

HART COUNTY SCHOOLS

Preschool Program

2022-2023

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Nathan Smith, Superintendent

Donna Turner LeFevre, Director of Preschool

BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Sheryl Shirley, Chairwoman
Tina Rutledge, Vice-Chairwoman
Wesley Hodges
Tyler Holthouser
Sonya Gedda**

**To Parents/Guardians:
Please review this Parent-Student
Handbook and sign the attached signature
page and return to your child's teacher.
Thank you for your support.**

GOALS

The primary goal of the Hart County Preschool Education Program is to provide a quality integrated preschool program for three and four year old children. The aim is to help children develop to their full capacity and to think, feel, and share, learn and play with others. This is accomplished through a well-rounded program of guided free play, structured group time, active and quiet play, indoor and outdoor play and special guests.

Preschool will provide early childhood educational experiences which promote the individual child's physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth and well-being which will enhance the quality of children's preschool lives. We welcome parents to visit us often and participate in their child's early childhood experiences.

We welcome questions and suggestions and ask that we be given a chance to address any concerns. Through a close relationship between parents and teachers, the children will greatly benefit from their preschool experiences.

POLICIES

SCHEDULES

Children who are enrolled in the preschool program will attend class Monday through Thursday. Classes will begin at 8:00 a.m. and will end at 2:45 p.m. Parents may begin dropping off students at 7:45 and may begin pick-up at 2:45. Children should not arrive at school prior to 7:45. There will not be any supervision for the children before that time. Friday will be planning and home visit day for the preschool teaching staff.

SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

During the school year, when inclement weather like sleet, snow, or freezing rain and other emergencies occur, school delay or cancellation decisions must be made. Every effort will be made to make the decision as early as possible.

The Hart County Schools will notify radio stations WLOC (1150 AM) in Horse Cave, WHHT (106.7 FM) in Glasgow, WGGC (95.1 FM) in Glasgow, WCLU (102.3) in Glasgow, WPTQ (103.7 FM) in Glasgow, WGRK (103.1 FM) in Greensburg, WOVO (105.3 FM) in Glasgow, WHAS (840 AM) in Louisville, WKNK (99.1 FM) in Edmonton, WQXE (98.3 FM) in Elizabethtown, and television stations WBKO Channel 13 in Bowling Green, and WHAS Channel 11, WAVE Channel 3, and WDRB Channel 41 in Louisville.

Hart County Preschool will participate in the Non-Traditional School Days (Raider Days). On these days the student will be assigned classroom specific activities which will be assigned by the preschool teacher. All assignments will have the appropriate modifications as stated in the Individual Education Plan (IEP). All special education, speech, and preschool staff will be available on Raider Days for any questions or help the student may need.

DEPARTURE

For the continued safety of your child, all children will remain in the school building until the parent comes to pick up the child. Each school has an individual arrival/departure procedure. Your teacher will review this procedure at the beginning of the year. Hart County preschool will follow state regulations for hand-to-hand transfer. Parents/guardians will physically hand transfer a child to appropriate school personnel. Hand-to-hand transfer will also be followed during departure. Parents/guardians are responsible for securing children in car seats or seat belts.

If you come to pick your child up early, please let the office call the room. This will eliminate teacher/student classroom disruption.

If someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking your child up from school, the person picking the child up must have a note from the parent/guardian. You must also call the school to confirm this change. This is to ensure the safety of your child.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES/EXCUSE POLICIES

Regular and punctual attendance is necessary for quality preschool programs. In order to provide quality academic instruction, regular and punctual student attendance is very important. Your child can best benefit by being on time and present every day possible. The starting time for preschool children is 8:00 a.m. They will be considered tardy after 8:00 a.m. Although preschool attendance is not mandatory, regular attendance allows students to achieve greater success both socially and academically.

If your preschool student accumulates three days absences without a proper excuse (immediate family death, student illness, student medical appointment) or if the child's attendance is irregular, the preschool teacher will make contact with the parent/guardian and will notify the Director of Special Education, Donna LeFevre and/or the Director of Pupil Personnel, Daniel Hawkins.

Since your child will be in kindergarten in the future, strong attendance in preschool prepares students for the K-12 attendance policy. The Kentucky Compulsory Attendance Law (KRS 159.150) defines a student as truant who has accumulated three (3) or more days without a proper excuse. When a student accumulates six (6) unexcused absences a "Final Notice" will be issued. If the student accumulates nine (9) unexcused absences, an Educational neglect petition will be filed against the parent. For upper grade students, a juvenile petition will be filed with the Court Designated Worker (CDW).

The student information system (Infinite Campus) is used to document enrollment of children and the information is kept up to date on all children including children with disabilities. Daily attendance records are maintained.

NOTIFICATION OF FERPA RIGHTS

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Kentucky Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (KY FERPA) afford parents and “eligible students” (students over 18 years of age or who are attending a postsecondary institution) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. They are:

1) The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within forty-five (45) days of the day the District receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal/designee a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2) The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights.

Parents or eligible students may ask the District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of privacy or other rights. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy or other rights.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA and/or KY FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District shall disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or to other entities authorized by law.

4) The right to prohibit the disclosure of personally identifiable information concerning the student to recruiting representatives of the U.S. Armed Forces and its service academies, the Kentucky Air National Guard, and the Kentucky National Guard.

Unless the parent or eligible student requests in writing that the District not release information, the student's name, address, and telephone number (if listed) shall be released to Armed Forces recruiters upon their request.

5) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Hart County Schools are required to maintain special education records for three (3) years after the date of the last activity. Therefore, the school district will destroy all records three years after graduation or three years after a student has exited a special education program. If you have reason to believe you will need these records at a later date, you must notify the Hart County School District that you want the records prior to the designated time for destruction. You may request your records by contacting Donna LeFevre, Director of Special Education, at 270-524-4589.

CHILD FIND FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NEED OF SPECIAL EDUCATION OR 504 SERVICES

The Child Find process ensures delivery of appropriate, relevant, research-based instruction and intervention services (KSI) prior to or as a part of the special education referral process.

The Hart County School District keeps educational records in a secure location in each school and Board office.

The Hart County School District obtains written consent from a parent or eligible student (age 18 or who is attending a postsecondary institution), before disclosing personally identifiable information to an entity or individual not authorized to receive it under FERPA.

For students who have been determined eligible for Special Education, educational records will be destroyed at the request of the parents when they are no longer needed to provide educational programs or services. The Hart County School District may destroy the educational records of a child without parent request three years after they are no longer needed to provide educational programs or services. Parents are advised that data contained in the records may later be needed for Social Security benefits or other purposes. The Hart County School District may retain, for an indefinite period of time, a record of the student's name, address, telephone number, grades, attendance records, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed.

Children eligible for Special Education include those children with disabilities who have autism, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, emotional-behavior disability, hearing impairment, mental disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairment and who because of such an impairment need Special Education services.

Children eligible for 504 services include those children in a public elementary and secondary education program who have a current physical or mental impairment that currently substantially limits some major life activity which causes the student's ability to access the school environment or school activities to be substantially limited.

Children eligible for the State-Funded Preschool program include three- and four-year-old children identified with disabilities and four-year-old children who are at-risk, as defined by federal poverty levels up to 160%. Preschool children eligible for special education must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) instead of a 504 plan to receive State-Funded Preschool program services.

The Hart County School District has an ongoing "*Child Find*" system, which is designed to locate, identify and evaluate any child residing in a home, facility, or residence within its geographical boundaries, age three (3) to twenty-one (21) years, who may have a disability and be in need of Special Education or 504 services. This includes children who are not in school; those who are in public, private, or home school; those who are highly mobile such as children who are migrant or homeless; and those who are advancing from grade to grade, who may need but are not receiving Special Education or 504 services.

The district's "*Child Find*" system **includes children with disabilities attending private or home schools within the school district boundaries that may need special education services.**

The Hart County School District will make sure any child enrolled in its district who qualifies for Special Education or 504 services, regardless of how severe the disability, is provided appropriate Special Education or 504 services at no cost to the parents of the child.

Parents, relatives, public and private agency employees, and concerned citizens are urged to help the Hart County School District find any child who may have a disability and need Special Education or 504 services. The District needs to know the name and age, or date of birth of the child; the name, address, and phone number(s) of the parents or guardian; the possible disability; and other information to determine if Special Education or 504 services are needed.

Letters and phone calls are some of the ways the Hart County School District collects the information needed. The information the school District collects will be used to contact the parents of the child and find out if the child needs to be evaluated or referred for Special Education or 504 services.

If you know of a child who lives within the boundaries of the Hart County School District, who may have a disability, and may need but is not receiving Special Education or 504 services, please call 270-524-4588 or send the information to: donna.lefevre@hart.kyschools.us

ELIGIBILITY

All preschool children served are residents of the district unless there is a reciprocal agreement with a neighboring district.

If your child is three (3) with a disability, school districts are required to provide instruction to children, aged three (3) to twenty-one (21) with disabilities based on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Kentucky special education regulations (707 KAR 1:002-1:380)

If your child is 3: must have a developmental delay to qualify for preschool

If your child is 4: must have a developmental delay or income eligible to qualify

ENROLLMENT CHECKLIST

Prior to attendance each child shall have on file:

- Application for enrollment
- Copy of a legal birth certificate
- A Kentucky Certificate of Immunization
- A medical examination meeting requirements conducted within six (6) months prior to entry into the school program
- Eye Examination by January of entry year into Preschool

SCREENING AND INTERVENTIONS

Preschool children will be included in a speech, hearing and developmental screening. The speech pathologist will conduct the speech screening. The preschool staff will complete the hearing and vision screening. Also, the preschool staff will administer the screening instrument which is a survey of each individual child, identifying strengths and areas of developmental needs of all the

children. Parents must also complete a questionnaire associated with their child's self-help and social skills.

If no concerns are noted on the county-wide screening, these children will not proceed any further in the screening process. If concerns are noted, the children will have the opportunity to receive interventions. These interventions will be tailored to each child's needs.

If the child makes progress during the interventions, they will not proceed any further in the screening process and will not be eligible to attend preschool. If after the interventions, the child continues to have areas of concern; the child may then be referred for evaluation.

After the evaluation is completed, the ARC will then meet to determine if the child has a disability. Children who have disabilities may then be eligible to attend preschool.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

The preschool program includes developmentally appropriate experiences in cognitive, communication, social, physical, emotional development and creative expression.

The preschool program assists children with their intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and in maximizing self-management and independence. The related service staff works collaboratively with the classroom teachers in providing special education services as much as possible within the classroom environment.

The program includes appropriate learning activities and teaching techniques in accordance with each child's level of comprehension and maturation. Children with disabilities are guaranteed a full continuum of services based on their needs. Children with disabilities are placed with non-disabled peers as much as possible. The program provides a supportive social and emotional climate. The program gives children many opportunities for success through developmentally appropriate program activities.

ROUTINES- Routines provide a daily balance of activities:

- Indoors
- Outdoors
- Quiet and active times
- Individual and group times
- Include opportunities for large and small groups
- Child and staff initiated
- Structured and spontaneous
- The program promotes physical growth by providing developmentally appropriate materials and equipment, in sufficient quantity to allow choice.
- Provides supervised time for children to use large and small muscles to increase their physical skills
- Provides appropriate guidance while children use equipment and materials that promote children's physical growth

HEALTH/MEDICATION POLICIES

Each school has a staff person on the premises who is trained in emergency first aid and CPR. If, however, emergency medical attention is necessary and the teacher is unable to reach you or one of your family members, the child will be taken to the doctor listed on the emergency card. You will be responsible for any charges incurred.

The teaching staff discourages parents sending medication to school. State law prohibits dispensing any medication to a child with the exception of a prescription medicine. The medicine bottle must contain the child's name and complete directions for administering the medication. If your child must take medication at school, a parent/guardian must give the medication to the school nurse or designated staff member and sign a release form before medication is given.

Any child showing signs of communicable illnesses such as severe colds, chicken pox, flu, or elevated temperature should not be sent to school. Sick children who are having a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or are feeling miserable do not enjoy being at school. We will send sick children home so please make sure we can contact you to take your sick child home.

Staff should be notified of any illnesses or health conditions of the child. This includes food allergies.

Head lice policies are the same as for an elementary or high school student. See attached revised policy (effective 03/07/2022) at the back of this handbook.

Children must be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours prior to returning to school after being ill.

RESTROOM

We will supervise children in the restroom, teaching them good health habits, and assisting them with toileting if they ask or if we notice they need help.

DISCIPLINE

One of the goals in the preschool program is to teach the child self-discipline. The preschool program will be implementing Conscious Discipline. Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive social and emotional intelligence management program that integrates social-emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation. Conscious Discipline will build strong relationships between teachers, parents, and students by developing the following seven skills: (1) composure, (2) encouragement, (3) assertiveness, (4) choices, (5) empathy, (6) positive intent and, (7) consequences. Additional information will be shared throughout the year on strategies that support self-discipline. The children will be made aware of the expectations of the classroom through consistent use of clearly defined limits. Behavior issues that are unable to be resolved within the classroom will require additional communication with the parent to discuss a plan to meet the needs of the child.

SPEECH SERVICES

Speech therapy and other related services will be available for those children who are eligible for such services. If you are concerned about a particular development area, discuss this concern with the preschool teacher.

MEALS

Children will be served breakfast and lunch. The school breakfast and lunch menu is printed each week on Hart County's website. Please refer to these resources for information about the food your child will be served. Please advise the preschool teacher if your child needs a special diet of any kind or is allergic to any foods.

For the 2022-2023 school years, **ALL** Hart County Schools will participate in the Community Eligibility Program. This program will allow all students in preschool through twelfth grade to receive a breakfast and lunch meal every day at no cost to the student. All students will be strongly encouraged to participate in the program and take breakfast and lunch each day. There is no charge for the meal; however, students may purchase "extras" and other ala carte items at regular prices. Student lunch accounts remain active and will be maintained as in previous years.

Parents will not have to complete a Free/Reduced Lunch Form; however, students will receive a Household Income Form on the first day of school. Parents are to complete this form (only one form per household) and return it to your child's school.

BIRTHDAYS

Since birthdays are very important in the life of a child, we will recognize each child's birthday throughout the year. Parents may provide simple cookies, cupcakes, or nutritious snacks for birthday celebrations. According to health department code, all food items served to preschool children from home should be purchased in a store or bakery and brought to the school in the original packages. Please clear all of this with your child's teacher in advance of the birthday. Notes will be sent home concerning holiday party supplies.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

When dressing your child for school, keep in mind that **ACTIVE PLAY** is the basis of our program. Children can feel inhibited about activities if they are afraid their clothing will get soiled. Play clothes and gym shoes work best. Some activities will include water/sand play, playdough, painting, cooking activities and outside experiences. Please dress your child appropriately for outside play. See the weather chart posted in your child's classroom to determine if students will go outside. They will need coats, mittens and hats in cold weather. On the first day of school send a complete outfit, which will remain at school in case of accidents. Label these items with your child's name and/or initials.

COMMUNICATIONS

Please feel free to contact the preschool staff to talk about your child. You may do this by leaving a message in the office. The preschool teacher will return your call at a convenient time. If you come to pick your child up early, please let the office call the room. This will eliminate teacher/student classroom disruption. Monthly newsletters will be distributed to all parents. We are trying to focus on parent involvement. We will begin by having open house in each preschool. It is our hope that all communication and experiences during preschool are positive. If you have a complaint, talk with your child's teacher first about your concern. If you feel the situation has not been resolved, please contact Donna LeFevre, Director of Special Education and Preschool Services, at 270-524-4588.

RATIO AND STAFFING

The maximum group size is twenty (20) children. Consideration is given to increasing the number of staff or decreasing the group size depending upon the needs of the children, including the needs of children with disabilities. An adult is never left alone with more than ten (10) preschool children.

DISCUSSING SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD

Children often have misconceptions about any new undertaking and it is helpful to refer to school in a cheerful way and remind them of toys and activities they will do that they will enjoy. Ask questions about what they think they will do at school. Sometimes the answers show that they are confused about something that is worrying them. For example, one child was worried about doing homework. (There is no homework.) She wasn't sure what homework was exactly and she didn't know how to do it.

If your child talks about missing you while at school, reassure them that you will miss them too. Also, remind them of something you will do together after school. Children sometimes get worried about how they will get home. Make it clear to them who picks them up and when they will come home. After school begins, asking about specific times of the day, work time, group time, etc., will probably get you more information than asking: "What did you do today?"

If your child becomes upset over an incident at school, we will tell you and we hope you will let us know if they are upset at home over an incident from school. Children do not always tell their teacher when something is bothering them and things that seem unimportant to adults can be upsetting to children. Please bring to our attention any problems your child has within the preschool program.

HOME ACTIVITIES

The teaching staff will be sending home notes explaining what our school plans are so that the parents can discuss them with the children and add activities of their own to enrich the school program. Occasionally, when we come across information that we would like to pass along to parents, we will copy and send it home with your child. Parent programs will be part of your child's school experience. They will be held at differing times during the year.

ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

Each day brings opportunities to play, work, investigate, and to express ideas through the following:

- FAMILY LIVING - Planning, working, and playing in an organized manner so that desirable health habits, attitudes, reasoning, independence and a sense of responsibility are all established.
- CREATIVE ACTIVITIES-Self-expression through the use of paints, crayons, chalk and playdough.
- LANGUAGE EXPERIENCES -Enjoying stories, finger plays, conversations and responsibility are all established.
- MUSIC EXPERIENCES - Singing and listening to music, records and tapes.
- HEALTH AND SAFETY-Learning good health habits, acquiring an intelligent understanding of safety rules.
- INTELLECTUAL SKILLS -Providing opportunities to investigate and to communicate; providing books, music, science, sand and water play, math and art experiences; providing opportunities to count, measure, compare, and to broaden language experiences.

- **PHYSICAL SKILLS** – Providing opportunities to hop, climb, crawl, and jump which are essential to rounding out young bodies and to the development of muscles and muscular control.
- **SOCIAL SKILLS** – Living and working together includes sharing, respect for feelings and the possessions of others.
- **EMOTIONAL SKILLS** – Through wise guidance, work out problems that arise. Children discover self-control, self-respect and respect for others. They learn to give and share.
- **COMPUTER EXPERIENCES** – Playing fun and educational computer games.
- **LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT** – being able to express wants and needs, naming specific items, asking/answering who, what, where, when, why questions

PTO/PTA/PTSA

Each elementary school has an active Parent-Teacher Organization, Parent-Teacher Association or a Parent-Teacher-Student Association. You are urged to join and become an active member in any of these organizations. Meetings are held throughout the year. Information regarding meeting times, activities and other information about membership is available from the school or from the PTO/PTA/PTSA officers.

PARENT PARTICIPATION / INVOLVEMENT

The preschool staff will be communicating regularly with the parents through newsletters, phone calls, and home visits. Parents are very important to the overall success of the preschool experience for their children. There are many things parents can do to help both at home and at school. Some things parents can do include:

- bring the child regularly to school except when the child is ill
- teach the child self-reliance; to put on, take off, hang up clothes; put away toys, and have regular meal and bed times
- know the child's teacher and work with them concerning any problems
- talk with the child's teacher but refrain from discussing the child in their presence
- take an interest in the work the child brings home
- participate actively in the parent's program and visit the classroom
- help the child to learn his/her full name, age, address and phone number
- always say good-bye to the child and pick them up promptly
- listen to the child's daily experiences and talk about them
- do things with the child, work and play together as a family group

PARENT VOLUNTEER POLICY

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom. We recognize the importance of parent involvement in the preschool experience. Volunteer services include working directly with the children or preparing teaching materials. It is understood that many parents work or cannot volunteer on a regular basis. No matter how great or small, your involvement is greatly appreciated. To become a parent volunteer, parents should comply with the following requirements:

- Criminal Record Check must be completed by the central office
- work under the direction of the classroom teacher
- be scheduled prior to coming to the classroom
- Parents should contact the Family Resource Center at their school if interested.

Parents will be asked not to volunteer if:

- you are found to be in violation of Kentucky State Law
- use obscene language in the presence of the children
- are found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- are disorderly or cause disruption in classroom activities

SAFETY POLICIES

The preschool program operates in compliance with administrative regulations in areas including facilities, safety, and health.

The preschool program utilizes the local school district's current safety policies regarding:

- accident records
- medical emergency plans
- fire and disaster plans
- first aid
- dispensing of medications
- reporting of child abuse and neglect, with modification as needed to accommodate young children

PUBLICATIONS FOR HART COUNTY'S PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

The Hart County Preschool Education Program will be publishing articles and pictures involving many of our preschool students, including, but not limited to, video, online assessment, Teaching Strategies Gold, Hart County Schools TV channel, Hart County Website, and teacher web pages. If for any reason you do not want your child's picture and name printed, it will be your responsibility to inform your child's teacher within the first week of school.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS STATEMENT

The Hart County Board of Education has a policy, which states that:

1. The Hart County School District will comply with the provision of KAR 704-1:050 through 1:060; Individuals with Disability Education Act (2004); Section 04 of the Rehabilitation Act (Sub Part D) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act for making available any and all information concerning Hart County Exceptional Children.
2. The Hart County School District will comply with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act in making available any and all information concerning any Hart County School Student.
3. Student records will be transferred to another school or school district upon the request of that school's appropriate personnel without parent's/guardian's signature unless the parents/guardians of the affected child objects in writing.

CHILD CARE WEATHER WATCH

Watching the weather is a part of the Hart County Preschool teacher's job. Planning for playtime, field trips, or weather safety is part of the daily routine. The changes in the weather require the preschool teachers to monitor the health and safety of our children. See attached Child Care Weather Watch sheets for more information and guidance.

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