

Chillicothe STEM Preschool



Student Handbook 2022-2023

Mt. Logan Learning Center
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Dear Chillicothe STEM Preschool Families,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to the 2022-2023 school year, and to the Chillicothe STEM Preschool! Attending preschool is an exciting milestone in your child's life, beginning a journey that will lead him/her on many roads of discovery and learning. At Chillicothe STEM Preschool, we believe it is our job to nurture the learner in every child by providing a caring and compassionate staff committed to the highest quality education for all of our students, giving children extraordinary opportunities to observe and understand the world all around.

At the center of that commitment are the following core values:

- **Caring and Compassionate Educational Setting**
 - A teacher to student ratio of 1:8.
 - A supportive staff including: social worker, occupational therapist, speech/language pathologist, physical therapist, intervention specialists, and parent advocate.
- **Experiential Learning Opportunities**
 - Expeditions to local activities and events, and engaging times of new experiences within the school setting.
- **Innovative STEM & Literacy Focused Curriculum**
 - Creative lessons that involve student-driven ideas, facilitated through hands-on learning that fosters imagination in the classroom and in life.
- **Parent/Guardian and Family Involvement**
 - Encouraging family participation in the school setting is essential to student success.
**Opportunities for family involvement may vary due to COVID-19 restrictions.*

Our students will receive an enriched STEM academic experience, with a focus on problem-solving skills that will foster confidence and outside-of-the-box thinking. It is this creative new way of thinking that will allow your child to thrive in his/her academic experience as they progress through the Chillicothe STEM Preschool, and beyond!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Sarah Hawthorne
Chillicothe City Schools Preschool, Principal

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OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Chillicothe STEM Preschool, our philosophy is to instill a love for lifelong learning and to educate all students to their fullest potential, utilizing an innovative staff to provide rich STEM experiences in a well-equipped and positive environment. Our preschool program is designed to facilitate children's development in communication, social skills, cognition, motor skills and the development of a positive self-concept. Our preschool classrooms provide an active, safe, and nurturing environment in which children interact with peers, adults, and materials to achieve individual goals and objectives while utilizing developmental and age appropriate practices to meet the needs of each child.

We believe that children construct their own understanding of the world through active involvement with materials, people, and concepts. Our Chillicothe STEM Preschool staff support your child's understanding of the world by creating opportunities for them to undertake activities and to facilitate each child's reflection of his/her activities. The staff encourages your child's exploration by providing appropriate materials, planned spaces, and a consistent daily routine based on developmentally appropriate practices.

In our preschool classrooms, STEM and Literacy focused learning is based on curiosity, inquiry and play. Students will experiment, build, and interact with the natural world all around them. Our teaching staff focus on teaching problem-solving skills that will foster confidence and outside-of-the-box thinking in our students. Because we recognize that the first 5 years of life are a critical stage in a child's brain development, we are committed to building each child's capability to think creatively; preschoolers have a natural curiosity that is unmatched in any other age group.

We believe that families are the child's first and most important learning facilitator. Family support is provided through family meetings, education, classroom newsletters, and more! Due to COVID-19 restrictions, these opportunities may look different, but rest assured that families will most definitely still have a chance to participate in the life of the Chillicothe STEM Preschool.

All classrooms are licensed by the Ohio Department of Education. The reports compiled by the licensing consultant are available at all times in each classroom. These reports will be made available for parental review upon request to the classroom teacher. In addition, we strive to maintain open communication with staff and parents. If a concern arises, please discuss it with your child's teacher. If additional assistance is needed, please contact the school office.

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT & DETAILS

Program enrollment for the upcoming school year begins March 1st annually. Families who are interested in program enrollment must follow the steps as listed below.

1. Sign up through the online platform for an enrollment meeting (published online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508084da8a728a2fd0-chillicothe> and also through the Chillicothe STEM Preschool Facebook page. Families may also call 740-773-2638 to sign up for an enrollment meeting)
2. Meetings will be approximately 1-hour in length, and will include: a tour of the building, completion of Final Forms, STEM/Literacy activity, and program photo
3. Families are asked to bring the following items with them to the enrollment meeting:
 - a. Custody documentation, if applicable
 - b. Proof of income
 - c. Birth Certificate
 - d. Social Security Card
 - e. Immunization Record
 - f. Proof of Residency

Please keep in mind:

- a. Enrollment is first come, first serve, and space is limited
 - i. Priority enrollment will be given to those families who have submitted all above required documentation.
- b. Once spaces have been filled, a waiting list will be started.
 - g. Students on the waiting list will be contacted throughout the school year if spaces may become available.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Students are eligible to enroll into the Early Education Classrooms if s/he is four years old as of October 1st of the school year in which they will attend preschool, unless a student's Individual Education Plan states otherwise.

FEE SCALE & TUITION PAYMENTS

| 2022 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Persons in family/household | Poverty guideline |
| 1 | \$13,590 |
| 2 | \$18,310 |
| 3 | \$23,030 |
| 4 | \$27,750 |
| 5 | \$32,470 |
| 6 | \$37,190 |
| 7 | \$41,910 |
| 8 | \$46,630 |
| For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,720 for each additional person. | |

Chillicothe STEM Preschool uses the Federal Poverty Guidelines to determine fees for families. Families who meet 100% of the federal poverty guidelines will not be charged for preschool enrollment or services; children who are serviced through Individualized Education Plans are also not charged for enrollment or services.

You will receive a billing statement each month via mail with the amount of tuition due for your child, based on the sliding fee scale. This amount will be due upon receipt of your bill, and failure to pay promptly may result in a disruption of services. At any time if your income changes, we can adjust your fees. Proof of income will be requested at the time of registration and at time of needed readjustment, if applicable.

CHILD CUSTODY

If custodial arrangements have been made through court action, a copy of that order must be on file in our program office. This court-issued document directs the school, not necessarily the wishes of one parent or the other. Parents have an obligation to inform the school anytime the custody of a child changes, and provide documentation of the new court order for the office file.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance in the program is very important for children to become comfortable with a regular and consistent schedule. Students must attend school regularly if they are to derive maximum benefits from the educational process. Continuity in the learning process is seriously disrupted through a student's excessive absences. The lack of good attendance can cause students to achieve below his/her potential. In accordance with the Missing Child Act, families are required to notify school if your child is not going to be in attendance that day.

Please call the school at 740-773-2638 by 9 a.m. daily to inform our staff of the absence.

MEALS

The Chillicothe City Schools Food Services Department will provide a healthy breakfast, lunch and snack to every preschool child free of charge. A monthly calendar from our Food Services Department will be sent home regularly, outlining daily lunch menus. Students are also welcome to bring a packed lunch, if s/he wishes.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The Chillicothe STEM Preschool recognizes families as the most valuable resource in each child's education. As such, families are encouraged to be active in the educational process. Families are invited to be involved in classroom activities, to conference with staff during quarterly scheduled parent/teacher conferences, and as needed.

During Non-COVID impacted school years, family members may choose to volunteer in a child's classroom, as need dictates and as advised by the classroom teacher. Classroom volunteers will be required to sign in/sign out at the main office, and will need to complete a volunteer application form before assisting in the classroom.

EXPEDITIONS

Expeditions (field trips) for the Chillicothe STEM Preschool will include a variety of scheduled, curriculum-connected trips to local events and settings to encourage deeper learning with students. The Preschool will adhere to the Ohio Administrative Code by providing families' trip destination details, including location, date, departure times, return times, and mode of transportation details. Pre-authorization in writing from a parent/ guardian is required. If the expedition requires participation in or near water two feet or more in depth, parents/guardians must complete a disclaimer, stating if their child is a swimmer/not a swimmer.

CLOTHING & PERSONAL BELONGINGS

An extra change of warm weather and cooler weather clothing should be sent to the Preschool, marked with your child's name. If clothes come home soiled, please return fresh clothing as soon as possible. Each child has a personal cubby for his/her belongings. All personal items should be labeled with your child's name, including coat and lunchbox. Children should come to school dressed for active play. Comfortable shoes and appropriate fitting clothes are best. We use washable markers and paints, but understand that your child may get paint, dirt, etc. on his/her clothing especially as we explore the world around us.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child before the end of the school year, please notify the school office and the classroom teacher at least five days in advance, if possible. This gives the school an opportunity to prepare documents necessary for transfer and allows school loaned materials to be collected, if applicable, and also gives your student time to prepare for the transition out of the classroom.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Transportation is available for Chillicothe STEM Preschool students. Transportation should begin once a transportation request is completed. Please contact the Transportation Department at (740) 775-4250, ext. 16159 to schedule. It is the parent's responsibility to be at the bus stop at pick up/drop off times. If no one is present at the bus stop to receive your child, s/he will be brought back to Mt. Logan Learning Center; family will report to Mt. Logan to pick up the child on that given day. For more information on transportation, please visit <https://www.chillicothe-cityschools.org/Content2/Transportation>.

BUS STOP RULES

- A) Students should arrive at the bus stop no more than five (5) minutes before the bus arrives.
- B) Students should wait in a safe location for the bus to arrive (as directed by the parent/guardian).
- C) When the bus arrives, students should form a line to board. Students should never run alongside the bus while in motion, or push/shove others while boarding. Students will be required to wear a mask while riding the Chillicothe City School bus to/from school. If your child does not have a mask, one will be provided to him/her.

MEDICAL PROCEDURES

ACCIDENTS, ILLNESS, & COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

If a child has an injury or becomes ill at school, a parent/guardian will be notified to pick up the child. If a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the alternate person(s) in Final Forms will be notified. Any child who has a fever of 100 degrees or greater, or conditions such as vomiting, diarrhea, or signs and symptoms of a possible communicable disease will be sent home. Please keep students with a possible or known communicable disease home until they are symptom-free or have been treated for at least 24 hours; a preschool student sent home with a fever of more than 100 degrees must be fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of medication in

order to return to school. If your child has had known contact with someone confirmed or probable to have COVID-19, prior to returning to the Preschool s/he must complete isolation or quarantine procedures per the Ohio Department of Health Guidelines.

CLINIC/SPECIFIC HEALTH CONCERNS

Families are responsible for informing the school of any specific health problems their child may have, especially life-threatening conditions, such as asthma, bee allergy, or food allergies.. Parents/Guardians are required by Ohio Law to complete and sign an emergency medical form for their child in Final Forms.

All preschool students must have an up-to-date medical form signed by his/her doctor upon enrollment in the program. This medical form must be updated each year. This form is required by the Ohio Department of Education.

Children must be 72-hours free of vomiting, diarrhea, and/or fever without medication to attend School and have 72-hours of antibiotics, when necessary. Students that display symptoms of illness such as fever, vomiting, diarrhea, rash, wheezing, etc., may be sent home at the discretion of the school administration.

MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

Medications may not be taken at school unless certain procedures are followed.

If your child needs medication at school we will use the following procedures.

In accordance with Ohio state law and the Chillicothe City School District's policy for the administration of medication to students in school, the following procedure has been created and MUST be followed before ANY medication may be administered to any student who falls under the Handicapped Children Act of 1975, 20 U.S.C. 1401, under the chronic health impaired conditions, or where the physician deems it necessary for the student to receive medication during the school day. A signed medication form must be completed and include the following information:

- Student's name and address
- The school and class the student is enrolled
- The name of the drug and dosage
- The time and intervals at which each dosage of the drug is to administered
- The date on which the administration of the drug is to begin
- The date on which the administration of the drug is to cease
- Any severe adverse reactions which should be reported to the physician and one or more phone numbers at which the person who prescribed the medication can be reached in case of an emergency
- Specific instructions for administration of the drug, including sterile conditions and storage.
- All medication must be in its original container. Pharmacists can make a duplicate bottle for school.

New request forms must be submitted each year and whenever there is any change in the medication order (i.e. an increase or decrease in dosage). **The medications and the signed forms must be brought to school by a parent/guardian. Students are not permitted to carry medication with them.** Forms can be faxed from home or the physician's office to school.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for picking up unused medication at the end of the school year. Medication will not be sent home with the student. A trained staff member will administer all medication at the preschool.

IMMUNIZATIONS

In compliance with the Ohio Compulsory Immunization Law, no pupil shall be admitted to school unless he/she presents written evidence that they have received the required immunizations by such means as approved by the Department of Health. Ohio Immunization Law (ORC 3313.67) requires that all students produce an acceptable record of immunization or written evidence of medical exemption to immunization for enrollment. A student, who presents a written statement in which the parent or guardian objects to the immunization for good cause, including religious convictions, is not required to be immunized. Any immunization required by this section can be waived if a physician certifies in writing that such immunization is not medically advisable.

PROGRAM ACADEMICS & ASSESSMENT

The Chillicothe STEM Preschool curriculum is based on the [Ohio Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards](#) and is delivered through an innovative STEM & Literacy-focused curriculum that is developmentally appropriate for the preschool-aged child.

STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. In our preschool program, STEM learning is based on curiosity, inquiry, and play.

- Our goal is to provide children with opportunities in:
 - o Fine motor
 - o Gross motor
 - o Critical and creative thinking
 - o Language development
 - o Social and emotional skills
 - o Increased self-esteem

Classroom activities include the use of a variety of age and developmentally appropriate equipment and materials. Individual, small, and whole group instruction is utilized to develop and promote age appropriate skills, and to allow for individual growth goals in terms of academic differentiation as well.

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, PROGRAM

Early Learning Assessment (ELA)

All students will be administered the ELA assessment in the fall and spring. The Ohio Department of Education developed this test with the purpose of identifying literacy skills in order to inform instruction. It also provides a measurement of growth in reading readiness skills. Results are shared with parents/guardians on the progress reports and during conference times.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Each quarter, parents/guardians will receive a progress report based on the Pre-Kindergarten Standards for the State of Ohio. These reports are a continuum of the child's growth in Preschool. Every child progresses at different rates and these are just one reflection of a child's growth. Parents/Guardians also receive a letter explaining the grading system and age appropriate skills.

PROGRAM EXPECTATION & RULES

DAILY SCHEDULE

Mt. Logan Learning Center rear parking lot doors will open at 8:30 a.m. Early drop offs are not permitted. Students may be picked up at 3:00 p.m. at the rear parking lot doors.

If a child needs to be picked up early, please send a note or call (740) 773-2638 and leave a message for your child's teacher. The note or message should reflect what time your child will arrive/depart and who will be responsible for drop-off/pick-up. We must follow the information provided to us on Final Forms. We must check identification for special pick up needs.

Buses will use the front entrance for pick up and drop off. Staff will escort students to and from buses.

Chillicothe PreK Daily Schedule

| Session Title | Arrival Time | Dismissal Time |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| All Day | 8:30 a.m. | 2:55 p.m. |
| Half Day* | 8:30 a.m. | 12:30 p.m. |

*Half day only option is available as space allows.

SIGN IN/OUT PROCEDURES

The parent/guardian, or other responsible adult, must sign the child in and out each day. Under no circumstances can a child be dropped off in the parking lot to find his/her own way to the classroom. The parent/guardian must bring his/her child in and make contact with the teacher.

All individuals authorized to pick up a child must be at least 16 years old, and listed on the child's Final Forms.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

All preschool families are automatically signed up to receive all-calls and automated text messages from the Chillicothe STEM Preschool program. Announcements, reminders, and other important information will be shared using the program's all-call notification system. If you are not receiving the all-call messages from the program, please contact the main office at (740) 773-2638 to be added.

In addition to the all-call notifications, we encourage families to follow the program's social media page on Facebook at "Chillicothe STEM Preschool". Each teacher also maintains a Class Dojo for parent/family communication and updates.

Chillicothe City Schools operates and maintains a website as a valuable information resource for students, parents/guardians, and community members. Please visit our website at www.CCSD.us. From there, you can access an individual building and programs, including our Chillicothe STEM Preschool webpage at <https://www.chillicothe.k12.oh.us/4/Content2/mtlhomepage>.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

The Chillicothe City School District has adopted the Education Connection phone notification system to inform all district parents of closings, cancellations, and any other emergency alert information concerning our district buildings or property. Local radio WKKJ and TV stations will also carry this message along with our website www.ccsd.us or the Chillicothe City Schools Facebook page. Parents/Guardians should have a plan worked out for the supervision of their child in these situations.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

We believe that the goal of behavior management in the preschool setting should be to help children develop self-control and appropriate social skills, such as cooperating, helping, negotiating and communicating with others to solve problems. Children will be provided with corrective feedback or redirection. Each classroom teacher utilizes "Class Dojo," which is a positive behavior reinforcement management and communication tool. Through this tool and consistent classroom expectations, teachers address social development throughout the year and are responsible for discipline in his/her respective classroom, but all staff support all children in the program as a whole.

Learning self-control and behavior management is important as we guide our students along the path of school success. As a program, we use positive responses that strengthen the self-esteem of children, and help them to grow emotionally and developmentally.

The Chillicothe STEM Preschool program allows for individual student planning in regards to behavior management strategies and consequences. Ultimately, it is our goal that students remain in the classroom, encouraging readiness for kindergarten and life beyond, and that all students and staff are safe. It is at the discretion of the Principal that any further decisions are made regarding consequences for behavioral concerns.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

SERVICES

Parents/Guardians may request an evaluation for special education services if a disability is suspected for their student. Requests for evaluation should be directed to our program main office at 740-773-2638. Services can occur through itinerant or in-program delivery, dependent upon space and availability.

Itinerant services can be scheduled for 3 year old students who qualify for special education services, but are not enrolled in the preschool program. Services can be scheduled as student needs dictate, and based on parent/guardian and staff availability. Minutes and services will be met as outlined in the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

In-program services occur during the scheduled school day with the staff responsible for the specified services. Students may receive services in the classroom setting, in small groups, in pull-out sessions, or a combination of these locations, depending upon the needs and services as listed in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

RELATED SERVICES

Related services are frequently provided as part of the student's center-based preschool program. Related services may include: Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy, and Physical Therapy. Related services are primarily provided in the classroom setting with typically developing peers, whenever possible. This approach assists the student in generalizing acquired skills to other settings. Contact information for each specific staff member will be given to the parents of Special Education Students.

RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS (DUE PROCESS)

Due process is Your Right. If you have a complaint involving the programs, services, policies, or administrative practices of the Chillicothe STEM Preschool, you can be heard. Contact: Debbie Swinehart, Superintendent - Chillicothe City Schools 740-775-4250, or by email at deborah.swinehart@ccsd.us. All complaints or reports of any suspected violations concerning the operation of the programs such as ours which are regulated by Chapter 3301-37 of the Administrative Code may be reported to the Ohio Department of Education's Division of Early Learning and School Readiness by calling 614-466-0224.

SCHOOL SAFETY

SAFETY PLAN

The protocols in our Comprehensive School Safety Plan are the result of a procedure designed to comply with Ohio Revised Code 3313.536. This plan contains protocols for emergencies that may develop in our school. Each staff member is familiar with the district's Safety Plan. Administrators, staff, and students are instructed on the various procedures to follow in the case of an actual emergency. Drills will occur periodically throughout the school year, as mandated by the Ohio Department of Education and per the Ohio Revised Code.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING

As required by law, all school employees are legally bound as mandated reporters, and must immediately report any suspicions of abuse or neglect to Ross County Children Services (ORC 2151.421). We are committed to the safety of our students first, and we will work together with local community agencies to ensure the highest level of safety for our students.