

Jasper County Preschool Parent Handbook

2022-2023



Mission Statement (charter system)

The Jasper County Charter School System will provide superior and innovative learning experiences to prepare every student for life beyond school.

Vision Statement (charter system)

The vision of the Jasper County Charter School System is to provide dedicated staff and supportive learning environments to inspire and motivate every student to achieve individual success.

Please review the Jasper County Preschool Handbook on our website at:

<https://www.jasper.k12.ga.us/Domain/12>

You may also request a printed copy of the Handbook.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information presented in the Jasper County Preschool Handbook, please contact **Camilla Moss at 706 468-4972** or at **cmoss@jasper.k12.ga.us**.

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Jasper County Preschool! It is with great excitement that I welcome you to the 2022-2023 school year! I am honored and proud to serve as your Preschool Director and I look forward to working with each of you as we partner to help your child reach their fullest potential. At Jasper County Preschool, we are committed to helping your child learn the skills necessary for later academic success.

We know that you are your child's primary teacher and we are eager to work in partnership with you to meet your child's needs. In addition to our educational staff, we have family services staff to support you in setting family goals and providing community resources. Please do not hesitate to ask Preschool staff to assist you with any needs.

We are thankful you have chosen to share your most precious resources with us. Together we can achieve great things. There are many opportunities to volunteer and partner with us to serve our students. We look forward to your involvement and support of your child's educational journey. We are planting the seeds of knowledge that will grow forever!

Sincerely,

Camilla C. Moss

Head Start- Head Start is a federally funded program for children and families. It is a comprehensive child development program and includes services in the areas of education, parent involvement, social services, health and disabilities. In Jasper County, we serve 82 three and four year old children in a full day program with hours 8:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. To apply for enrollment, parents can complete registration documents online or come to the Jasper County Preschool office to complete forms. Necessary documentation includes birth certificate, social security number, income information, and proof of residency. Once a child is accepted, the immunization certificate (Form #3231) and certificate of vision, hearing, dental, and nutrition (Form #3300) will be required. Head Start students will also require a full physical and a dental examination. There are no mandatory fees for participation.

Parent involvement is a major part of the Head Start Program. We want parents to be active in the entire program. There are opportunities to volunteer in classrooms, attend parent meetings and training sessions, serve as officers for the parent group, health advisory committee, and/ or serve on the Head Start Policy Council. The Head Start Policy Council is an advisory group made up of Head Start parents and community members which is similar to the School Governance Teams at JCPS, WPES, JCMS, and JCHS. This group meets monthly, or as needed.

Members of the Policy Council serve in an advisory and procedure making capacity in cooperation with the Jasper County Board of Education. The Policy Council works to assist with approval of the goals for Head Start within the program and developing ways to meet these goals within HHS guidelines. Policy Council members assist with administration of the parent fund, as well as approval of major changes in the Head Start operating budget while the program is in operation. Finally, Policy Council members assist with decision making and completion of the annual self evaluation. Training will be provided for those interested in participating.

Georgia Pre-K- Georgia's Pre-K program is an educational initiative available to residents of Georgia that is funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education through grants to Pre-K sites. Jasper County Board of Education is the grantee for the Jasper County Preschool program. In our program, all four year old students are enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K program which is a full day, five day a week program. School hours are 8:00 AM- 2:30 PM. To register for Georgia Pre-K, parents can complete an application online or come to the Jasper County Preschool office to complete forms. Parents will also provide a copy of birth certificate, social security number, and proof of residency. Once a child is

accepted, the certificate of immunization (Form #3231) and certificate of vision, hearing, dental, and nutrition (Form #3300) will be required. There are no mandatory fees for participation.

Parent involvement is a vital component of Georgia's Pre-K program. There are opportunities to volunteer in classrooms, attend parent meetings and training sessions, and serve as officers for the parent group.

School Day- Please make every effort to have your child at school each day. We ask that students not arrive on campus prior to **7:20 AM**, as supervision is not provided until that time. Students may enter the building from the front parking lot **only**. Upon arriving on campus, all students will report to their classroom. Preschool students will eat breakfast together as a class at 8:05. Please make every effort to get students to school by 8:00. This will allow students time to begin their classroom routine before breakfast. Students arriving at school after 8:05 AM must sign in at the Preschool office. Because the Preschool day is different from school age children, we ask that late students arrive no later than 11:00. For Preschool age students, the majority of their learning occurs in the morning. Students who arrive late miss a great deal of instructional time.

Dismissal and Procedures for picking up students- Car riders are dismissed from the Preschool beginning at 2:30 PM. Parents are welcome to stand at the front door with the child's car rider sign or wait in your vehicle in the car rider line. In the afternoons, the Preschool car rider line begins at the fire hydrant adjacent to the school. If you choose to walk up to receive your child, please park in a parking space to allow the car rider line to proceed. Students with family standing at the door will be released first. Once all of the walk up students have been released, then staff will begin walking children to the cars. At the beginning of the school year, dismissal takes longer as students and families learn the routine. Your patience is appreciated.

If you are checking a student out from school, **you will be required to show picture identification**. Only those persons listed on your child's registration sheet will be allowed to check a student out unless a note is sent to the front office. **Parents are not able to go directly to classrooms to pick up students.**

School buses- Riding the school bus is a privilege and a responsibility. Any preschool student that rides the bus is **required to wear a seatbelt**. Students will be assigned to seats equipped with seatbelts which makes it very difficult for preschool students to be switched from one bus to another. Therefore, bus changes are not accepted. Please contact the preschool office with any questions

about transportation.

Food Services- Breakfast is provided free of charge to every student in Jasper County schools. Preschool students will eat breakfast and lunch in their classrooms. Preschool students **CANNOT** bring lunch to school. **All preschoolers must eat lunch at school.** Doctors' orders are required for children who are on special nutritional diets. Our food service program will prepare special menus for these students. Preschool students will also receive a snack that is provided by the school nutrition department. Our objective is to promote good eating habits that nurture healthy development. By partnering with parents, our children will not only strive to achieve educational goals, but embrace approaches for lifelong well being. If you have any questions about the free and reduced lunch program, please contact the Preschool office.

Student Charges- In order for PK – 2 students to open a charge account, the parents/guardians of the child(ren) must be contacted to approve the practice of charges for this aged child. One meal may be charged prior to making contact with a parent/guardian. Limitations for charges will be established with the parent/guardian which may be negotiated based on the needs of the family. The School Nutrition Program will solicit the help of principals, counselors and local administrators to work with families to collect the debt as well as evaluate the family's need for assistance.

Birthdays/ Celebrations-Families who wish to celebrate birthdays with their children are encouraged to purchase treats from the Primary School Nutrition department. Delicious, whole grain cookies and brownies are available for purchase. To ensure that the cafeteria staff have adequate stock, please inform Preschool staff two weeks prior to confirm product availability. Payment is expected at the time of order.

Prices for special items are as follows:

Frosting-Filled, Whole Grain Cookies		\$.65/ each
(Chocolate chip and vanilla sugar cookie available)		
Whole grain cookies-	Chocolate Chip, Sugar cookie -	\$.40/each
Fruit (pre packaged)-	Half cup (applesauce)	\$.45/each
Milk-	Carton	\$.55/each
Juice-	4 oz carton-	\$.40/each

On occasion, parents may desire to send snacks to school for special celebrations. To meet nutrition guidelines regarding snacks, parents must be aware that snacks served at Preschool **must meet** the USDA standards for healthy snacks, also called smart snacks. If the first ingredient is "whole grain," then the snack is likely compliant. Examples include whole grain goldfish crackers, pretzels, graham crackers, etc. There are two helpful tools to assist families in determining whether snacks meet the smart snack guidelines.

- First, you can see if your snack is listed in the products section of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Smart Foods Planner.

<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/products>

- Or, you can enter information from the food Nutrition Facts panel into the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Smart Snacks Product Calculator. <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneraton.org/calculator>

Attendance Policy- Children who do not attend on a regular basis, are routinely late, or routinely leave the program early will be referred to the Family Services Coordinator. Parents will be contacted each morning when a student is absent from school. Students who are sick should not attend the program. If a pattern of chronic tardiness or chronic absenteeism develops, the Family Services Coordinator will schedule a parent conference to identify ways the program can support attendance. Chronic tardiness is defined as late arrival or early departure more than once per week. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than two days per month without medical or other reasonable explanation. Chronic tardiness or absenteeism may also be defined by an established regular attendance pattern(s), e.g., if a child is late every Monday or absent every Tuesday or leaves early every Friday. According to GA Pre K guidelines, **children who continue to be chronically tardy or absent after intervention must be considered for disenrollment. Children who do not attend class for ten consecutive days without a medical or other reasonable explanation must be removed from the roster.**

Curriculum-Jasper County Preschool utilizes Creative Curriculum which aligns with the Georgia Early Development Standards (GELDS) as well as the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF). The GELDS and the HSELOF are a set of appropriate, attainable standards for Georgia's youngest learners and are designed to be flexible enough to support children's individual rates of development, approaches to learning, and cultural context. Creative Curriculum is a comprehensive research based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as the way of learning. Student learning occurs through studies, which are hands-on, project-based investigations. Our goal is to build children's confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills and promote positive outcomes.

Conferences- Teachers will schedule conferences twice per year to share progress with parents. Conferences usually occur in December and May. Teachers will contact parents to schedule appointments. Conferences may also be requested by parents or teachers at any time. They should be scheduled in advance, when possible. If it is necessary to come to the school for a conference

without an appointment, parents should sign in at the Preschool office and ask for a conference.

School Discipline- Jasper County Preschool uses a positive and proactive approach to help children develop social and emotional skills. We implement a program-wide approach, the Pyramid Model, which is a positive behavior intervention and supports approach designed for young children. This ensures that teachers and staff use effective teaching practices that promote the social and emotional competence of children and provides individualized interventions to children who need additional instruction or behavior support. Our program-wide approach is guided by a Leadership Team that uses data for decision-making, provides training and support to teachers, and fosters partnerships with families. We have established the following program-wide expectations for all children and adults:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Ready to Learn

Staff members teach children about these expectations and link classroom rules to these core values. The expectations can also be taught at home. We find that when all are on the same page with our expectations, children are able to flourish.

Our staff members use positive methods of child guidance including natural and logical consequences, redirection, anticipation of and elimination of potential problems, and the encouragement of cooperative behavior. Staff members are prohibited from using corporal punishment or humiliating, threatening, frightening, or shame-based disciplinary techniques. All staff members receive training in developmentally appropriate and child guidance procedures and are monitored on their implementation of these practices.

If a child exhibits behavior challenges that are a concern, we will contact the family so that we can work together to develop and implement a plan. This plan will include strategies for teaching social and emotional skills and reducing behavior challenges. We also encourage families to ask questions about appropriate child guidance techniques and seek assistance if they have concerns about the child's social, emotional, or behavioral development.

If children engage in behavior that is harmful to themselves or to others, staff members may remove the child from the activity or room until the child is calm and able to return to the classroom. If the behavior incident is dangerous or might be physically harmful, we will seek to conference with the family

immediately with the goal of developing an effective approach to support the child. For some children, an evaluation, consultation with professionals outside the program, or additional services might be needed to ensure the child can be successfully supported in the program.

School Closings-When the possibility of bad weather in the form of snow and freezing rain exists, local radio and television stations will carry appropriate information regarding school closings. Parents should also refer to Jasper County Charter System's website for up to date information regarding school closings.

Child custody-In most cases, when parents are divorced, both individuals have equal rights where their children are concerned. If there is a court order that limits the rights of either parent, a copy should be provided to school personnel as soon as possible to be placed on file. Otherwise, **whoever enrolled the child has precedence.**

School visitation- Parents are welcome to visit the school. Visitors must first sign in at the main office and get a visitor's pass. This is important for school security and will be strictly enforced. Visits may take place in the classroom. For the safety of our students, we request that other arrangements are made for siblings, so that parents and caregivers can focus on their Pre K student.

Authority of the Director- The director is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in this Code, the director may undertake corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student and the school provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures.

Thank you for your support and have a great school year!