Sometimes you must leap
She said gently
And grow your wings
On the way
down.

The successful child is not the child that can memorize facts, but rather, the child that can ask the winnowing question.

--Jane Healy

No play, no learning—know play, know learning.
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PHILOSOPHY

American Martyrs Preschool is a Catholic preschool based on faith, hope and love: faith in Jesus, hope for the future and love of all that God has created.

We believe that trusting relationships, mutual respect and communication are critical aspects of a young child’s learning environment.

We believe that play is the primary vehicle through which a child’s cognitive, physical, social/emotional and language development occurs.

We believe that parents are our partners in the education, spiritual guidance, and care of our children.

We at American Martyrs Preschool provide a safe, loving and stimulating environment that facilitates learning through hands-on experiences. Our play-based program promotes success for every child and in so doing nurtures a positive self-concept—the foundation for a life-long love of learning.

I tried to teach my child
from books.
I tried to teach my child
with words.
They passed him by,
often unheard.
Despairingly, I turned aside,
“How shall I teach this child?” I cried.
Into my hand he put the key.
“Come,” she said, “and
play with me.”

Children at American Martyrs Preschool are exposed to many activities rooted in the academic disciplines. In addition, the social/emotional development of our children is a major focus of our program: the nurturing of imagination and creativity, the ability to engage each other in play and the practice of communication skills including the language of conflict resolution. We know that these skills, coupled with resilience (flexibility, the ability to recover strength, spirits, etc. quickly), are paramount to success in elementary school and beyond.

WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT TO YOUNG CHILDREN?
Play contributes to all areas of a child’s growth. In play, children:

Use their imaginations
Think flexibly
Solve problems both with materials and with people
Cooperate with others
Work through their feelings in creative ways
Pay attention
Use something to represent something else (the beginning of symbolic thought)
Develop a sense of competence

Play experiences lay a foundation on which our young children can build successes as lifelong learners.

THE SPECIAL VALUE OF CHILDREN’S MIXED-AGE PLAY
Mixed-age play offers opportunities for learning and development not present in play among those close in age. It is less competitive, more creative, and more conducive to practicing new skills than is same-age play. In mixed-age play, younger children learn from the more sophisticated behavior of older children, and also typically receive more emotional support from older kids than from those near their own age. Mixed-age play also permits older children to learn by teaching and to practice the more altruistic behaviors of nurturance and leadership. Older children are often inspired by the imagination and creativity of their younger playmates.

American Journal of Play, volume 3, number 4. Peter Gray, Ph.D. is a research professor of psychology at Boston College primarily on children’s natural ways of learning and the life-long value of play.
ADMISSION POLICY

- Admission is open to any child, provided that our school can meet the needs of the child.

- Admission priority will be given to the children of active members of American Martyrs Parish whose parents:
  - attend Sunday Mass
  - participate in parish activities
  - contribute regularly to the support of the church by Faith Direct or the family envelope

- American Martyrs Preschool is open to children whose parents are not members of the American Martyrs Parish Community.

- Every child must be at least 3 years old on or before December 2\textsuperscript{nd} of the year of entrance to the preschool and must be fully toilet trained.

CONFERENCES

Before preschool begins in September, all parents are invited to sign up for an opportunity to meet with their child’s team of teachers “conference style”—15 minutes when parents have the teachers all to themselves! This is a good time for you to share your special knowledge of your child and to begin to know his/her teachers. Hopefully, these introductions, although brief, will set the stage for a smooth and comfortable transition into the preschool year.

Beginning in the month of November, teachers will make a telephone call to the parents of each child. This telephone call is intended to give the teachers an opportunity to share some of the particulars of your child’s adjustment to preschool and to give you the opportunity to have answered any questions that you may have.

The preschool may be closed for several days in the spring to provide time for parent/teacher conferences. This time is set aside to give teachers an opportunity to share information with parents about their child’s growth in the preschool setting. Sign-up sheets will be posted.

In addition, a conference relating to your child’s growth and development may be arranged at any time by parent request or by request of the teacher. Due to supervision responsibilities, teachers are unable to answer questions about your child’s adjustment to preschool during drop-off and pick-up times. At any time, parents can leave a message with the office and a teacher will call at the end of the day to answer questions or address any concerns.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents may sign up to be either inside or outside Story Readers beginning in November. The Parent Volunteer Coordinator will arrange for parents to sign-up and will post the schedule of reading-days on the Parent Volunteer bulletin board in the hallway. Once you volunteer, we count on you! Please arrange for a substitute if you cannot come on your assigned day.

Note: each classroom volunteer must have a TB test on file in the preschool office.
ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP

Parking
Please PARK IN THE PARISH CENTER PARKING LOT and WALK down to the preschool when dropping off and picking up your child. TELL EVERYONE who picks up your child to do the same. This provides a safer, traffic-free and congestion-free zone for our children and helps to maintain good relationships with our neighbors.

Please remember:

NO STREET PARKING (park in the lot)
NO PARKING IN DRIVEWAYS (even for just a minute!)

Arrival
It is important that you empower your child by encouraging him/her to walk into the preschool (please resist the urge to carry him/her) and that you sign your child in each day. The Department of Social Services requires a complete and clear signature (no initials) and time of day by the adult who is in charge of the child. After signing your child in and putting his/her things in the cubby, bring your child to the play yard area for our opening song and prayer. For safety, please make sure that a staff member is aware of your entrance and exit.

Children who are in the morning session may be dropped off from 8:00-8:10am. Children who are in the afternoon session may be dropped off from 11:50-12:00pm. Please note that there is no supervision available for children before these drop-off times.

Pick-Up
It is important that you sign your child out of preschool each day. The Department of Social Services requires a complete and clear signature (no initials) and time of day by the adult who is in charge of the child.

If you are going to be detained, please call the preschool as soon as possible so that we can tell your child that you will be late and reassure him/her that you are coming. Picking up on time is a courtesy to teachers whose lunch and reset time is limited.

Authorization to Pick Up Your Child
A child will be released only to his/her parent or to someone authorized by the parent. A list of authorized persons is kept in your child’s file in the office. Parents may add names to or remove names from this list at any time by notifying the office.

Please tell your child’s teacher if the usual person will not be picking up on a given day. If the pick-up person is not on the authorized list in your child’s file (e.g., another child’s parent taking your child for a play date), there is an Occasional Authorization to Pick-Up form on a clipboard next to the daily sign-in sheet. The preschool must have written or verbal authorization for anyone picking up a child. For identification, we will ask for a driver’s license from anyone we do not recognize. Please advise your pick-up person so that s/he is not offended. We ask in order to insure your child’s safety.
SEPARATION
STARTING PRESCHOOL: NOTES FOR PARENTS ABOUT SEPARATION

It takes courage to go to preschool—courage on your part to leave your little one and courage on your child’s part to negotiate a new environment (feel safe, get his needs met, build relationships with adults without mom/dad to facilitate). Please don’t build preschool up too much—this can inadvertently stress your child because she has not yet had first-hand experience with the concept of preschool (remember the “ice cube” at Orientation) and she won’t know what this thing called preschool really requires until she is here. So, be matter of fact about where you will be going on that first day just like you would introduce going to the Round House, the Children’s Museum, or any other adventure. Also, please don’t tell your child that he will have fun—let your child discover this for himself!

Tell your child what to expect.
Language idea:
“Mommy is going to take you to preschool today. I wonder if there will be...(something that interests your child; e.g., dinosaurs, trucks, dress-up, etc.).
You can tell me when I (or whoever) pick you up (or when you get home).

An overview to help you tell your child what to expect:
1. In the morning, the director will be at the gate to greet you as we walk into preschool. (note: always let your child WALK into preschool. This sends the message that s/he is safe and that you have faith in your child’s ability to succeed in this new environment)
2. Parents with children come into the hallway to sign-in on the clipboard outside of the child’s room and check the child’s cubby. There are clipboards available for children to “sign-in” if they want to do so. If you are helping your child to write her name, remember to use upper case & lower case.
3. Parents bring children back out to the play yard. Parents, siblings and guests are encouraged to stay for the welcome song and prayer (if parents are going to leave before the song and prayer, always inform one of your child’s teachers AND your child!).
4. After the prayer, children will leave their parents and go to their teachers.
Note: If you feel that your child will need a parting ritual, talk about what it will be (e.g., “I will [blow you a kiss, give a thumbs up, wave goodbye or whatever simple gesture you agree upon] and you will go with your teachers.” Use your ritual as the children join their teachers and classmates.

REMEMBER: NEVER, NEVER sneak out on your child. ALWAYS say, “Goodbye! I’ll be back to pick you up after preschool!” (even if she cries—if necessary, the teachers will help you; they will always offer comfort and reassurance to your child; remember courage!)

DO NOT LINGER where your child can see you. Once you have said goodbye, leave the play yard with confidence. Your attitude will convey to your child that you trust this new environment and that she will be safe. If you need to stay, let the office know that you will be sitting by the tree outside of the gate and we will check on your child and report back to you.

5. Tell your child that Moms, Dads, Babysitters always come back. Sometimes, young children know many things (colors, numbers, alphabet,
etc.—the cognitive part of the brain that governs the intellect is developing) but are not ready for separation from their parents/caretakers (the emotion-governing part of the brain that controls feelings is growing but is not yet sufficiently developed to make them feel safe on their own). We will do our best to help you and your child transition into preschool.

IF YOUR CHILD IS A...

‘BYE MOM/DAD SEE YOU LATER’ child—

If your child is pretty carefree about separating from you, you can tell him that you will say goodbye after the song and the prayer, he will go with his teachers into the classroom and you will be back to pick him up after preschool. Please encourage your child’s independence by reflecting his “see you later” attitude even if you are crying because he does not seem to need you! One more kiss or hug (that mom/dad need) can become the proverbial “straw”, sending the message to your child that he should be acting differently (i.e., crying or holding on to you). So, be brave and go!

LEG-HUGGER child—

If your child leans into you and is anxious about you leaving, enlist a teacher’s help, say a timely goodbye and go. Any time that a teacher is helping with transition from parent to preschool and your child is crying when you leave, please let the director know. You can sit on the bench under the tree in front of the preschool and she will check on your child to see if she has made the transition and report back to you. Or, you can leave and call the preschool after about 20 minutes to check on your child.

LEG-GRIPPER child—

If you child is crying and has “a death grip” on your leg, enlist a teacher’s help. If the teacher is unsuccessful in transitioning your child, you can tell your child that he can stay with the teacher or you are going to take him home with you today and that you will come again next time. This choice should be delivered ONCE in a non-threatening, matter-of-fact tone of voice (with matching body language, as much as possible!) If your child says that he wants to go home, DO NOT STAY EVEN IF YOUR CHILD CHANGES HIS MIND. As you are leaving, reassure him that you will come back to preschool next time (in other words, he will get another chance). Before the “next time”, call or come by to see the director to make a plan for coming to preschool.

‘BYE MOM/DAD SEE YOU LATER’ child who, after a few weeks (or months) morphs into an “I DON’T WANT TO GO”/LEG-GRIPPER child:

This behavior can be a one-day occurrence or the beginning of a pattern. In either case, it always seems to take us by surprise! Use the same approach that you would for a LEG-GRIPPER child (above) and talk to the director (when your child is not present; telephone is OK) before the “next time”.

Note: If your child ever has difficulty staying at preschool and you MUST leave her to go to an appointment, work, etc., please let the teacher know when you arrive.

“CUSTOMIZED CARE”

If your child does not fit any of the descriptions above, we will do whatever we can to help your child transition into preschool. It is always possible that a child is not yet ready to be on his/her own at preschool. Talk to the director ~ she will help you assess your child’s readiness.
POLICY FOR COURT-ORDERED PARENTING PLANS

In the best interests of children enrolled in American Martyrs Preschool, the preschool staff will attempt to remain neutral in all custodial situations. In this spirit and to prevent misunderstanding, the following policy is set down in writing:

If parents have shared legal custody of a child enrolled in American Martyrs Preschool:
1. either parent (with identification) will be allowed to pick up his/her child from the preschool at any time
2. the parent who fills out the enrollment paperwork for the child will automatically be given a form entitled Persons Authorized to Pick Up Your Child
3. an additional Persons Authorized form will be given to the other parent upon request
4. all paperwork will be made available for review to either parent upon request
5. the child will be released to anyone (with identification) who is authorized by either parent
6. in the case of a request by one parent for any member of the preschool staff to provide an unusual service (e.g., documenting their child’s behavior, providing access to sign-in sheets from past months, etc.), the other parent will be notified of the request.

If a court order prohibits any of the above (#1 – 6), the court order must be on file in the preschool office. The preschool staff will abide by the terms of the court order.
DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

American Martyrs Preschool program runs from September to June.

Morning **DROP-OFF** — gate opens at 8:00am

Morning **PICK-UP** – gate opens at 11:00am

Afternoon **DROP-OFF**— gate opens at 11:50am

Afternoon **PICK-UP** – gate opens at 2:50pm

3 mornings/week
   Monday, Wednesday, Friday   8:00am - 11:00am
   Tuesday, Thursday, Friday    8:00am - 11:00am

3 afternoons/week
   Monday, Wednesday, Thursday   11:50-2:50pm

4 mornings/week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday)
   Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday   8:00am – 11:00am

SCHEDULING

From one year to the next, your child is guaranteed the same number of days per week and time of day in which s/he is currently enrolled. Forms to request schedule changes will be made available at the beginning of the new enrollment period, usually in the early spring. Although an effort is made to accommodate all requests for schedule changes, it is not always possible to do so.
AMP DAILY SCHEDULE (MORNING)
for Rooms that are INSIDE FIRST

Note: The “Inside First” schedule alternates between the Green/Blue Rooms and the Yellow/Red Rooms every two years

**Morning Session**

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<th>Activity</th>
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<td>8:00 – 8:10</td>
<td>Arrival</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:10 – 8:20</td>
<td>Welcome Song &amp; Community Prayer; Transition to Inside</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:20 – 8:35</td>
<td>Gathering Time</td>
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<td>8:35 – 9:40</td>
<td>Activity Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:40 – 9:50</td>
<td>Clean-Up and Transition to Outside</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:50 – 10:50</td>
<td>Outside Activity Time (play yard)</td>
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<td>10:50</td>
<td>Clean-Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Pick-Up Time from the Play Yard/Classroom</td>
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</tbody>
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Note: This schedule is subject to change depending upon the needs of our children.
AMP DAILY SCHEDULE (AFTERNOON)  
for Rooms that are INSIDE FIRST  

Note: The “Inside First” schedule alternates between the Green/Blue Rooms and the Yellow/Red Rooms every two years

**Afternoon Session**

11:50-12:00  Arrival
12:00 – 12:10  Welcome Song & Community Prayer; Transition to Inside

12:10 – 12:25  Gathering Time  
Chants, Rhymes, Finger Plays, Storybooks, Music, Movement  
Introduction of available activities for Activity Time

12:25 – 1:25  Activity Time  
Inside/Outside (Classroom and Patio)  
- art center/easel painting  
- block play  
- book corner  
- cooking  
- dramatic play  
- perceptual, manipulative & sensory experiences  
- science  
- story writing  
- woodworking/take apart  
- snack—snack menu is posted on the hallway bulletin board next to the kitchen

1:25 – 1:35  Clean-Up and Transition to Outside

1:35 – 2:40  Outside Activity Time (play yard)  
- dramatic play  
- easel painting  
- swinging and climbing  
- rotating activities set up by teachers (e.g. movement, sensory experiences, coordination experiences, etc.)  
- sand and water play  
- bike riding  
- block (and other) building

2:40  Clean-Up
2:50  Pick-Up Time from the Play Yard/Classroom

Note: This schedule is subject to change depending upon the needs of our children.
AMP DAILY SCHEDULE (MORNING)
for Rooms that are OUTSIDE FIRST

Note: The “Outside First” schedule alternates between the Green/Blue Rooms and the Yellow/Red Rooms every two years

**Morning Session**

8:00 - 8:10 Arrival
8:10 – 8:20 Welcome Song & Community Prayer

8:20 - 8:35 Gathering Time
Chants, Rhymes, Finger Plays, Stories

8:35 - 9:35 Outside Activity Time (play yard)
dramatic play
easel painting
swinging and climbing
rotating activities set up by teachers (e.g. movement, sensory experiences, coordination experiences, etc.)
sand and water play
bike riding
block (and other) building

9:35 – 9:45 Clean Up and Transition to Inside

9:45 – 10:00 Gathering Time
Storybook, Story-telling, Flannel Board, Music, Movement, Small Group Work
Introduction of activities available for Activity Time

10:00 - 10:50 Inside/Outside Activity Time (Classroom and Patio)
art center/easel painting
block play
book corner
cooking
dramatic play
perceptual, manipulative & sensory experiences
science
story writing
woodworking/take apart
snack—snack menu is posted on the hallway bulletin board next to the kitchen

10:50 Clean Up
11:00 Pick-Up Time from the Play Yard/Classroom

Note: This schedule is subject to change depending upon the needs of our children.
AMP DAILY SCHEDULE (AFTERNOON)

for Rooms that are OUTSIDE FIRST

Note: The “Outside First” schedule alternates between the Green/Blue Rooms and the Yellow/Red Rooms every two years

**Afternoon Session**

11:50-12:00  Arrival
12:00 – 12:10  Welcome Song & Community Prayer

12:10-12:25  Gathering Time
Kansas, Rhymes, Finger Plays, Stories

12:25 – 1:20  Outside Activity Time (play yard)
- dramatic play
- easel painting
- swinging and climbing
- rotating activities set up by teachers (e.g. movement, sensory experiences, coordination experiences, etc.)
- sand and water play
- bike riding
- block (and other) building

1:20 – 1:30  Clean Up and Transition to Inside

1:30 – 1:45  Gathering Time
- Storybook, Story-telling, Flannel Board, Music, Movement, Small Group Work
- Introduction of activities available for Activity Time

1:45 – 2:40  Inside/Outside Activity Time (Classroom and Patio)
- art center/easel painting
- block play
- book corner
- cooking
- dramatic play
- perceptual, manipulative & sensory experiences
- science
- story writing
- woodworking/take apart
- snack—snack menu is posted on the hallway bulletin board next to the kitchen

2:40  Clean Up
2:50  Pick-Up Time from the Play Yard/Classroom

Note: This schedule is subject to change depending upon the needs of our children.
HEALTH

Upon enrollment in our school, the parent (guardian) must file a health form signed by a physician. We also require that each child has certain standard immunizations and a tuberculin clearance. All staff members are tuberculin cleared and attend a CPR and First Aid training class every two years.

If a child seems unusually tired or has symptoms of illness during the day, the child’s parent will be contacted to pick him/her up from preschool. Until the parent or authorized person arrives, the child will be isolated in a comfortable place in the office away from the other children.

In case of minor injuries, a teacher will apply TLC and first aid. An “Ouch” slip will be filled out and put into the child’s cubby.

In case of accidental injury, a teacher will apply TLC and first aid and attend to the child’s immediate needs. If necessary, we will call the paramedics. We will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we cannot reach you, we will call the persons listed on your emergency card. Until the arrival of a parent or the paramedics, the director or a teacher will be in charge and make all decisions about the care of your child.

In case of lice, teachers will vacuum rugs and floors; they will cover, remove for 48 hours or wash and dry on high heat soft surfaces and dress-up clothes in the classroom per our lice consultant/educator. Children must be nit free to return to preschool.

It is very important to keep the office advised of all changes in home phone, work phone and cell phone numbers.

Please notify the preschool as soon as possible if your child has a communicable disease (e.g., pink eye [conjunctivitis], strep throat, chicken pox, hand, foot & mouth) or a communicable condition like lice. If children in a classroom have been exposed, notice of exposure will be e-mailed to parents. We wash and disinfect our toys and dress-up clothes regularly in order to maintain a healthy classroom environment.

Please call the preschool if your child is absent for more than one day.

Medication

No prescription or non-prescription drugs will be administered at the preschool. Sunscreen will not be applied by the preschool staff.

If it is necessary for your child to have an epi-pen type emergency medication stored at the preschool, fill out a “Medication Form” (available in the office) and return it to the office with the medication in a labeled zip lock bag.
PLEASE, PLEASE!
KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME
FROM PRESCHOOL IF S/HE:

- has yellow or green discharge from the nose
- has vomited within the previous 24 hour period
- has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hour period
- has a cold that is less than 4 days old.
- has a constant cough
- has had diarrhea within the previous 24 hour period
- is fussy, cranky, or generally not him/herself
- is overly tired

- has been given any type of medication in the morning

- has symptoms of a possible communicable disease (these are usually the sniffsle, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache and abdominal pain, fever)

- BE AWARE of any hot, red, swollen area on the skin often looking like an insect bite—highly contagious MRSA infection is possible—child should be checked by a doctor
NUTRITION

Snack

We serve a mid-session snack consisting of items from at least two food groups. Weekly snack menus are posted on the bulletin board in the corner of the main hallway. Due to an increase in the number of children who have severe allergies to peanut products, AMP is a peanut free snack environment.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a time of celebration and joy. On your child’s birthday, s/he will be recognized by the Happy Birthday song.

The following is optional: we invite parents to gift their child’s classroom with a favorite book. You may inscribe the book with your child’s name and date and, if you like, attach a photo of your child to it. Wrap the book and at Gathering Time your child will present the gift and unwrap it for the class. These books and will become a permanent part of the American Martyrs Preschool collection.

Please do not use the cubbies to distribute children’s birthday party invitations, children’s thank you notes, etc. even if the whole class is included.

Please do not bring birthday sweets or goodie bags to preschool.

Holidays

During holiday times, classrooms take on a holiday look with the colors and symbols of the special day. Within this festive environment, the teachers provide appropriate activities for our preschoolers in somewhat of a “business as usual” atmosphere. The classes do not have holiday parties. Donations of specialty items (e.g. holiday stickers, decorations, wrapping paper, seasonal notepads) are always welcome!

Valentine’s Day: because every child has his or her own Valentine bag, attaching a small (i.e., it fits into a lunch-sized bag) peanut-free edible treat or non-edible treat to the Valentine card is ok but OPTIONAL (when deciding, think a dozen Valentines candy = a dozen pieces of candy per child!)

Dads & Moms Come to Preschool Days: If your child attends preschool on both Wed. & Thurs.: 1) a parent can join us on both days 2) a parent can come one day & another special person can come on the other day (see dates & times on calendar page)

Cubbies: regarding treats and invitations…

Please do not put treats of any kind (food or non-food) into children’s cubbies at any time even during the holidays (as stated above, small Valentine treats go into Valentine bags, not into cubbies).

Please do not use the cubbies to distribute children’s personal party invitations, children’s thank you notes, etc. even if the whole class is included. These policies are intended to avoid the possibility of a child’s feelings being hurt because s/he perceived exclusion.

14
CLOTHING

Provide simple clothing that your child can manage by him/herself in the bathroom (belts, zippers and snaps are often difficult for children to close). Also, consider messy materials and wet sand and provide clothing that is washable.

Please, NEVER ask your child to stay clean or dry at preschool. If you need to take him/her someplace special directly after preschool, bring a change of clothes at pick-up time.

Put TWO complete changes of extra clothes AND an AMP towel in your child’s cubby every day. LABEL each item of clothing and the tag of your Zig-Zag Bag with your child’s name.

Please include: long pants shirts extra shoes or flip-flops
shorts underwear socks (if your child wears them)

How to use the Zig-Zag Bag:
1. bring your child’s clean clothes to preschool in his/her Zig-Zag Bag
2. DUMP the clean clothes OUT OF THE BAG & into the cubby
3. leave the EMPTY Zig-Zag BAG in the cubby to collect wet clothes
4. Repeat each preschool day
5. Your child's zig zag bag is issued upon enrollment with the intention of it lasting the full two years at AMP. Each child is given a new room colored tag when their classroom changes for their second year. We understand that bags may sometimes be misplaced or lost. While taking some time for it to turn up, you may use another bag from home. If it is gone forever, we will replace it once. After that, we will need to charge $10 for the bag and $5 for the towel.

Sample of note advising you that your child may need extra clothes in his/her cubby:
************************************************************************
Time to restock your child’s cubby.
Please make sure that your child has:
CLOTHES
A SMALL TOWEL

Label everything. Thank you!
************************************************************************

Regarding Costumes
Please do not bring your child to preschool in costume (except on Halloween, of course!). Socially, children respond to a child who comes in costume as the character s/he is portraying rather than the child as him/herself. Each classroom rotates many appropriate dramatic play pieces to enhance our children’s play.

Please label all of your child’s clothes especially jackets, sweaters and sweatshirts to enable us to return misplaced items to your child’s cubby.

Belongings
Label everything that comes to school with your child. (Masking tape stuck onto small items with your child’s name written on the tape will pull off later if you don’t want a permanent label.)

Bring to School: Books, CDs, pets, insects, rocks, shells, etc.
Do Not Bring to School: Gum, candy, weapons, war toys

Lovey: If your child needs his/her lovey to transition to school, the lovey can be put in your child’s cubby for the day. This allows your child access to the lovey for comfort while minimizing interference with his/her participation in classroom activities.
FINANCES

Deposit
A non-refundable deposit of one month’s tuition is required when enrollment in the preschool is accepted by the parent for his/her child (click on the TUITION link on the homepage for the amount). This deposit is applied to tuition for the last month of the child’s attendance at American Martyrs Preschool (usually, June two years hence).

In the case of early withdrawal: if the office is notified at least 30 days in advance of a child’s last day of attendance, the deposit will be applied to the last month’s tuition.

Tuition beyond the deposit paid in advance is non-refundable.

Registration Fee
(click on the TUITION link on the homepage for the amount)

There is a separate, non-refundable registration fee per child per year

Tuition
(click on the TUITION link on the homepage for the amount)
American Martyrs Preschool uses the Smart Tuition payment system to manage all tuition needs. It is an auto pay system that is set up with your banking information or credit card. Upon Enrollment each family will have a new account that can be tailored to their needs.

No monetary credit or make-up day is given for absence due to illness or personal vacation periods.

Fees for Late Payment and Returned Checks
There will be a $40.00 late fee (thru Smart Tuition) for any payment received after the predetermined due date of each family.
There will be a $20.00 fee for any check that is returned NSF.

If a check is returned NSF (non-sufficient funds), we will immediately redeposit the check and you will be billed the $20.00 NSF fee. If the check is returned a second time, it will be necessary for you to replace it with cash and pay any additional fees incurred.

Scrip Requirement
Each American Martyrs Preschool family is required to generate $200.00 in profit for the preschool by participating in our scrip (aka gift certificate) purchasing program. See explanation pages 17-18.
**SCRIP PROGRAM**

*A Volunteer-Run Joint Venture between the “Big School” and the Preschool*

**Introduction to Scrip**

Scrip is a **No-Cost Fundraiser**. When you buy scrip, you are buying gift certificates. The Program buys scrip (gift certificates) from national and local merchants at a discount and sells it to you at face value.

**Scrip Requirement**

Each preschool family is required to generate **$200.00 in profit per year from scrip purchases**. Purchases include

1. paper scrip bought in the parish center office (about 100 vendors from which to choose)
2. amounts credited to your account through some grocery stores
3. on-line services (e.g. eScrip [Vons], Schoolpop)

Each merchant sets his own discount percentage (ranging from 1.5% to 25%) so some scrip purchases “earn more” profit than others. The various profit percentages are printed on the scrip order form which is available in the Scrip Office at the Parish Center.

If you have children in the Big School and in the Preschool, you must generate $400 in profit ($200 for the Big School & $200 for the Preschool). You reach the bonus level at $401.

A sample family might satisfy the $200 requirement through **annual** purchases of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store Name</th>
<th>Annual Purchase</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Profit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albertsons</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart &amp; Final</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Foods</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starbucks</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald’s</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See’s</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galleria</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Theatres</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys R Us/Babies R Us</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**$209.00**

**How to Purchase Scrip**

1. Go to the Parish Center:
   - Monday – Friday during the preschool day
   - Saturday after the 5:00pm Mass
   - Sunday 7:45-11:30am
2. Fill out an order form including your family scrip number. If you don’t yet have a number, tell the seller that you are a new preschool family and that you need a number.
3. Make your check payable to AMPA (the big school’s American Martyrs Parent Association—AMPA runs the Scrip Program).
**eScrip**

Participating businesses contribute a percentage of your grocery loyalty cards, credit card and debit/ATM card purchases to the organization of your choice. There are local merchants as well as many online merchants. Visit www.escrip.com family of merchants for a complete list of participants in the program.

**Here’s How e-ScRip Works**

- You register any one or all of your existing grocery loyalty, debit and credit cards for use in the program.
- Participating merchants will make contributions to your chosen group, based on purchases made by you, just by using the cards you have registered.
- Your purchases are tracked and available to you online, allowing you to see just how much you are earning on your child’s behalf.  
  (Note: purchases can take up to 3 months to be posted to your account)

**Record Keeping**

The Program keeps track of all of your scrip purchases. At the end of the scrip year, profits from each source are added together: paper scrip purchases, grocery store purchases and on-line purchases. If you generate more than the $200 profit requirement *(but less than the $350 profit required for the bonus level explained below)*, your extra profit dollars will directly benefit the preschool. If you fall short of the $200 requirement, you will be billed for the difference between your profit and the $200 profit commitment.

The scrip year runs from mid-March to mid-March to give the staff adequate time to prepare statements and collect any outstanding balances. All scrip purchases made during this time period will be credited to your scrip profit account for the current preschool year.

**Scrip Bonus Program**

If you earn $350 in scrip profit, one-half of all profit over $350 will be credited to your child’s tuition after March 15th.

**Scrip Buyouts**

The Scrip “Buyout Program” allows families to fulfill their scrip commitment by writing a check payable to AMPA (the Big School’s American Martyrs Parent Association). The buyout costs are as follows:

- $200 if received in the preschool office by October 1st
- $225 if received in the preschool office by December 1st
- $250 if received in the preschool office by March 15th
- $275 if received in the preschool office after March 15th

**Questions?** Visit the Scrip Desk in the Parish Office!
FACTS ABOUT THE
AMERICAN MARTYRS PRESCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1. **Awning:**
   The awning over the sandbox provides 96% UV protection from the sun and will withstand 90 mph winds!

2. **Cat Sirens:**
   In our sand-filled environment, high frequency sirens are turned on each evening to keep cats and other critters out of the play yard.

3. **Cleaning:**
   The preschool is professionally cleaned every night.

4. **CPR & First Aid:**
   All of the teachers and staff are CPR and first aid trained on an ongoing schedule every two years.

5. **Water Spigots for Handwashing:**
   All of the water spigots in the bathrooms and classrooms operate by sensor.

6. **Outside Drinking Water:** The water in the play yard drinking fountain is filtered.

7. **Heating System:**
   Our heating system contains a high efficiency air cleaner. The air flows through a filter in each room and then through ultra-violet lights (under the floor) that kills 87% of airborne bacteria and 99.9% of mold spores. In the summer of 2003, individual thermostats were installed in each room to allow teachers to accurately control the temperature of each classroom environment.

8. **Hallway Solar Gard Window Treatment:** (installed 3/07)
   98% UV protection
AMP has 5 emergency backpacks in the preschool—1 for each classroom and 1 in the office. Each backpack contains emergency information for each child in the preschool, emergency supplies that would be needed immediately in case of evacuation (including a first aid kit and 18 pairs of flip flops) and a key for the Emergency Supply Shed. Most of our emergency supplies (food, water, etc.) are stored in the shed at the North end of the playing field at the Big School. This would be our destination in case of evacuation and the place where you would pick up your child.

Keys for the Emergency Supplies shed: 1 on each backpack
1 with each teacher

Each classroom has a container in the Emergency Supplies shed containing:
- food & water for 30
- 20 thermal blankets
- 20 waterproof ponchos

1 extra tub contains:
- Crank personal safety device (emergency radio, flashlight, cell phone charger, emergency siren)
- First aid kit
- Light sticks
- Work gloves
- Emergency LED light (red reflector lights up & flashes)
- Signaling mirror
- Multi-function tool
- Emergency whistle (includes compass & thermometer)
EXTENDED EDUCATION FOR OUR AMP STAFF

2017

July 2017
Roseville Community Preschool-Play Conference. An inspirational visit to a school environment based on play and child-led curriculum.

2015-16

August 2015
Storytelling workshop for all staff-presented by Peter Kors, renowned children’s storyteller. Peter shared tips on telling folk stories, including all children in the group and getting them to tell the story back to you!

April 2016
Westside Neighborhood School-Engaging all Learners Symposium. We experienced mini workshops including : Gardening Curriculum for Early Learners, Practicing Mindfullness with Children and Preschool Math Concepts.

June 2016
Silke Hamilton OT shared information with the staff on signs of developmental delays in the classroom vs. sensory issues. Silke returned in August to provide the staff with tools to promote an environment full of “fine motor” opportunities. She shared many different activities with us to promote strong hands and help with pencil grasp issues.

Pedagogy of Play-a Reggio inspired preschool in Portland Oregon. Miss Paolina & Miss Christy enjoyed 3 days of hands-on activities and workshops promoting and supporting our play philosophy at AMP!

2014-15

August 2014
Occupational Therapy Inservice –presented by Aishah Muhammad-Flissinger, OTD, OTR/L, Pediatric Occupational Therapist. Aishah shared her knowledge and expertise on the importance of children working their “core”. We learned that the “core” of a child is the first part of the of the body to develop and that the rest of the muscles develop from there out to the tips of their fingers! This knowledge was inspiring for the staff because it validates our philosophy based on play including large and small motor development-the stepping stones to writing and holding a pencil!

2013-14

August 2013
Mathematics in Early Childhood Education presented by Jon Dueck, California State Mathematics Consultant for grades pre-K through 12. Jon is the parent of 4 children, including a 3-year-old! His presentation reviewed and extended our knowledge of how to set the foundation for math in preschool on which our children will build math competence as their education progresses.

Art in the Preschool Classroom presented by Patricia McGrath, director of Branches Atelier Preschool in Santa Monica. Patricia presented an interesting array of art tools from gesso to unusual brushes to enhance our children’s art experience in the classroom.

2012-13

April 2013
From the Table to the Floor explored how children learn science and demonstrated activities that teachers can set up in both the indoor and outdoor environments to support science leaning in the classroom.

Mathematics and Science in the Early Childhood Classroom presented by Dr. Doug Clements and Dr. George Forman. Dr Clements summarized recent math research and emphasized how children develop mathematical concepts and skills at the preschool level. Dr. Forman addressed how teachers can prepare the environment and ask provocative
November 2012 - February 2013

**Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child** presented by Dr. Laura Markham. Dr. Markham’s talk translated the research on emotional intelligence into practical everyday routines and strategies to help children develop high EQs.

**Creating a World of Colors: Palettes that Connect us to our World** presented by Patricia Hunter McGrath. Topics included creating a wide range of beautiful palettes; techniques of paint mixing; the difference between a tone, a hue, a shade and a tint; how paint and color support literacy and learning.

**An Introduction to Reggio** presented by Patricia Hunter McGrath. This workshop explained the Reggio approach to early childhood education. It included explanations of: the philosophical roots of the Reggio approach; how materials support children’s learning; how environment acts as a third teacher; how wonder supports creativity and imagination; the role of parents in a Reggio inspired preschool.

**Why the Grey Matters—A Neuroscience Professional Development Program for Teachers** presented in 3 Saturday workshops which focused on the latest research in Neuroscience and Psychology along with strategies for direct application in the classroom:

- **Plasticity, Mindset and Memory**—topics include Plasticity and Mindset; Memory, Stress and Emotional Regulation
- **Understanding Executive Function**—topics include Self-Regulation and Attention; Focus and Perseverance; Motivation’ Creativity
- **Designing a Brain-Friendly Environment**—topics include Social and Emotional Learning; Happiness; Neuroscience of Sleep, Safety, Exercise, Stress

**I Want to Teach Conference** at El Camino College included presentations on Reflective Teaching for Science and Math and Conflict Resolution Skills.

**August 2012**

**Pony Workshop:** Ms. Nathalie Medina, the Big School Pony Program teacher, presented a workshop in the Pony classroom on the curriculum and skills that she teaches in her Developmental Kindergarten program.

2011-12

**August – November 2011** Parent educator Ariel Wrye from The Echo Center for Parent Education presented a six session workshop to the staff. The workshop mirrored the content of the Parent Education Series offered to our parents as well as information on brain growth and development.

2010-11

**February 2011** Presentation by Larry Garf, child development specialist, entitled: “Playing Around: Why Play is Vital for the Emotional and Intellectual Development of Children”. attendees: Miss Chelsea, Miss Claudia, Miss Sandra, Miss Solly, Miss Stacey & Miss Jeannie

**January 2011** Presentation by Bev Bos & Michael Leeman entitled Current, Best Strategies for Creating an Outstanding Preschool Program. attendees: Miss Anita, Miss Bethany, Miss Christy, Miss Jen & Miss Mara

**November 2010** Beach Cities Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Fall Conference: “The Whole Child”. attendees: Miss Sandra & Miss Jeannie

**August 2010** Kristina Jackson MS, MFT began an advanced workshop on Team Building which will extend over 12 hours during the preschool year.

**August 2010** The topic of this year’s archdiocesan sponsored workshop was *Praying with Preschoolers.*
2009-10

October 2009  Antonio Sacre told stories in each classroom followed by a workshop for our teachers on the techniques of providing experiences of oral tradition for our children. Antonio is an internationally touring writer, storyteller, and solo performance artist based in Los Angeles. Since 1994, he has taught drama, storytelling, and writing to teachers and students nationwide. He has performed at the National Book Festival at the Library of Congress, the Kennedy Center, the National Storytelling Festival, and museums, schools, libraries, and festivals internationally.

August & September 2009  Kristina Jackson MS, MFT presented one workshop on Team Building and another on Meetings: How to Reach Consensus & Maximize Creativity—both inspiring and very practical.

July 2009  Bev Bos, internationally known early childhood educator (for over 30 years) and author—All of the members of our staff who had not yet had the opportunity to visit Bev’s preschool in Roseville, California attended her three-day workshop—a creative and inspiring program of hands on preschool practice.

2008-09

September 2008  Zoe Mailloux, Director of Pediatric Therapy Network, presented a workshop on nourishing the preschooler’s brain through sensory stimulation.

August 2008  All of the staff participated in a lively science workshop entitled “Story Time Slime” presented by Julie Gintzler from Steve Spangler Science. Julie taught kindergarten for 22 years and is currently promoting the connection between science and literature for preschoolers.

2007-08

June 2008  A representative from each classroom and the director attended Creating the Outdoor Classroom: A Conference for Early Childhood Educators (attendance per preschool was limited) to focus on providing and maximizing experiences of nature in our preschool environment.

May 2008  All of our staff attended an afternoon presentation by Pediatric Therapy Network at the Big School on the importance and methods of providing sensory stimulation for children.

May 2008  Once again, our staff attended a 1 day workshop presented by Bev Bos (see January 2007) to be reinvigorated in our work with our little ones!

August 2007:  Math, again!—Lisa Sandbeg, a Pre-K to 12 mathematics consultant, returned to AMP to give our staff a refresher workshop on Mathematics in Early Childhood Education. Lisa first brought a wealth of mathematics information to us in April, 2006 and we welcomed her back with great enthusiasm!

August 2007:  Leadership Workshop—our staff attended a one day workshop facilitated by Barbara Robinson, MFCC to give a boost to our teamwork approach at the preschool.

January 2007:  Bev Bos—our staff attended a 1 day workshop to be re-inspired by the hands-on creativity of this internationally known early childhood educator (for over 30 years) and author.

2006-07
February 2006: Alfie Kohn—many of our staff attended a local conference to hear Alfie Kohn speak (author of books and articles including *Punished by Rewards, The Schools Our Children Deserve, Five Reasons to Stop Saying “Good Job!”*) and participated in a discussion group based on his presentation.

April 2006: Math Workshop—AMP invited Lisa Sandberg to present on the topic of Mathematics in Early Childhood Education to our staff. Lisa, a mathematics consultant statewide for grades pre-K to 12, presented a workshop jam-packed with concepts, materials and ideas for integrating math into the everyday life of our preschool in a developmentally appropriate way.

August 2006: Workshop: Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Preschools by Lisa Murphy, the Ooey Gooey lady—Lisa has been an early childhood educator for over 15 years. Her current project is assisting educators across the country in linking all aspects of a hands-on, play-based, “ooey gooey” program to various educational requirements (aka standards). She is dedicated to the idea that playing is “getting them ready” for school! Lisa spent 2 days with our staff here at American Martyrs and loved our preschool. She even sent her husband here with a camera to take photos!

2005-06

August 2005: Brother William—our staff attended a half-day presentation on the inclusion of children with special needs into our preschool.

2004-05

August 2004: Music Together—our staff completed a three-day Music Together training workshop in Newport Beach.

August 2004: SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) Movement Workshop—our staff attended a 1 day SPARK workshop at AMP. SPARK is a health related physical education program designed in 2001 by a team of educators and researchers in San Diego.

2003-04

July 2003: Bev Bos, early childhood educator and author—our staff attended a three-day workshop featuring exciting and developmentally appropriate preschool practice at Bev’s preschool in Roseville, California.

In addition, teachers attend workshops and classes of their choice throughout the year. We all aspire to be lifelong learners!