



What Is The Omaha Early Learning Center At Kennedy?

The Omaha Early Learning Centers (OELC) are high quality early childhood educational centers that operate two schools located on the campuses of Skinner and Gateway Elementary schools. The OELCs operate year-round, Monday-Friday from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm. The Omaha Early Learning Centers are committed to helping children develop the foundational skills that will help them become successful students. The OELC also works with parents to help them become self-sufficient and strengthen their ability to be their child's first teacher.

When it opens in 2020, the OELC at Kennedy will be the third OELC location. It has been developed in partnership with 75 North and Omaha Public Schools as part of making the "cradle to career" vision for the Highlander Neighborhood a reality.

Who Will The OELC At Kennedy Serve?

The OELC at Kennedy will include 12 infant and toddler classrooms, serving infants and toddlers ages six weeks through three years of age. In addition, the school will house 4 preschool classrooms operated by Howard Kennedy Elementary School.

Infant and toddler services will be provided at no cost or low cost to eligible children and families with the support of scholarships and child care subsidies. Priority will be given to families living in the immediate vicinity of Kennedy Elementary School and based on factors such as income and need for full-day, full-year care.

A parent meeting for interested families will be held in the fall of 2018. Questions regarding eligibility and enrollment for children six weeks through age three may be directed to Jennifer Sturgeon, Executive Director for the OELC's, at Jennifer.Sturgeon@OmahaELC.org. Questions regarding eligibility and enrollment for preschool aged children may be directed to Jorja Brazda-Witters, Early Childhood Coordinator for OPS, at Jorja.Brazda-Witters@ops.org.

Is The Early Learning Center The Only Thing That Will Be In The New Building?

No. The first floor will be dedicated to the Omaha Early Learning Center at Kennedy and the Omaha Public Schools preschool classrooms. The second floor will house the Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative, an organization that provides business services and training and technical assistance to child care providers. The second floor will also include a dedicated business resource center for child care providers that will provide low and no-cost services and a state-of-the-art training center. The training center will offer professional development opportunities for community-based child care providers in Omaha and across the state.

What Other Benefits Will The New Facility Offer To The Community?

The Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative is committed to serving child care providers and those interested in becoming child care providers. While NECC is already planning on offering business services and training and technical assistance to child care providers, including those in the Highlander Community, they are also interested in hearing what you need to strengthen your business or the quality of your child care program. If you have ideas, please reach out to Shannon Cotsoradis, Chief Executive Officer, at scotsoradis@nebraskaearly.org and share your thoughts.

If you are an aspiring child care professional, the OELC at Kennedy also means job opportunities. The Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative will be recruiting on behalf of the OELC at Kennedy. Recruiting for new positions will begin in January 2019. If you are interested in learning more about career opportunities OELC at Kennedy, please reach out to the NECC, at careers@nebraskaearly.org.

If you are interested in being part of the OELC at Kennedy's teaching staff and you don't currently have a Child Development Associate credential, the minimum requirement for an Associate Teacher, NECC will be offering a class in the Highlander Community beginning in the fall of 2018. If you are interested in being part of the CDA class, please contact Cathy Stockwell, Director of Professional Development, at cstockwell@nebraskaearly.org.