



2024-25 Preschool Parent Handbook

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&

WASHINGTON COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD

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I. INTRODUCTION:

The Preschool Program began in 1990 as part of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). We currently have preschool classrooms at Washington County Elementary and North Washington Elementary.

This booklet has been prepared for the families of children who will participate in Washington County School's KERA Preschool Program. This information is provided with the hope that it will help your child have a wonderful first year in school.

II. OUR BELIEFS:

A. Mission Statement:

The mission of the public-school program for three (3) and four (4) year-olds is to provide a developmentally age-appropriate curriculum which nurtures self-respect, fosters positive self-esteem, and is in partnership with the family.

B. Philosophy:

All children have the right to be provided with appropriate learning experiences regardless of race, ability, religion, or ethnic background. The preschool program shall include multi-sensory age-appropriate experiences that foster development in the areas of: cognition, communication, social skills, large and small motor skills, emotional awareness, independence in self-help and creativity. The preschool program shall assist young children with their personal and interpersonal skills to maximize self-discipline, concentration, and independence. The program shall include learning activities and teaching techniques appropriate to each child's level of understanding and readiness. Meaningful and regular family interactions shall also be stressed.

C. Goals:

The following goals from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) have been adopted for use in the Preschool Program:

- Foster positive self-concept and independence
- Develop social skills
- Encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment
- Encourage language development
- Enhance physical development and skills
- Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety and nutritional practices
- Encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts
- Respect cultural diversity in children and staff

III. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Children who meet the following criteria are eligible for the Preschool Program:

Resident of the Washington County School District and meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. 4-year-old who will turn 5 AFTER August 1, 2024 who has an educational disability
2. 4-year-old who will turn 5 AFTER August 1, 2024, who is "At-Risk" based on income guidelines. (Once determined "At-Risk Eligible", status remains the same for the current school year regardless of change in income.)
3. 4-year-old who will turn 5 AFTER August 1, 2024 who does not meet eligibility requirements 1 and 2 may attend on a tuition basis as space allows (See Tuition Section for details)
4. 3-year-old who has an educational disability

****4 year old's who turn 5 on or before August 1, 2024 may not attend preschool.

Students with special needs (delays or disabilities) may only be admitted to the program upon approval of the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC). The (ARC) committee may request additional information and evaluation data before a final eligibility decision is made.

IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT:

Each child must have the following items on file at the school before they can begin:

- A copy of a legal birth certificate. This must be the official state copy from the Dept. of Vital Statistics (the hospital record of birth is not acceptable for school purposes).
- A Kentucky Certificate of Immunization: This must be valid and up to date. It will be kept on file at the school at all times.
- Eye Exam: Performed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. (due by January 1st)
- Physical Examination: A copy of a current physician's medical examination must be provided. (Note – TB Skin Tests are not required for preschool enrollment)
- Proof of Washington County Residence: Example – a current utility bill, which is mailed to your residence or whatever is required by the specific school to indicate residency. (NOT a P.O. BOX).
- Proof of income if qualifying "At-Risk": (May be documented by the most current Income Tax Return Form 1040, W-2 Forms, pay stub dated within the last three months, written statements from employers, or documentation showing status of recipients of public assistance).
- Social Security cards are not required but will be accepted if submitted

HEALTH:

A. Screening:

Each child registered for the Preschool Program will complete a free preschool screening in the following areas prior to enrollment:

- Speech and Language
- Motor development
- Social and emotional
- Self-help/Adaptive
- Cognition
- Vision & Hearing if not completed by physician

B. Illness:

Ill children should not be sent to school. Signs of illness, which might warrant a child to remain at home, include fever, diarrhea, vomiting, rash, and discharge from the eyes, ears, and nose. If a child's fever is over 100 degrees, they should not come to school. A child should be free of fever for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.

Children who do not feel well cannot function well in the classroom. If a child becomes ill after arriving at school, the family will be notified. If your child is exposed to or contracts a contagious disease, please notify the school promptly.

C. Medication:

- If possible, please try to schedule medication times so that medicine does not have to be sent to school.
- When it is necessary for children to take medication at school, parents must see the school nurse to complete required forms and authorization for medication to be given at school.
- Medication must be brought to school in the original prescription container, and properly labeled by the doctor or in the original over-the-counter medicine container with the written order of the physician or dentist attached.
- Information listed on the container shall include the student's name, date, the name of the medicine and prescribed dosage, and directions for use.

D. Emergency Procedures:

Emergency information must be on file at the school. Should a child become ill or suffer an injury at school, the staff will attempt to contact the child's parents, or, if they cannot be reached, the person authorized to act in an emergency. Please include several numbers on your emergency card. Children can only be released to people whose names have been provided to the school. If you move or your phone number changes, please notify the school immediately so new information can be recorded. The school nurse provides emergency cards to each child for parents/guardians to fill out.

V. **RELATED AND SUPPORT SERVICES:**

The following support services will be provided for students with identified special needs as determined by evaluations and recommendations of the Admission and Release Committee (ARC):

- Speech and language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Other related services as determined appropriate

VII. **TRANSPORTATION:**

One-way bus transportation is provided to addresses along the Washington County Schools bus routes; depending upon which session your preschool child is enrolled; morning or afternoon. If your child is enrolled in preschool and attends childcare on a regular basis the other half of the day, bus transportation can be utilized Monday – Thursday on both the morning and afternoon bus routes. If your child is not enrolled in full-day services; transportation will be provided to one pick up or one drop off only as there are no mid-day buses. In addition, a bus monitor will assist on all preschool buses. It is the responsibility of the parents to have their child at the assigned bus stop at the scheduled time and to be present to greet the child upon pick up or drop off (depending on whether your child attends the morning or afternoon session). Children may not be left unattended at bus stops. The parent will provide an address for pick up or drop off. If this address changes, parents will need to provide the new address and at that time a determination

will be made regarding continued bus transportation.

A. Arrival and Dismissal:

Bus Riders:

- Parent(s) or other authorized persons must remain at the bus stop with the preschool children.
- When the bus arrives at school, the child's teacher or assistant will receive them.
- When dismissed from school, the children will be escorted to the bus by the teacher or assistant and received by the bus driver or bus monitor.
- A parent or other authorized adult must be at the bus stop to receive the child. If no adult is present, the child will be returned to school and the parent will be contacted to arrange pick up.

Parent Transported Students:

- An adult or other authorized person must deliver the child to the teacher. A parent or other authorized person must pick up the children when dismissed from school. The parent must provide the teacher with a list of authorized persons who are allowed to pick up the child.
- WCES: Parents must check children out at the preschool classroom at WCES.
- NWES students in the morning session will be signed out at the preschool classroom. NWES afternoon session will go to the car-rider line. No child will be released to an unauthorized person.

B. Pick Up Policy:

Families should take special care to make sure children are picked up on time or met at the bus on time every day.

- The teacher shall explain the pick-up policy during the first home visit.
- The first time the child is not picked up in a timely manner or is returned to school by the bus driver, a policy reminder call shall be made.
- The second time the child is not picked up in a timely manner or is returned to school, a letter shall be sent.
- The third time the child is not picked up in a timely manner or is returned to school; the assistance of the principal shall be requested. The principal shall have authority to take the most appropriate steps.
- If the parent knows they will be late in picking up their child, the school should be called. This procedure is to be used only for emergencies.
- It is the teacher's responsibility to stay with the child at school unless the principal approves an alternate arrangement.
- Parents must sign the child in if tardy or out if the child is picked up during regular preschool session.

VIII. NUTRITION:

Washington County Schools' grades P-12 participates in a Federal Program that allows students to eat breakfast and lunch free. A preschool student will only receive the free meal during their scheduled preschool hours. Breakfast is served to the preschool morning session students and lunch is served to the preschool afternoon session students. Your child will receive this meal at no cost through the National School Breakfast/Lunch program.

If the preschool child attends childcare during the other half of the day, you are not eligible to receive this meal free. Only one preschool meal per day is eligible to be free. If your preschool child attends childcare on Fridays, you will be responsible for the cost of both meals served on Friday because this is a day they are not enrolled in Preschool. The cost of full-priced meals is \$1.30 for breakfast and \$2.50 for lunch and is payable to the cafeteria at your child's school. Your child may also bring their meals to school if you wish to send them. **Due to concerns about food safety and food allergies, any food brought in from outside school for parties and events to be shared with all students must be store purchased and packaged with nutritional facts.**

IX. GENERAL INFORMATION:

A. Attendance:

It is Washington County Schools' policy that every student attends every day. In the case of absence, the parent shall send a written note to the teacher explaining the reason for the child's absence.

B. Family Involvement:

The Preschool Program staff welcomes family involvement. Meaningful and regular family involvement helps ensure the child's success in school. Parents may volunteer in the classroom, assist in making classroom materials and/or assist with class parties with principal approval. In addition to classroom involvement, parents may attend field trips and preschool parent workshops. Prior to volunteering in the classroom or attending field trips, parents must complete 3 background checks and be deemed approved to volunteer. These state issued fees total \$53.25 and include a fingerprint check. Background check forms need to be completed at the Board office and require 3 separate forms of payment with check or money order. Background checks must be re-submitted and approved every three years per Washington County School District policy. If a parent volunteers on a regular basis in the school, they must attend a Volunteer Training (held at the beginning of the school year) and complete a district Volunteer Participation Statement form and a District Volunteer application. We do ask that if your child attends NWES preschool that you always sign in at the NWES school office and pick up your visitors pass before coming to your child's classroom. If your child attends WCES preschool, sign in with the preschool teacher.

C. Parent Advisory Council:

Parents may participate in a Preschool Parent Advisory Council to provide input into improvement of the preschool program. Information about meeting times and locations will be sent home with your child. All parents are welcome to attend the meetings.

D. Home Visits:

During the school year, teachers will make two (2) home visits. Other visits will be scheduled as needed.

- Visit # 1: The first home visit will take place before preschoolers start school in August. During the visit, the teacher and assistant, family and child become acquainted. All forms required for enrollment are collected if not already received. Information about transportation is given. General questions about the program and information about the child are mutually shared.
- Visit # 2: During the second home visit, which takes place near the end of the year, the child's family and teacher will meet to discuss and summarize the child's progress. The family will be provided with information about the upcoming school year.

E. Inclement Weather and School Closure

Preschool will follow the same closure and delay schedules that apply to the K-12 grade levels. If school is closed, preschool is closed. If on a one-hour or two-hour delay, preschool will begin accordingly. On non-traditional instruction (NTI) days, preschool students will have activities to complete in place of in-person instruction.

X: TUITION:

Tuition will be \$1200 per year (8 payments of \$150.00). The first payment of \$150 is due on September 1. Each subsequent month's payment is due on the first day of the month. Tuition in full is expected every month regardless of school breaks or snow days. No reduction of tuition will be given when the student

cannot attend due to illness. Long-term illness will be addressed on an individual basis. Tuition payments will be considered late on the 5th of each month. Late statements will be mailed by the 10th of each month to the parent or guardian responsible for the preschool tuition account notifying them of any past due balances. If a child's tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, the child will not be allowed to attend preschool until the balance is paid. If unforeseen financial circumstances arise, please contact Paula Turner, Preschool Director, at 859-336-5470, ext. 2214, to discuss alternative payment arrangements.

XI: **CONCERNS**

Washington County Preschool deeply values feedback from parents/guardians. For this reason, we have a formal process that we encourage parents/guardians to follow to ensure concerns are heard and adequately addressed. For parents who may have concerns about their child's education:

- Address the concerns with your child's teacher. Be sure to schedule an appointment. Teachers are not available to have a conference during unscheduled visits or during student pick-up and drop-off times.
- If not resolved, schedule an appointment, provide your concern in writing, speak with the Principal/Assistant Principal/School Counselor. The school's leadership team values your input and takes concerns very seriously.
- If not resolved at the school level, contact the Early Childhood Central Office at 859.636.7211. The Early Childhood office staff will attempt to resolve the concern or direct the concern to the appropriate WCPS department that has the expertise needed to partner for a resolution.

WCES Preschool 859.336.7778
NWES Preschool 859.375.4038 ext-2039
Washington Co. Preschool 859.636.7211

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I have read and understand the information included
in the 2024-25 Washington County Preschool
Handbook.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____