

Hardin County Schools Preschool Program



Welcome to Hardin County Schools Preschool Program



The Preschool Team of Hardin County would like to welcome you as we begin the school year. This handbook is designed to help you become familiar with our district policies, procedures and programs. We encourage you to take time to read this handbook. If you have questions, please contact your child's school or teacher. It is our hope that this booklet will help make your transition to preschool as smooth as possible. We are looking forward to an enjoyable and successful year. We encourage you to become an active and involved member of our school family.

Our School Staff

SITE	TEACHER	ASSISTANTS	
Creekside	Chelsey Ritchie	Teresa Magner	
	Katie Reed	Beth Reynolds	Jasmine Rucker
	Sarah Bigler	Vicki York	Chelsea Davenport
Cecilia Valley	Tara Martin	Pamela Price	Janet Logsdon
	Jennifer Vowels	Teresa Archuleta	Kayla Douthitt
	Miki Tennant	Angela Thompson	Lora Sporleder
	Brittany Cates, PRA	Stacy Vincent	
GC Burkhead	Susie Beard	Amanda Ritchie	Samantha Ramsey
	Lauren Helton	Anna Angus	
	Emily Pile	Kristen White	Alexandria Horn
Heartland	Lachel Barnett	Kaitlyn Smiley	Carla Moore
	Anisia Woodring	Jennifer Simpson	Christina Dailey
Lincoln Trail	Nan Hildesheim	Rita Williams	Melissa Taulbee
	Danielle Thomas, STEM	Melissa Johnson	
	Elizabeth Lipps	Stephanie Crady	Courtney Brandenburg
	Julia Martin, PRA	Whitney Jones	
Lakewood	Casey Munson	Shannon Childers	Sandra Miller
	Amy Atcher	Kenzie Allen	Courtney Becker
New Highland	Grace Mills	Tatiana Cofield	Madeline Deusner
	Kasey Johnson	Theresa Duncan	Lisa Cordle
North Park	LaTanya McDaniels	Jessica Exler	Aiyana Sealey
	Emily Williams	Elizabeth Appenzeller	Nicole Jackson-Ozment
	Courtney Baker	Deidre Hall	Hana Lutfi
	Jessica Campbell	Kayla Sowle	
	Sheri Coolidge	Samantha Boggs	Kayla Via
	Mackenzie Hinton	Stephanie Knott	
	Julie Powers	Courtney Underhill	Amanda Trueblood
	Miranda Schwartz	Gayla Turner	Dawn Caskey
	Jessica Spires	Rebecca Sandfer	Caitlin Emberton
	Emily Wilcoxson	Jennifer Pokipala	Pam Amos
	Jasmin Bensing, PRA	Jenny Sparkman	
Rineyville	Jennifer Arnold	Christy Eisenman	Amanda Risinger
	Lori Allen	Tammy Herrin	Beadie James

Our Central Office Early Childhood Staff

If you need assistance from our Central Office staff, please feel free to contact us at the phone numbers or email addresses listed below.

Director

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The guiding philosophy of the Hardin County Schools Preschool Program is that young children learn by being actively involved in their environment through direct experiences. Children of this age learn best through concrete experiences where they are encouraged to explore, manipulate, create, dismantle, and reconstruct things in their environment. The preschool experience will provide opportunities for such child-initiated activities and for structured and unstructured play, which is the means for your children's learning. Our classroom curriculum is built to focus on all developmental areas: Cognitive, Language, Physical, Social, and Self-help. The curriculum is designed around the KY Department of Education's series, ***Building a Strong Foundation for School Success for Early Childhood Programs*** that provides a framework for early childhood curriculum, assessment and family involvement. All preschool classrooms are 5 Star programs as evaluated by Kentucky All-Stars.



By providing a positive classroom learning environment, we can:

- Promote literacy and language development and pre-math skills
- Encourage children to learn as individuals
- Encourage children to explore questions and discover answers
- Allow for observation and documentation of each child's progress and success

The daily classroom schedule is a sequence of events to include:

- Indoor/Outdoor and Spontaneous/Structured choices – staff provide appropriate guidance when children use equipment and materials that promote physical growth
- Supervised time for children to use large and small muscles to increase their physical skills
- Transitions (between activities and events)
- Individual/Group Time
- Group Activities (small and large)
- Quiet/Active time
- Child-Initiated/Staff-Initiated activities
- Flexibility that takes into account the individual needs, mental health, and interests of the children and adults in the classroom.



Family involvement is a critical component of the Preschool program. Since parents are a child's first teacher, a partnership between family and school will be developed to prepare and assist the family in its role as an educator. Parents are strongly encouraged to visit the classroom and participate in their child's learning.

Hardin County Schools' preschool staff encourages family involvement and emphasizes the importance of family participation within the school to include:

- Health Screenings
- Hearing Screenings
- Vision Screenings
- Developmental Screenings
- Social Services as needed
- Parent Education/Training Opportunities/Conferences/Workshops
- Home Visits
- Parent Committees
- Family Newsletters
- Annual parent evaluation of the effectiveness of the preschool program
- Classroom/Special Activities volunteers



PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

A child may qualify for the preschool program by meeting one or more of the following criteria:

1. Four years old on or before August 1 and qualify by income (up to 160% of poverty guidelines) {*eligibility may be determined up to 4 months prior to start of school*}, **OR**
2. Four years old with an identified disability or speech delay (qualifying for Special Education services), **OR**
3. Three years old with an identified disability or speech delay (includes children whose 4th birthday is after August 1 of the current school year).

All preschool children must be residents of Hardin County unless there is a reciprocal agreement with a neighboring district. Once at-risk eligibility has been approved, children shall remain eligible for the entire school year. Other non-eligible children may be served through district funds as space is available.



ASSESSMENT

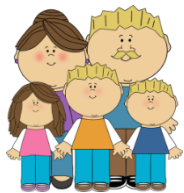


Unless some form of evaluation is received from another agency, each child will be screened using the Dial-4 or Brigance screening instrument. All assessments used are developmentally appropriate. The assessment is accomplished by observation or activity with the child in structured and informal situations. A questionnaire will also be provided for the parent/guardian to complete as part of the child's assessment. The teaching staff will use the information from this instrument, as well as classroom observations and parent input, to develop and implement goals for each child. Your child's success will be documented through classroom observations, developmental checklists and a portfolio of your child's class projects. You will receive a written summary of your child's progress in January and in May and other times as needed to ensure that you are aware of your child's progress. We encourage you, however, to talk with your child's teacher on a regular basis. Remember, **YOU** are your child's first teacher. The creation of a strong home-school partnership will promote success for your child.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES



Research shows that children learn through modeling what they see. Special instruction and/or speech therapy, occupational therapy or physical therapy is most effective when incorporated into a child's daily routine and not taught in isolation. Because of this proven success, this program utilizes a consultation/collaboration approach to special services. This means that the specialists work with the classroom teachers and ensure that each child's goals are reinforced and monitored daily. Children are not pulled from the classroom setting to receive services unless absolutely necessary. To further incorporate modeling, children with disabilities are placed in the same classrooms with non-disabled peers. **Only biological parents can sign for Special Education services unless parent rights have been terminated.**



Home Visits

Your child's teacher will be making two home visits over the course of the school year. The first visit (usually before the child comes to school) is to meet your child, get to know your family, and discuss what you would like to see your child receive through attending preschool. The second visit takes place later in the year and is designed to address transitions, strengths and concerns, and talk about your child's progress. These visits will be scheduled with parents' input and will occur in the afternoons after preschool has been dismissed and on designated Home Visit Days.

Curriculum

The preschool program includes developmentally-appropriate experiences in cognitive, communication, social, physical, emotional development, and creative expression. The program assists children with self-awareness as well as social skills such as active listening, collaboration with peers, problem-solving and conflict resolution by providing appropriate learning activities in a supportive social and emotional climate in accordance with each child's level of comprehension and maturation. The program utilizes individual, small group, and large group activities. Accommodations are made for children with special needs.



Learning Centers located throughout the classroom imbed learning through both individual play and peer interaction. During center time, children may choose from a variety of play centers:

- Art
- Block building
- Housekeeping
- Dramatic Play
- Library/Reading
- Math
- Music
- Sensory Table
- Science
- Table Toys, Puzzles & Manipulatives
- Writing



All Hardin County Schools' preschool teachers hold an Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) certificate which means that all lead teachers have specialized education and training to design, plan, implement and facilitate experiences and instruction, create and maintain learning environments, and assess the development and learning of infant, toddlers and preschool children.



Annual Evaluation

To ensure that our program retains the required rigor and quality standards, multiple evaluations are conducted annually. Parents, staff and other professionals are involved in assessing the effectiveness of the program in meeting the needs of participating children.

District staff members visit each classroom to ensure that program standards are being met and implemented throughout the preschool day. Additionally, families are surveyed at the end of each school year to assess the value and effectiveness of the program for their children.



ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTATION

SECURE NECESSARY FORMS - The following forms are needed in your child's records by your child's first day of school unless otherwise noted:

1. **Kentucky immunization certificate** (Military families have 30 days to comply.) This must include the varicella (chicken pox) vaccination or documentation that the child has had chicken pox. Children **MUST** have the four-year-old booster shots within two weeks following the child's fourth birthday.
2. **Preventative health care exam** (physical) dated less than 1 year from start date of school
3. **Copy of Certified birth certificate** (received from the State Department of Vital Statistics) or other **reliable proof of the student's identity and age along with a notarized affidavit** stating the reason for the inability to produce a certified copy of the birth certificate. The preschool staff can assist you if you need help applying for a copy of your child's certified birth certificate.
4. **Vision examination** completed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist - due by January 1 of the current school year.
5. **Approved Federal Lunch** application (if at-risk four-year old) or **Individual Education Plan** (if disabled three or four-year old).

Items you need to provide:

- **Book bag** - He or she will need to bring a book bag to school every day, beginning on the first day of school. We suggest that you choose a book bag that is large enough to hold a standard-sized folder that is not folded in half.
- **Clean, dry clothes** - Please send a full change of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) in a plastic grocery or zip-lock bag, labeled with your child's name.
- **No school supplies** - Our program provides everything your child will need in the way of school supplies. Please do not send crayons, scissors, paper, markers, etc. to school. We do encourage you to purchase them to use at home.
- **Facial Tissues, Wet wipes, Paper Towels** - We go through many of these items throughout the year. **Donations would be welcome.**
- **Label Belongings** - Coat, sweaters, jackets, boots, and backpacks, etc. should be marked with your child's name. This will help your child learn to recognize his/her name and build responsibility.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR WITHDRAWAL

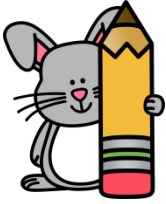
For the safety of our students, it is important that we have an accurate address and **SEVERAL** emergency phone numbers. If at any time during the school year you have a change of address or phone number, please contact the school immediately. Should it become necessary for you to move from our area, causing your child to not continue in our program, please contact us immediately so we can withdraw your child and prepare his/her records for transfer to another program.



SCHOOL HOURS

Preschool is in session Monday through Friday from 7:15 – 1:00 pm except for Lakewood Elementary, which is in session from 8:00 – 2:00 pm. The last 90 minutes of each day is considered the teacher's planning period and is used for conducting home visits, conferences, educational screenings, social service activities and parent workshops.

ATTENDANCE



Student attendance at school is an essential ingredient for student success. Because this program is individualized to meet the needs of each child, ***it is important that your child is in attendance and on time daily***. Children will have difficulty learning if they frequently miss school. Truancy patterns begin in preschool! A goal of this program is to establish routine and consistency in your child's school life. This will ***create security and confidence*** as your child transitions into primary school.

We value good attendance at preschool. Good attendance habits set early in life transfer to school and work as we grow. However, there may be times when your child is too ill to come to school. You, as the parent, need to make that decision—please do not leave it up to the child. When a child comes to school ill, he or she usually spreads the condition to other students and staff members. If your child is sick and must be absent, please call the school or send a note to school upon your child's return notifying us of his/her illness. Students' attendance is recorded in Infinite Campus. The parent/legal guardian will be contacted if the child's attendance is irregular or if a child is absent for 3 consecutive days.

Here are some situations in which your child should not be in school:

- Fever over 99* during the night **or** in the morning before school.
- Vomiting during the night **or** in the morning before school.
- Diarrhea during the night **or** in the morning before school.
- A rash that is spreading on his/her skin.
- Coughing which brings up mucus, causes vomiting or choking.
- Thick green mucus from the nose.
- Sticky mucous and reddened eyes.



TRANSPORTATION



Parents/guardians will complete a **Transportation Authorization** form listing transportation arrangements as well as approved pick-up contacts.

Car Riders - 1:00 PM Pickup - It is extremely important that your child is picked up each day by 1:00 PM (2:00 pm for Lakewood) if you are providing transportation. This is an area we will watch closely and we will expect consistent pickup times. If you are not able to pick up your child on time each day, we will need to discuss ways to eliminate barriers so this is manageable or discuss withdrawing from the program.

When dropping off your child, please inform the school staff that your child is a preschooler so a hand-to-hand contact transfer will be made to a preschool staff member. **Do not drop your child off in the parking lot, in the school office, leave him/her unattended in an empty classroom, or send him/her in with an older sibling.** Older siblings frequently do not bring the little guys to the proper location! **There must be a hand to hand transfer of your child from the parent to a preschool staff member.**

Bus Riders - 1:00 PM dismissal - Buses will pull away from school buildings at 1:00 pm each day (2:00 pm for Lakewood).

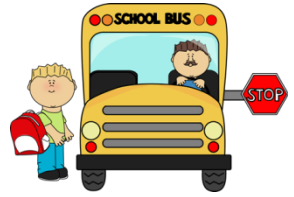
Please do not call to change a pick-up person **unless that person is listed on your emergency pick-up form** (Transportation Authorization). We **must have** a legal signature to release your child from school or from the bus.

In order to assure the safety of our children, it is important that these guidelines be followed. If your child rides a bus to and/or from school, please make sure you read and understand the following bus transportation regulations. Your cooperation in these areas is necessary for the protection of our students.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

****Please read this section carefully.**

Hardin County Schools provides transportation for all eligible preschoolers. A bus assistant is present on all preschool buses. The Transportation Authorization (TA) for Preschool must be completed by the parent upon enrollment.



- The regulation for transporting preschool children (702 KAR 5:150) states:
- It shall be the responsibility of the parent, guardian, or person authorized by the parent of a preschool child to provide **safe supervision to and from the bus stop** and delivery to and receipt from the driver assistant.
- The driver's assistant shall be responsible to deliver/receive the child safely to/from the parent, guardian, or person authorized by the parent.
- If the parent, or person authorized by the parent to accept the child, is not present upon delivery, the child shall be taken to a prearranged location, or returned to his/her school. The child **will not be transported home again that day**.
- The designated contact at the bus stop **must be of middle school age or older**, must have his/her name listed on the T.A. form and must be physically at the bus stop to receive the child. **Picture identification may be requested**.
- The child **must be picked up and returned to the same arranged stop daily**. If there is a change in address, please notify the school in sufficient time to inform the driver and assistant.
- Failure to observe these safety regulations may cause your child to be dropped from the preschool program.

*NOTE: Although the state guidelines specify that the child "can be dropped from the program" for not following the transportation requirements, this is not the practice of Hardin County Schools. If the transportation requirements are not followed (example: A child is not picked up at the bus stop and is brought back to school 3 or more times) the child can remain in preschool **but bus transportation will be suspended as determined by the school**.

As your child begins use of the transportation service, the driver will give you an estimated time of pick up and drop off. Unless there are unforeseen circumstances, they will arrive daily within approximately 10 minutes of this time. To ensure that each child is picked up and dropped off at the estimated time, it is important that you do the following:

- Please be waiting **AT THE BUS STOP AND NOT AT THE DOOR OF YOUR HOME**. The driver is unable to wait at the stop because this causes the rest of the route to be delayed.
- When the bus driver arrives at your stop, please wait at the side of the road. The bus assistant will come to you at the stop to receive your child or bring him/her to you. This is for your child's safety.
- Please notify the school immediately if you should need to add or delete an authorized person from the list.

Only the parent, guardians, or authorized persons may pick a child up from school.

Picture ID may be required for anyone receiving the student off the bus or picking up at school.



HEALTH

Nutrition Program

A very important part of our preschool program is good nutrition for your child. Students receive breakfast, lunch and a snack at the end of the day. Milk is provided at every meal. Fruit juice is also available at breakfast. As much as feasible, children are involved in the planning and preparation of snacks and meals. Staff members provide appropriate supervision during meals to develop language, understanding and problem-solving skills as well as providing developmentally-appropriate information about nutrition and health.

Because of the way our nutrition program is arranged, we ask that children do not bring food or drinks to school. If your child has any diagnosed food allergies, this should be shared with the classroom staff prior to your child's first day of preschool. Arrangements will be made to accommodate any diagnosed allergies.

Any food items brought to school for special events or parties must be individually wrapped and/or purchased from a bakery or a deli. **No homemade food may be brought to school.** Please check with the classroom staff before sending any food or drink items to school.



Medication

An authorization form must be completed by the parent or guardian of the child before we may give any medication. We cannot administer medication unless it is prescribed by a physician. All medicine is kept and dispensed in the school office. (The only exceptions are Epi-pens and inhalers).



Dress

An important component of the preschool curriculum is outdoor play. Therefore, it is very important that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. When the weather gets cold, please see that your child wears a heavy coat, hat and mittens or gloves.

Remember, your child will be working daily with paint and other different media. The children do wear smocks during these activities but sometimes accidents do happen. Please send your child in play clothes daily.



General dress code policy for Hardin County Schools indicates that articles of clothing with offensive, degrading or unwholesome slogans, symbols, or pictures are not appropriate for school. The following articles of clothing are not acceptable to be worn to school: strapless, spaghetti strap, midriff, mesh, see through, muscle shirts, and "short" shorts. Additionally, if your daughter wishes to wear a dress or skirt to preschool, it is advised to layer over a pair of shorts or tights for modesty.

Your child's teacher will share any other pertinent information concerning dress code for your particular school. Please refer to this information when shopping for school clothing and dressing your child for school.



We are looking forward to an enjoyable and successful school experience for your child. We encourage you to become an active and involved member of your school family. Please call if you have questions about your child's program.

PARENT PROGRAMS



PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION - enables parents and teachers to work together in providing support and financial assistance to help improve the school program for our students. We encourage all parents to join the PTO and support PTO events and activities.



PARENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM - makes use of parents and other citizens in a variety of activities which enhance our students' educational experiences. If you are interested in becoming a parent volunteer, contact the school office.

MONTHLY PARENT WORKSHOPS - broaden ideas and skills in working with children and bond with the classroom staff to make an effective team.



SITE-BASED DECISION-MAKING COUNCIL is a group of elected representatives to include the principal, parents (2), and teachers (3). The council is involved in helping to establish the policies, practices, and procedures that guide the total educational program at our school.

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER – provides parent training, support and resource information and referrals to all Hardin County families. Any family and/or student in the Hardin County School district is eligible for services regardless of income. The goal of the Center is to help our children succeed in school by assisting them and their families in meeting some of their basic needs. This is done by providing community services at the center or by linking families to agencies in Hardin County. Contact your child's teacher or the school office for more information.



SCHOOL VISITATION – Please always sign in at the school office when entering the building. For the children's safety, it is important that the office staff is aware of all school visitors.



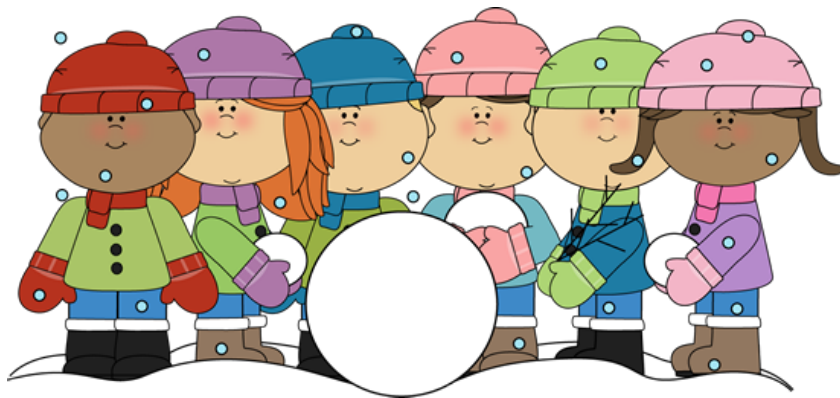
Weather Problems and Cancellations Preschool Special Considerations Hardin County Schools

- When bad weather is forecast, or begins during the school day, your best sources of information are the local radio stations.
- Usually the Louisville TV stations have information by 6:00 am.
- The Hardin County School system has a One-Call alert system, in which a phone call is made with any information regarding cancellations, delays, and early dismissals.

Here is our current policy, as it relates to preschoolers:

During inclement weather as determined by district administrators, preschool will operate on either a one- or a two-hour delay using the same schedule as grades K-5.

Be sure we always have a working phone number for your child!





The beginning of school is a big event in your child's life. You will be the one who has the most influence over his/her attitude toward this new experience. This is the first step toward many years of education, and it is very important that you do everything that you can to help your child adjust and feel positive about this experience.

General Suggestions

- Be willing to listen to his/her fears about going to school.
- Answer all of his/her questions honestly.
- Talk about school, but do not let it be the only or main topic of discussion.
- Provide a normal environment during the first few days of school. Since school is a change, children need the security of other normal routines.
- Avoid comparing your child's school experience to your own or that of his/her brothers or sisters.
- Try to have and show your child a positive feeling about school and learning.
- Have your child in bed early on school nights so that he/she gets plenty of rest.
- Work with the staff at school to provide a positive experience.

Specific Suggestions

Specific ideas for helping your child get ready for school are listed below in the form of a checklist. We suggest that you use this to assist you in preparing your child.

- Tell your child that there will be lots of toys at school (puzzles, balls, magnifying glass, etc.).
- Show your child where the school is.
- Show your child the outside fenced area and explain that he/she will play there when school begins.
- Tell your child the name of his/her teacher.
- Tell your child how he/she will get to and from school each day.
- Tell your child who will pick him/her up at the bus stop.
- Tell your child the time he/she will be dropped off and picked up. Draw a picture of a clock and show the times. Be sure to be on time or early when picking your child up at the bus stop.
- Show your child the starting date on your calendar. Count the days until school starts.
- Show your child where you will be while he/she is at school and tell him/her what you will be doing.
- Dress your child in comfortable play clothes during normal school activities.
- Encourage your child to tell the teachers when he/she wants or needs something (restroom, drink of water, etc.).
- Look at any work your child brings home. Tell him/her what you like about it.
- After school, ask your child questions about the day. (What did you eat? What toys did you work with?)



Kentucky Board of Education

Policy Statement

Parent and Family Involvement Initiative

The Kentucky Board of Education recognizes that parent and family involvement is essential to educating our state's children to meet high academic expectations. Schools and families must partner together to develop strong programs and policies that meet the needs of each community.

Educators must take the initiative in developing these vital collaborations.

Kentucky's educational system includes numerous opportunities for active and *meaningful* parent and family involvement (e.g., school-based decision making, primary and preschool programs, family and youth services centers). The Kentucky Board of Education, in cooperation with the Kentucky Department of Education, will continue to support and assist schools and school districts in developing, implementing, and evaluating policies and programs that involve *all* parents and families. Successful programs will:

- Create welcoming atmospheres for parents and families.
- Support parents and families as advocates for lifelong learning and as decision-makers in school issues and programs.
- Promote clear, two-way communications between schools and families about school programs and students' progress.
- Assist parents, families, and guardians in acquiring techniques to support their children's learning.
- Involve parents and family members, wherever appropriate, in a variety of instructional and support roles both within and without the school.
- Provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families.
- Identify and reduce barriers to parent/family involvement.
- Provide professional development for teachers, administrators, and staff on ways to effectively work with parents and families.
- Provide a written copy of the policy for each parent and/or family and post the policy in the school.

These forms of parent and family involvement require coordinated school-wide efforts and the support of parents, teachers, students, and administrators at each school site. The issue of parent and family involvement is much larger than improving student achievement. Effective parent and family involvement is fundamental to a healthy system of public education that expects all students to achieve at high levels.





HARDIN COUNTY SCHOOLS
HELPING CHILDREN SUCCEED