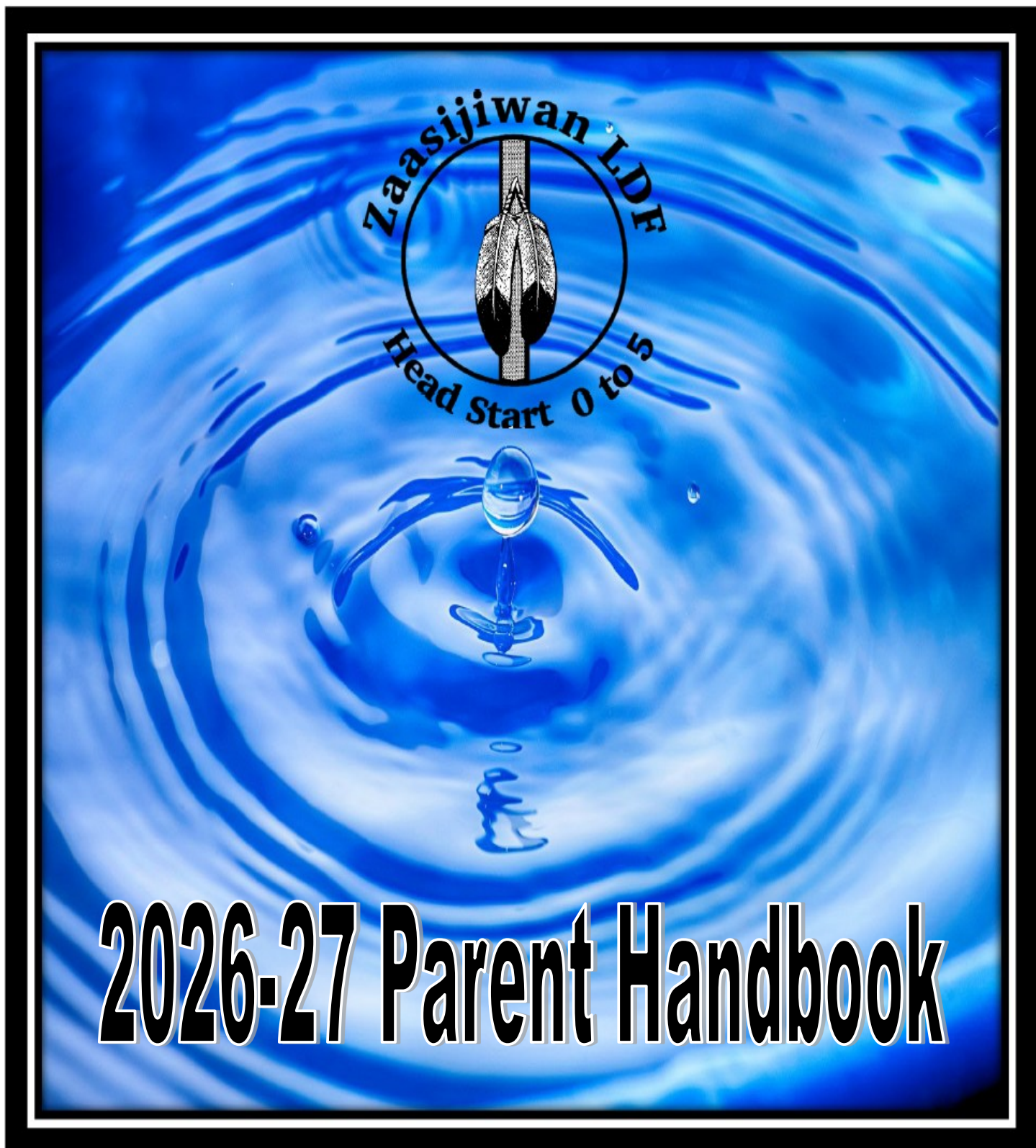




“It Ripples”

is the meaning of the Ojibwe word, Zaasijiwan. It was chosen to represent the program because it aims to create a ripple effect that reaches as far as possible in support of young children, their families and the community.



Welcome Message from Zaasijiwan Head Start

Dear Parents,

We at Zaasijiwan Head Start would like to welcome you to our program! Our staff is excited to begin the school year with your child and family.

This parent handbook is designed to ensure you and your child have the information needed to have a successful experience in the program. Please carefully review and save for future reference.

There are a few things to keep in mind as your child begins his/her ZHS preschool experience.

- School attendance, punctuality, and a good night sleep are all essential for student success.
- Collaborative partnerships between parents, families, and staff are strongly encouraged. ZHS offers a variety of methods for parents to partner with program participants and staff.
- ZHS strongly encourages family involvement in the program throughout the school year. We recognize that involvement is fundamental to the overall success of children and their families.

If you have questions about the program, please feel free to contact us anytime throughout the school year. Contact information is located within this handbook.

Once again, welcome and thank you for allowing us to be a part of the early education of your child.

Respectfully,

The Zaasijiwan Head Start Staff

Mission Statement

Zaasijiwan Head Start 0 to 5

Definition:

Zaasijiwan Head Start 0 to 5 is a comprehensive child development and family support program. The program is administered by the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. ZHS integrates the core values of family, caring, partnership, responsibility, trust and respect for others into its practice.

Mission:

The mission of Zaasijiwan Head Start 0 to 5 is to demonstrate a commitment to children and families to assure they have resources and opportunities to succeed. This is accomplished through direct services in the home and the center, the educational and empowerment process, and through working in partnership with existing community agencies.

Motto: “Each One Honor One”

Goals:

- To provide a high quality environment and facility for program participants that is responsive to and supportive of community needs.
- To improve the quality of educational services.
- To promote and increase parent and community involvement in the program.
- To promote staff morale, wellness, and retention.

Benefits:

- Children are ready to learn when they enter school.
- Parents and caregivers are supported in their roles and provided resources to assist in goal attainment.
- Families have access to consistent quality health care services and health education.
- Families develop an extended network of caring professionals who help them access comprehensive family support services.

Outcomes:

- Children receive appropriate early intervention services and exhibit pro-social behaviors.
- Families gain problem solving skills and the ability to advocate for themselves in existing systems.
- Family relationships improve.
- Families have greater knowledge of community services and resources.

Staff Directory



Front Desk

715-588-9291

Program Administration

Director:

Tari Wolfe

twolfe@ldftribe.com

715-588-4331

Administrative Assistant:

Leah Sunn

leah.sunn@ldftribe.com

715-588-4333

HS Education Manager & Disabilities Services Coordinator:

Ashley Fischer

afischer@ldftribe.com

715-588-4338

EHS Education Manager & Behavior Support Coordinator

Holly Prehn

hprehn@ldftribe.com

715-588-4339

Family Service Manager & ERSEA Coordinator

Debra Hagamon

debra.hagamon@ldftribe.com

715-588-4332

Health, Safety & Nutrition Coordinator

Sarah DeCota

sdecota@ldftribe.com

715-588-4335

Early Childhood Mentor & Coaching Coordinator

Whitney Sauer

wsauer@ldftribe.com

715-588-4336

Program Staff

Foodservice Workers:

Bradley Thompson

Robert Chapman-Smith

715-588-4330

Custodial Workers:

Lawrence Wewasson

Bryson RisingSun-Doud

Family Services Staff

Family Service Advocates:

Samantha Lande

slande@ldftribe.com

715-588-4334

Karen Zajicek

kzajicek@ldftribe.com

715-588-4334

EHS Parent Educators (Home Based Teachers):

Maxine Gans-Smith

max@ldftribe.com

715-588-4332

TBD

tbd@ldftribe.com

Early Head Start—Center-Based

Classroom 3:		715-588-4343
Dorran Hiller	dhiller@ldftribe.com	
Athena Lopez-Chapman	athena.chapman@ldftribe.com	
Classroom 4:		715-588-4344
Melissa Walters	mwalters@ldftribe.com	
Mary Saari	msaari@ldftribe.com	
Classroom 5:		715-588-4345
Theresa Valliere	theresa.valliere@ldftribe.com	
Elisabeth Carufel	ecarufel@ldftribe.com	
Classroom 6:		715-588-4346
Justina Bingham	jbingham@ldftribe.com	
Lorrina BigJohn	lbigjohn@ldftribe.com	
Classroom 8:		715-588-4348
Abby Hamilton	ahamilton@ldftribe.com	
Aubrianna Cadotte	acadotte@ldftribe.com	
Early Head Start Aides:		715-588-4340
Hattie Mitchell	hmitchell@ldftribe.com	
Allyson LaBarge	alabarge@ldftribe.com	

Head Start

Classroom 7:		715-588-4347
Jeanette Chapman	jeanette.chapman@ldftribe.com	
Dawn Maple	dmaple@ldftribe.com	
Classroom 9:		715-588-4349
Tisheana Maulson	tmaulson@ldftribe.com	
Allison Sharpe	asharpe@ldftribe.com	
HS Teacher Aides:		715-588-4341
Victoria Diver, Room 7	vdiver@ldftribe.com	
Sienna LaBarge, Room 9	sienna.labarge@ldftribe.com	

Program Aides:	
Chelsea Akre	cakre@ldftribe.com
Vacant	TBD @ldftribe.com

Admission/Enrollment

Head Start is a free educational program serving low income families with children ages 0-5, including pregnant mothers. Head Start reserves enrollment slots for children with special needs. Children not accepted into the program at the beginning of the year will be placed on an active waiting list. Parents will be notified of enrollment opportunities when openings occur.

Enrollment options

Early Head Start Home Based: Ages Prenatal-3; Participate in one home visit each week for 90 minutes with your child's Parent Educator. Twice monthly socials are also provided for your child and family to engage with program participants and staff.

Early Head Start Center Based: Ages 15 -36 months;

Classroom hours are **7:40 AM-4:40 PM** Monday through Thursday.

Head Start Center Based: Ages 3-5 years;

Classroom hours are **7:40 AM-3:25** PM Monday through Thursday.

Important Information:

My child's teachers' are: _____

My child's classroom number/name: _____

My Family Service Advocate: _____

Family Service Advocate number: _____

My child's first day of school: _____

Notes to remember:

Suggestions, Concerns, Grievances

Suggestions, concerns, and grievances are welcome. We will do our best to achieve resolution to any concern or grievance presented. Please follow the communication procedures (page 13) and chain of command (page 14). If you would like to make a formal complaint, please do so in writing.

Hours of Operation

Office Hours 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM ^ Early Head Start 7:40 AM – 4:40 PM ^ Head Start 7:40 AM – 3:25 PM

Teaching staff are available to receive students during class hours only. Authorized caregivers must pick-up students by dismissal time. Parents and/or caregivers give authorization when listing emergency contacts and must provide notice of any changes in who picks up if they are not listed. In the event that a student is not picked up, the program will attempt to contact parents/authorized caregivers listed in the student's emergency contacts. If contact cannot be made, authorities may be contacted. Breakfast, lunch, and snack (if applicable) are served at regular intervals. Physical activity is part of the daily schedule and classrooms spend a good portion of each day outdoors. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately; there are very few exceptions to outdoor time. Daily schedules for each classroom may vary and will be shared with families and posted in the classroom. Please refer to individual class schedules for further details.

Arrival, Departure, & Safe Release Procedures

ZHS students must be brought into the center through the Head Start entrance. Pre-K/Elementary students are not allowed to enter through Head Start and will be redirected to the public school entrance. To ensure safety and continuous supervision ZHS students must be accompanied by a caregiver during pick up/drop off. No child can be left alone or unsupervised. Caregivers are required to sign in/out in the classroom. Caregivers must check students into the classroom and ensure a staff member is available to receive the child so no lapse in supervision occurs. Students will only be released to caregivers authorized on student applications and/or listed as emergency contacts. Please contact the front desk to make any changes.

Attendance Expectations

Zaasijiwan Head Start encourages regular, consistent attendance which is proven to aid in the establishment of good routines and relationships and the overall school culture. The program strives for an overall attendance average of 90% or above and tracks attendance trends. If your child is unable to attend, please notify the Attendance Coordinator (715)588-4329 by 9:00 AM. If we do not receive notification, we will contact you and/or your listed contacts to determine the reason for the absence and provide assistance if necessary. Chronic absenteeism will result in program follow-up actions. Continuous, chronic non-attendance can lead to your student being withdrawn from the program and placed on a waiting list for re-entry. If there is anything we can do to help you maintain good attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Inclement Weather & Program Closures

Zaasijiwan Head Start makes every effort to adhere to its calendar. Decisions about program closures are determined based on health and safety concerns in addition to the status of the Lac du Flambeau Tribe, the Lac du Flambeau Elementary School, and other pertinent factors. When deemed necessary to close the program due to inclement weather or other urgent situations or emergencies, you will be notified electronically. In the event of a classroom closure, impacted families are notified individually. Please be sure to keep contact information current.

Focus on School Readiness

Beyond program goals, Zaasijiwan Head Start also strives to enhance the growth and/or development of infants, toddlers, and young children so they enter school ready to learn. We call this "School Readiness" and the primary goal in this area is that children will progress to the point that at least 80% are meeting or exceeding widely held expectations in six (6) areas of development and learning: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, and Mathematics. Ongoing efforts are made to align our goals with the Lac du Flambeau School's expectations for new 4K and Kindergarten students. Progress toward these goals is assessed through checkpoints following the Fall, Winter, and Spring academic periods. More information on School Readiness Goals can be provided upon request.

Family Services and Community Partnerships

Zaasijiwan Head Start adopts the Head Start philosophy that "empowerment of families occurs when program governance responsibilities are shared by families, governing bodies, and staff. When the ideas and opinions of families are heard, respected, and supported, the program meets its goal of "fostering relationships with the larger community to ensure families and staff are respected and served by a network of community agencies that work in partnership."

Our Family Service Team will work with participating families throughout the year to set goals for their children and themselves and to connect them with community resources that can assist with achievement of those goals. We want to ensure that all families participating in the program are provided with opportunities to meet their needs and goals. If we can assist your family with setting and achieving goals or dealing with a hardship, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Another function of the Family Service Team is facilitating participation in program governance via the ZHS Policy Council and program activities via the ZHS Parent Committee which are two primary means for involving families in setting the direction of the program.

Health, Safety, and Nutrition Coordination

Zaasijiwan Head Start maintains an acute focus on supporting health, safety, and nutrition as these elements of well-being are the foundation of overall wellness. We collaborate with other community agencies such as the Wisconsin Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the Peter Christensen Health & Dental Centers to promote and support access to consistent, quality nutrition and health services in addition to providing educational resources, materials, and presentations on relevant health topics. A core value of the Head Start program is "to ensure that all basic health needs are met while encouraging practices that prevent future illnesses and injuries and promoting positive, culturally relevant health behaviors that enhance life-long well-being."

We want to support your child and your family in your journey to good health and well-being. We accomplish this in a number of ways including providing vision, hearing, dental, and developmental screenings, performing various assessments, providing and/or coordinating health and mental health consultation and following up to ensure the health needs of your child are being met. The program employs a Health, Safety, and Nutrition Coordinator who works with children, staff, and families to promote this agenda. This employee also assists teaching and supports staff in handling any medical/dental emergencies that may arise while your student is in attendance.

Health Requirements

Zaasijiwan Head Start partners with parents to support the health and well-being of each student. We want to make sure each child's health and developmental needs are being met in a timely and effective manner. We will communicate and follow-up with parents often to assist in meeting the following requirements. Most can be fulfilled by participating in regular Well Child exams with primary providers and sharing information with ZHS.

Health History: This includes chronic health conditions or severe illnesses, medications and allergies, emergency contacts, as-well-as primary care providers (doctor, dentist) and insurance providers. If a family requires assistance finding a provider or health insurance we can assist them in obtaining both.

Nutrition Screening: Our nutrition screening is a questionnaire designed to assess if a child's nutritional needs are being met and to help us best fill them while in attendance. The Health, Safety, and Nutrition Coordinator will follow up on any concerns to develop plans for addressing them.

Immunizations: Part of ensuring individual health needs are being met is verifying immunization records and making sure they are up to date. ZHS follows the immunization schedule mandated by the Centers for Disease Control and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Parents who do not wish to vaccinate their children for personal or religious reasons will need to submit an exemption form that can be provided upon request.

Lead Screen and Hemoglobin: Lead screenings check for elevated lead levels which can negatively affect mental development and IQ. Hemoglobin is tested to check for chronic blood conditions. Both are a part of regular Well Child visits.

Well Child Visits: We track each child's preventative care schedule which requires records from each child's Well Baby/ Well Child visits. The schedule we follow to meet these requirements is outlined by the American Academy of Pediatrics and can be found at www.aap.org.

ASQ-SE: The ASQ-SE is a screening tool to assess each child's social and emotional health and development. It is administered at various age intervals ranging from two months on. These assessments are in the form of a questionnaire to be filled out by a child's primary caregiver.

Hearing/Vision Screen: Periodic vision and hearing screening is important to identify hearing or vision concerns that could interfere with learning and development.

Dental Exam: Oral health is monitored by ZHS as it has the potential to impact a child's comfort level and engagement in learning. Parents/guardians will be asked to fill out a dental consent form that allows us to obtain and share information with the Peter Christensen Dental Center and arrange for periodic center visits to provide education, encourage oral health, and provide fluoride varnishes and exams as a part of preventative care.

An at-a-glance timeline of important requirements and timelines for meeting them is provided on the following page.

If you have any questions about any of these requirements, please contact our Health, Safety, and Nutrition Coordinator at 715-588-4335.

Important Timeline

Completion of required screenings is based on your child's first day of enrollment and attendance in Head Start or Early Head Start. Please work with your assigned Family Service Advocate and/or the Health, Safety & Nutrition Coordinator to schedule the completion of these requirements.

Documentation needed	Completed by	Prior to Enrollment	Within 30 calendar days	Within 45 Calendar days	Within 90 calendar days
Enrollment Packet	Parent/ Guardian	x			
Immunization Record	Parent/ Guardian	X			
Health Care Provider & Insurance	Parent/ Guardian or Health Safety, and Nutrition Coordinator		X		
ASQ-3 & ASQ-SE	Parent			X	
Developmental screeners					
Health Screenings	Health, Safety, and Nutrition Coordinator or Family Service Advocate			X	
Vision/ Hearing					
Health Status	Parent/ Guardian				X
Well child & Dental					
Family Partnership Agreement (FPA)	Parent/ Guardian & Family Service Advocate				X

Educational Home Visits & Parent-Teacher Conferences

Over the course of the program year, teaching staff will conduct three (3) educational home visits. The 1st Home Visit takes place before the school year starts. Ideally, it takes place in your home as it is designed not only to introduce your child to his or her teachers but also to provide teaching staff with a background on your family makeup and culture. Home Visits will also be conducted midway through the year and at the end of the year. Additionally, ZHS holds Parent-Teacher Conferences twice a year to discuss your child's progress toward 'School Readiness'.

These visits and check-ins help staff establish and maintain good relationships with your child and family. They also provide a strong foundation for learning because they focus on your child's relationships, interests, needs, and learning progress. Please be sure to participate.

Classroom Procedures: Health Checks, Visitors, Celebrations, Food

Each class has a daily routine and method of performing program requirements (see classroom schedule for details). Individual classroom schedules may vary but certain procedures and requirements apply to all. Upon arrival, children store belongings and wash hands. Teachers perform a "health check" during which they observe each student and document any obvious signs of illness, injury, or other health concerns. Teachers keep attendance and practice active supervision. Tooth brushing occurs at least once daily along with periodic dental screenings and fluoride treatments. Visitors are welcome, however we must adhere to staff to child ratios and require you to be responsible for the supervision of any non-students at all times. Celebrations are held at the discretion of each classroom - outside food may be allowed in the classrooms with restrictions to enhance safety. Please discuss options with your child's teachers if you plan to celebrate a birthday or other event in class, age-appropriate non-food items are preferred.

Open Door Policy & Volunteering

We have an open door policy which allows anyone to visit and observe at any time during classroom and/or office hours. We serve breakfast, lunch, and snack at regular times and encourage you to stop in and join your child in his or her classroom during this time.

Likewise, we welcome volunteers into our program. Please contact us if you are interested in volunteering in any capacity. Volunteers may be required to participate in orientation and physical and criminal background checks depending on their status. Please do not hesitate to contact the center should you have any questions about these policies/procedures.

Parent Committee & Policy Council

As a participating parent, you are a member of our parent committee and we encourage your participation in educational events and program activities. We want to serve your needs and these activities help us gather the information needed to make that happen! Please look for announcements on meeting dates and times. Our program is also governed by the Policy Council which functions much like a school board and consists of parents elected each year. Please nominate yourself or another parent who may be interested in serving. We want parents to be as involved in setting the direction for our program. Please call for more info.

Surveillance

The Zaasijiwan Head Start program employs surveillance cameras to enhance the safety and security of program participants, employees, and property with consideration given to reasonable expectations of personal privacy. Notification of surveillance is provided via signage at entrances and other prominent locations. Please refer to the policy for further details.

Parent, Family & Community Engagement

Zaasijiwan Head Start provides many opportunities for families to get involved in their child's education. Including but not limited to the following:

Parent Committee

Parents are provided with opportunities to participate in a variety of program activities. They can choose to engage in committee discussions and events as members or to participate in a leadership capacity by working with ZHS staff to organize, facilitate and record committee activities and meetings.

Policy Council

Parents of enrolled children may participate in policy council. The policy council is an elected board that shares responsibility for program decision-making with program leadership and the Tribal government. Elections are held annually in September. The council consists of One(1) Head Start rep, one (1) Early Head Start rep, one (1) Home Based rep & two (2) community reps. A parent or immediate family member may not serve on the council if employed by Zaasijiwan Head Start. The policy council meets regularly with the Program Director and other governing officials. It elects its own officers, including: President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer.

Volunteer opportunities

Families are encouraged to let us know about any interest in volunteering. We have many opportunities and can contact you as they become available.

Other opportunities:

Attend/volunteer during family socials/ field trips	Set goals for your family and child	Participate in home visits/parent conferences	Attend parent committee meetings and/or engage in committee activities
Volunteer in a classroom	Attend socializations	Run for Policy Council	Fundraising

Parent and family engagement is essential to quality early care and education. Our program provides child care, home visits, family support services and intervention opportunities. We pride ourselves in providing quality early childhood education and family services. Our goal is to serve your whole family. Your family will be assigned a Family Service Advocate for the program school year. This person is responsible for conducting a minimum of (2) Home Visits (separate from educational visits) and maintaining contact with your family throughout the program year. The first home visit will take place within 90 days of enrollment. During your families home visit your Advocate will begin by getting to know your family through the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment and working with you to set goals that you would like to see achieved for your child and/or family. They will follow up throughout the year and conduct a second home visit during the second half of the school year to check in. If your family is participating in our Home Based option you will be assigned your very own Parent Educator. (See page 6, enrollment options)

Communication

Zaasijiwan Head Start strives to keep open communication between, staff, parents, families, and the community. We regularly send notifications via text, email, flyers, newsletters, and post updates on our Facebook page (Zaasijiwan Tribal Head Start) in an effort to keep everyone well informed. We may also contact you by phone, text message, or other messenger service (i.e. Facebook Messenger) to relay important information or follow up on any concerns.

We strongly encourage you to bring ideas, suggestions, or concerns you may have to our attention. We want to do our best to serve you and the community so maintaining an open dialogue is a top priority. Your input is important!

Let your child's teacher or other pertinent staff know if you have a communication preference or if you would like to restrict these efforts in any way. Below are some general guidelines for maintaining respectful and open communication. We want to make every effort to operate with openness, collaboration and a shared best interest for every student.

- **Maintain Respectful and Open Communication**

Always use a respectful and polite tone.

Request or suggest, please refrain from making demands.

Be ready not just to provide information, but to listen to the observations and perspectives of others.

Keep an open mind and assume a shared best interest for your child. Be prepared to work collaboratively to solve problems.

- **Confidentiality**

Recognize that confidentiality limits the type of information that can be shared from school to parents. This includes, but is not limited to, information about other children in the program, consequences for other students' behaviors, surveillance, etc.

We make every effort to respect the privacy of our students and families. If you have a concern about confidentiality, complete the Parent & Community Grievance form or submit your concern in writing to the appropriate administrative member.

- **Time to Respond to Communications**

Teachers will make every effort to respond as soon as possible to parent communications, with the understanding that the teaching day sometimes prevents immediate responses.

Teachers and staff may need some time to collect needed information before responding.

Whom to Contact

Most communications of classroom and playground concerns should be directed at first to your child's teacher. The Education Manager may receive concerns about academics or in-class behaviors. The Program Director may receive communications regarding non-academic concerns.

If you have an issue with a staff member, first try to address those concerns with that staff member directly, if you do not feel comfortable doing so, please contact the supervisor for assistance. Please refer to the staff directory and/or organizational chart for information on staffing structure.

If you have discussed the issue with the appropriate personnel in accordance with the chain of command specified in the organizational chart and you feel that the issue still has not been addressed to your satisfaction then please contact the Program Director for further assistance.

An alternative means of addressing concerns about the program is to contact the President of the Policy Council, which is an arm of the ZHS program governance structure comprised of parent representatives. The Council meets regularly and may be able to address your concern through collaboration with other staff and parents. This method can be especially helpful if your concern is related to curriculum, policy, staffing structure, or program performance.

2026-27 Zaasijiwan Head Start Organizational Structure



Zaasijiwan Head Start
2026-2027
Receipt of Parent Handbook



I, _____, have received a copy of the parent handbook. I understand that I am responsible for reading and understanding the guidelines as outlined within the Parent Handbook. I also realize that I may address any questions or concerns with my child's Teacher, my Family Service Advocate, Program Supervisors or the Program Director.

My preferred method of contact is:

Parent Signature

Date

Childs Name: _____

****This page should be signed and returned to your Family Service Advocate or Family Service Manager****