



Parents/Guardians:

Due to recent Alberta Education funding and eligibility criteria changes for Program Unit Funding (PUF), Pembina Hills Early Learning Programs have to adjust accordingly. We will now require assessments to confirm eligibility for the program to be completed prior to entry. The deadline to determine eligibility this year is December 1st. These assessments may include Speech and Language, Behavior assessments or medical documentation indicating a specific diagnosis. If you do not have an assessment yet, but are concerned that your child may qualify and benefit from early learning services, please talk to the Early Learning Principal or the teacher at your school.

Based on space and available resources, typically developing children **may** be offered placement in our preschool programs once we have determined that we can meet the additional program hours required for PUF children by Alberta Education.

Changes that families need to be aware of include:

- A requirement of a 400-hour program for those children identified with needs in accordance with Alberta Education Eligibility Criteria.
- Eligibility Criteria has changed from the current year and a child that may have been eligible for service this year may no longer be eligible given the narrowed parameters of the criteria.
- Financial supports have been reduced significantly that will affect level of supports that will be offered to children and families. This will also impact the number of children we will be able to service at our preschool sites.
- Funding is available for children identified up to December 1, 2020. Those children that come to Pembina Hills with an identified need after that time will not be eligible to enter the program until the next school year.
- 2 years of Program Unit Funding rather than 3 years of Program Unit Funding now exists. Children in their Kindergarten year that have been identified with a need will receive supports through the new funding structure provided by Alberta Education for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students. Children in the preschool years need to be 2.8 years of age to 4.8 years of age to qualify for funding and meet the eligibility criteria.
- There is no longer funding for children identified with mild to moderate needs in preschool. Those children with mild and moderate speech and language needs will be directed to access service through Alberta Health Services.

With the recent challenges that are present with school closures due to COVID-19, we are no longer able to continue with our plans for orientations for our programs.



Being mindful of the changing parameters of Program Unit Funding and the challenges that present themselves regarding assessment of children to identify eligibility for Program Unit Funding, Pembina Hills Early Learning will be taking names of potential registrants to our Early Learning Programs. Parents may call the Administrative Assistant, Anjeanette Klein, at 780-674-8545 to provide information regarding the preschool site you may like your child to attend. The Early Learning Teacher will contact you regarding your child's eligibility for preschool programming.

Should any changes regarding eligibility criteria for Program Unit Funding (PUF) occur by Alberta Education, Pembina Hills Early Learning will provide this information to parents as we are informed.

Sincerely,
Shirley Craig
shirley.craig@pembinahills.ca
Early Learning Principal

Community Partner Contact Information

Speech-Language Assessment

- Westlock Community Health Services: 780-349-3316
- Barrhead Community Health Services: 780-674-3408

Hearing Assessment

- Barrhead Community Health Services: 780-674-3408
- Wild Rose Audiology Clinic: 780-447-3881

Vision Assessment

- Barrhead Optometry Clinic: 780-674-2395
- Westlock Eye Centre: 780-349-3702