



340 Wilkerson Rd.
Rex, GA 30273
678-565-1910
678-565-1132 fax
info@asalearning.com

Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday – Friday, January – December
Breakfast Hours: 6:40 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.

Holidays: **The center will be closed for the following days:**

Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day and Friday after
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
New Year's Eve and New Year's Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day

The center will observe any holiday that falls on a weekend on the week day that the majority of other businesses close. The center will also close due to inclement weather when **Henry** County Schools close. Any changes will be posted well in advance.

Mission Statement

A Step Ahead Learning Center's mission is to provide a consistent optimum level learning environment. We will maintain an efficient program with professional and skillful child care providers. In partnership with parents, guardians, and the community, we will strive to stimulate, nurture, and encourage a healthy early childhood learning experience.

Purpose

We will always focus on providing a stimulating learning environment. We will give your child individualized care depending on their specific needs.

A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. will strive to be a positive impact for the community. We will work in conjunction with the local tri-county Chamber of Commerce in our community, civic clubs, and county administrations and solicit them as guests for the early learning center and after school program. We will provide field trips both away from the facility and in-house as a part of our yearly calendar. We will also invite upperclassmen at the local colleges to visit and

demonstrate such things as drawing, working with clay, building with wood, making things out of paper, and hundreds of other talents or skills they might be learning so that the children will be exposed to what goes on in their world.

Admission Requirements

Parents must fully complete the enrollment application with all pertinent information, pay all registration fees in full, and provide and maintain accurate required records (Birth Certificate, Health check or physical, Immunization and Ear, Eye, and Dental (EED) Exam)

All enrollment forms including an immunization record signed by a physician or other health source must be on file at the center prior to the child's first day.

This is a performing arts school. All parents and enrollees are expected to participate in the two major performances that we have each year, Christmas and Graduation.

Immunization

All children are required to have a current immunization record from either the Health Department or family physician within 30 days of enrollment. All child care centers are required by law (O.C.G.A. Chapter 20-2-771) to have current immunization records on file for each child. Form 3231 must be provided and kept current as new shots are received. Center staff can be fined or imprisoned for non-compliance.

Eye, Ear, Dental Exams (EED)

All children ages 3 or 4 years old are required to have an eye, ear, and dental exam within 30 days of enrollment. If needed, parents are expected to follow up with further exams or treatment.

Tuition Fees

All tuition payments are due on the Friday before services. All fees must be paid by cash, check, money order, or casher's check made payable to A Step Ahead Learning Center. If there are two or more children in a family, 15% is deducted for the second child and an additional 10% will be deducted for each subsequent child. **There will be a \$30.00 late fee if not paid by Tuesday.** Parents will receive written notification of non-payment after the second late fee. If your balance is not paid by the third week, Tuesday morning by 9:30 a.m., your child will not be allowed admittance. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure tuition payments are kept current. Subsidized child care payments do not exclude parents/guardians from this responsibility. In cases of dispute with a subsidized child care agency, the parent/guardian is responsible for the full tuition. The parent/guardian and the agency must work out any reimbursement arrangements.

Full tuition is due regardless of attendance. If your child is absent for one or more days during the week due to illness, vacation, or public school closings, full tuition is still required. If the center is closed due to weather conditions, full tuition is still due. **NO REIMBURSEMENT FOR DAYS MISSED.**

After 6 consecutive months of service, parents are entitled to two (2) weeks of vacation per year. At this time parents may pay ½ their tuition fee for these weeks. Vacation must be taken in week intervals, not days. Parents are asked to notify the center at least two weeks in advance in order to receive this credit, unless there is an emergency. Children may not attend the center during the week of their vacation.

Curriculum Fee

There is an annual curriculum fee due during the annual enrollment period for children from ages 1, 2, and 3 only. Academy registration (grades Pre-K and up) prices vary depending on the child's grade. The enrollment period begins in August. **Registration and tuition fees are non-refundable.**

Returned Checks

A processing fee of \$35.00 will be charged for any returned checks. When rectifying NSF checks, a money order or cashier's check must be submitted as the form of payment. **THE SECOND OCCURRENCE OF A RETURNED CHECK WILL RESULT IN A "MONEY ORDER" "CASHIER'S CHECK" OR "CASH" ONLY BASIS FOR ALL FUTURE PAYMENTS.** Postdated checks are not accepted. Failure to make good on a returned check may be subject to court action and associated penalties.

Attendance

Daily attendance is recorded and maintained. In order for children to receive the full benefit of our structured academics and recreational activities, we implore parents to have their children in and on time to be counted as present unless parent has given prior notification due to appointments scheduled. Make sure that you check with your child's teacher to insure that your child is in class when academics have started for them. It is imperative that students involved in activities not be distracted by tardy students throughout the day. Therefore, children will not be admitted after their scheduled time without a doctor's note or prior authorization from the director. The following are times your child needs to be in class:

- 1 year olds by 9:15 am
- 2 year olds by 9:00 am
- 3 year olds by 8:15 am
- Pre-K by 8:00 am
- Kindergarten and older by 7:50 am

Children are expected to arrive to the center prior to 7:35 a.m. in order to participate in the breakfast program. Breakfast is promptly from 6:40 am - 7:45 am.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

All students must be escorted by an adult 18 years or older in the morning to the lobby. The child and adult 3 years and older must wear a mask. All people entering will have a temperature/health check. Using your phone on Brightwheel app you will be able to sign in by scanning our QR code and putting your signature on your device. Parents will no longer be able to walk their child to class because of covid-19. An authorized staff member will take them to class.

During dismissal time, we will have a carpool group that will bring your child(ren) to you. During registration you will be given a card with your child's number on it to be placed on your dash. Using your Brightwheel app you will sign your child out. If you are unable to pick up your child and have authorized someone who does not have the app, that person must park in a parking space and come in for ID verification. Children will only be released to individuals pre-authorized by the parent on the registration form. Parents may make changes to this authorization at any time in writing. In case of an emergency, parents are requested to notify the Director/ Assistant Director in advance that someone who is not listed on the authorization list is coming to pick up their child. Proper identification will be requested and must be presented at time of check out.

Authorized Release of a Child

Children will only be released from the facility to an authorized, responsible person 18 years of age and older. In case of an emergency, parents are requested to notify the Director in advance that someone who is not listed on the authorization list is coming to pick up their child. Proper identification will be requested and must be presented at time of check out.

Parent(s) must provide the center with names and addresses of person(s) you wish to pick up your child.

A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. will not release your child to anyone that is not on the authorized list and/or cannot show proof of identification. If a person, incapable of providing adequate supervision, attempts to pick up your child, the center will notify you and may notify local law enforcement officials.

Entry Access Cards

Each family will be issued an entry access card. The access card will log in the time that your child (ren) arrived at the center and what time your child was picked up. In the event that you do not have your card, however, you will need to sign your child (ren) in and /or out. Daily attendance sheets will be provided at the reception desk. Parents are to sign each child in and out daily. If you have two or more children in the center and you pick up one child and not the other for an appointment, etc. then you will need to sign that child out so that we will be able to identify who left and when.

Your access card will allow you entry into the center between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. and between 2:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday. All other times you will have to

ring the door bell to gain entry. If these days fall on a holiday and the center is closed your card will not work.

If your card is ever lost or stolen it is imperative that you report it within a 24 hour period so that we can deactivate it. If you have not found your card after a week, you will need to purchase another. The cost to replace your card is \$25. If your card is damaged you will have to pay \$25 to replace it.

Late Pick-up Policy

A Step Ahead Learning Center closes promptly at 6:30 p.m. each day. Late pick-up fines will be imposed as follows:

- For students picked up from 6:31 – 6:40 p.m., the fine is assessed at \$10 per child.
- For students picked up from 6:41 – 6:45 p.m., the fine is assessed at \$15 per child.
- For students picked up from 6:46 p.m. and later, the fine is assessed at \$1 per minute per child.

The late pick-up fine is assessed per child per day.

Late pick-up fines must be paid when the child is picked up or no later than the next scheduled day. In the event that late pick up fine is paid with cash, it must be in exact monetary increments. We have no way of making change. Any overpayment will be considered a donation. After 3rd late pick-up without pay, your child will be dismissed until payment is made.

Transportation

A Step Ahead Learning Center will provide transportation (in facility owned vehicles) to and from pre-determined local elementary schools. A school transportation form must be signed at the time you enroll your child at the Center. A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. staff will not leave children at a drop-off site that does not have proper supervision. In such a situation, the children will be brought back to the Center. We will also provide transportation for planned classroom field trips. Parents must sign a separate permission slip for each field trip. A Step Ahead Learning Center will also provide transportation in the event of an emergency or 911 will be called.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of a child's educational development. We will provide field trips both away from the facility and in-house as a part of our yearly calendar. Our children will participate in community events, nature walks, cultural exhibits, and other activities which will enhance the classroom experience. The senior citizen community will play a major part in our facility; therefore, our children will regularly visit senior citizen facilities in our area. Parents will be notified of the planned outings and must sign permission slips granting the center permission to take children from the center grounds.

Discipline

A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. does not allow corporal punishment of any child. We believe that actively engaged children have little time for off-task and disruptive behavior. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the teacher to manage the classroom environment by preparing age appropriate and challenging activities, which optimize instructional time for the entire school day. Teachers will provide an environment where rules are clear and consequences are consistent. A practice of positive reinforcement for good behavior will be implemented in order to direct our students towards socially acceptable behavior. Effective and positive discipline helps children to develop self-control and teaches children behavior that is acceptable for the appropriate time and place. In an event that a child fails to follow guidelines and procedures as determined by the staff, the following steps will be taken:

- First Offense: Verbal warning and consultation with the teacher
- Second Offense: Age appropriate time out and consultation with the teacher
- Third Offense: Age appropriate time out in another classroom of similar age and parent phone call
- Fourth Offense: Conference schedule with parent, teacher, child and director to discuss concerns

Furthermore any harm inflicted by a child on another child or faculty member will not be tolerated. In the event this does occur, any medical expenses incurred by another child as a result of your child's failure to follow directions or disruptive behavior will be passed on to you the parents.

Time-out will be used when a child continues to misbehave; however, any child that the staff cannot handle will be removed from the classroom and management will report the incident to parents. Parents are expected to cooperate with the staff in disciplining their child. If no agreement can be made between the parent and staff, the child will be asked to be permanently removed from the center.

Grievance Policy

A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. will make every effort to ensure that families have an effective way of negotiating difficulties and differences that arise at the center. The administration is available at any time to address your concerns through special conferences and individual meetings.

Withdrawal Process

To withdraw a child from the center, a two week notice must be provided in writing to the Director. The front desk will provide you with the proper withdrawal forms to complete. Parents will be responsible for payment for the two weeks. Your final payment will be expected the

Friday before the final week. All key cards must be turned in on the last day. Failure to properly withdraw your child will result in a balance and will be subject to collections.

Although every effort will be made to work within the parameters of each family's needs, A Step Ahead Learning Center reserves the right to dismiss a child for the following reasons:

- Delinquent or non-payment of tuition fees
- Poor attendance – A student absent 3 or more days without notification (Re-enrolling will depend upon availability and payment of absentee tuition fees)
- Late pick-up without reasonable explanation (one or more times per month)
- Failure to provide proper documents such as immunization records
- Consistent disruptive behavior which is considered harmful to themselves and others

Clothing and Diapers/Pull-ups

Uniforms

All students are required to be in uniform Monday through Thursday. All uniforms have logos. If your child is not in uniform, you will be asked to leave and may only return with a full uniform on. A change of clothes must be uniforms.

All students 2 years and older must be in uniform purchased from the school's vendor choice. All students must wear navy blue socks, all black sneakers or Oxfords/Mary Janes, and a plain black belt for pants.

In the event of an accident, all children must have a change of clothes, along with underwear, in their assigned cubbies at all times. Please remember to exchange the clothing as the seasons change.

The child's name should be labeled on all clothing, coats, bags, etc.

The children will be allowed to play outside except in inclement weather or the parents give written notice stating that they do not wish their child to play outside. Please dress your child for play each day. Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times. Rubber soled, heel and ankle supported shoes are strongly recommended. A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. will NOT be responsible for lost or damaged items.

Although we will take reasonable care of all children's clothing, we request that parents write child's name on the inside label of their clothing, coats, in order to minimize or prevent loss.

Children will not be permitted to bring toys to the center.

Parents of children in diapers/pull-ups are expected to bring a full pack of diapers/pull-ups and wipes as needed. Your child's caregiver will notify you of your child's needs. Toilet training procedures will be handled on an individual basis. Children that are potty-training are required to wear pull-ups until they are fully potty trained.

For water play times, it is suggested that you have Little Swimmers diapers available for your child.

Beads

We understand that parents like their little girls to wear beads in their hair and why. However, we will not prohibit the wearing of beads unless children start putting them in their nose and ears.

Potty Training

When your child shows signs of readiness for using the toilet, our staff will be happy to assist you. Potty training can be considered when your child can walk to the toilet, undress, use the toilet, wipe and pull up his or her own pants. We believe it should be a positive experience for your child. We would like to work in cooperation with you to make this as pleasant and stress free as possible. **Before a child is considered for our 3 year old program, he or she must be completely potty trained. If the child in our 3 year program has more than 3 accidents in one week then the child will be moved from the class to a potty training class until that child has no accidents and can wipe themselves.**

Meals

A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. will provide healthy, well-balanced meals. We provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Weekly menus will be posted at the center. Menus will be constantly improved to include a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.

All meals and snacks are in compliance with the Office of School Readiness Program regulations. All outside food or drinks are permitted, but must be in compliance with the Office of School Readiness Program, with the exception of classroom celebrations.

Children who have special milk must bring their milk daily in a thermos with the child's name on it. Lunches must be kept in thermal containers to keep food warm and/or use ice pack for food that needs to be kept cool. Lunch boxes will be kept in your child's class to prevent cross contamination in the kitchen.

Birthday Celebrations

We encourage parents to allow their child to celebrate their birthday at the center with their peers. Refreshments should be kept simple, such as cup cakes, cookies, and juice. In addition, we ask that the parent coordinate the appropriate time of day with the teacher. Parents should

work with the staff in order to plan the celebration in such a way that all children are included in the learning experience. **BECAUSE OF COVID-19, NO OUTSIDE PEOPLE WILL BE ALLOWED IN CLASSROOM.**

Conferences / Daily Communication

Conferences can be requested and scheduled at anytime throughout the year. Because of Covid-19, parents are unable to come into classrooms. Parents will receive daily communication reports concerning their child and day-to-day happenings.

Volunteers

A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. will strive to be a positive impact for the community. We will work in conjunction with the local tri-county Chamber of Commerce in our community, civic clubs, and county administrations and solicit them as guests for the early learning center and after school program. We will also invite upperclassmen at the local colleges to visit and demonstrate such things as drawing, working with clay, building with wood, making things out of paper, and hundreds of other talents or skills they might be learning so that the children will be exposed to what goes on in their world. A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. encourages volunteers of all ages, especially senior citizens. The senior citizen community will play a major part in our volunteer program.

Daily Health Checks

Each child will be observed upon arrival by a staff member to check for and document early symptoms of illness, possible injury, or abuse. If abuse, neglect or injury is suspected, the Director, as required by the law (Georgia Code 19-7-5), will report to the Department of Family and Children Services. Each child will have a health check upon entering the building. Anyone who has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will not be allowed to go to the classroom. Please check your child's temperature daily before bringing to school.

Physicals and Health Checks

A Step Ahead Learning Center requires all children to have a current health check on file at the center. The first one is due within 45 days of enrollment

Illness and/or Injury

- Sick children must be picked up within 2 hours of phone call. Sick children are not to be brought to the center with illnesses, fever, diarrhea, or vomiting. No child shall be accepted nor allowed to remain at the center if he/she has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher temperature and other contagious symptoms, such as, but not limited to, a rash, diarrhea, pink eye or sore throat. **ANY CHILD SENT HOME WITH A FEVER WILL NOT BE ALLOWED BACK FOR 72 HOURS AND MUST BE TESTED FOR COVID-**

19 WITH DOCUMENTATION GIVEN TO OFFICE OF PROOF OF NEGATIVE DIAGNOSIS.

- Pink eye – pink or red around the eye with white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep. Requires exclusion until 48 hours of antibiotic treatment and no signs of active infection.
- Ringworm Infection – Requires exclusion until 24 hours after treatment began and the location of the infection must be covered.
- Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease - Hand, foot, and mouth disease is a common viral illness that usually affects infants and children younger than 5 years old. Symptoms of hand, foot, and mouth disease include fever, mouth sores, and a skin rash. Blisters are red with a small bubble of fluid on top and often turn into ulcers. The soles of the feet and the palms of the hands also may be affected with a rash that can look like flat red spots or red blisters. Keep children home from school and childcare while they have a fever or open blisters on the skin and mouth.
- If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, please notify the center immediately. The center follows the Department of Human Resources current communicable disease chart recommendations for exclusion and readmission of a sick child. If your child is exposed to a communicable disease at the center you will be notified as soon as possible.
- If your child is injured at the center, we will call parents and advise them if the child needs to be picked up from the center. In case of serious illness or injury, **911** will be called; first aid will be administered; and the designated emergency backup will be notified. A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. staff or management will accompany the injured child to **Henry Medical Center**. The parent(s) will be notified and asked to meet us at the hospital.
- Minor accidents and/or injuries during day to day play will be written up on an incident report and given to parents at the end of the day. The incident report should be signed by both the teacher and the parent/guardian picking up the child and a copy made to be placed on file.

Please keep your child's records current to reflect any significant changes as they occur, i.e., telephone numbers, work numbers, email addresses, work location, emergency contacts, child's physician, child's health status, infant feeding plans and immunization records, etc.

The center will not release information of any child to anyone other than parent or guardian.

The custodial parents of each child may enter the center at any time of day while their child is in attendance. Please notify the staff before removing the child.

Medication Authorization

A medication authorization form must be completed before any medications can be administered to your child. All medicines must be in the original container with your child's name marked clearly on it. All medication must be signed in at the front desk. Noticeable adverse reactions will be documented and parents will be notified at time of pick-up. If reactions are severe, parents will be called immediately. If your child needs breathing machine treatments, we can only give one treatment a day. All other treatments must be given at home. Meds will only be given at 12:00 p.m.

Parental Notification of Illness and Injury

Parents will be notified immediately when professional medical attention is required, or when a child experiences symptoms of moderate discomfort such as elevated temperature, vomiting or diarrhea. Staff will contact parents to obtain specific instructions until the parents arrange pick up of the child. The notification will be recorded in the communication log and recorded on the Incident Report Form, if necessary.

In addition, if your child is feeling a little under the weather and/or you have given him/her medication before bringing him/her to school, please notify the front desk and the teacher so that we can keep a closer eye on your child.

Emergency Procedures

- **In the event of severe weather**, the center will take precautions that are posted in each classroom. Parents will be asked to pick up children as soon as possible. Adequate notification will be given.
- **In the event of any physical plant problems** (loss of water or electricity, heating or cooling) or structural damage, the parents will be notified and asked to pick up children as soon as possible. If the Center has structural damage that is too severe for occupancy, the children will be transported to **Travelers Rest Baptist Church, 2112 Rex Rd., Morrow, GA 30260** Parent(s) will be asked to pick up children from Morrow location.
- **Escape/evacuation plans** have been developed and will be posted in each classroom to be used in case of emergency. Regular fire drills will be performed. The following procedures will be followed: In the case of **inclement weather**, i.e. severe storms or tornado warnings, A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. staff will be asked to bring the children into the main hall away from windows. In case of **fire or conditions requiring evacuation**, a fire alarm will sound. Each teacher is to gather the children, emergency notebook and proceed out the exit door of the classroom. Infants will be placed in a cart or crib and rolled out the exit door. Staff will escort children out gate to designated area on the parking lot. A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. staff will account for each child in attendance. Parent(s) will be notified as soon as the evacuation is complete. Note: Each classroom emergency notebook will include: copy of emergency procedures, diagrams of emergency procedures and parent and emergency contact information on each child.

- **If a child wanders away from the center or field trip/facility**, A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. staff will immediately notify manager on duty and a search will be initiated, both in and out, the entire center or trip facility. Facility management will be notified that the child is missing and asked to assist with the search. If the child is not found, staff will also look around the immediate vicinity of the school/facility. Concurrently, the parent(s) will be notified and 911 called. Incident report will be written and placed on file.

Smoking

A Step Ahead Learning Center is a no smoking facility. Smoking is not allowed on the premises, playgrounds or center vehicles.

Thank you for entrusting your most prized possession to our care. Your child's educational and sociological growth is our top priority. We want them to feel like A Step Ahead Learning Center, Inc. is their "Home away from home".