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PRE-K PROGRAM GUIDE

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MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT



MTSD Pre-K Program 3740 West 26th Street, Erie, PA 16506 814-836-6091

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Millcreek Township School District Pre-K Program believes in the importance of quality early learning experiences as the building blocks for future success. We strive to provide a fully integrated, enriched, student-centered, and hands-on learning environment that meets the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive needs of students ages 3-5. Our schools, families, and community work together to provide the foundation for life-long learning.

SUPPLEMENTALS

The following addenda are included at the end of this Program Guide:

> STUDENT SUCCESS & CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PLAN

FLEXIBLE INSTRUCTION PLAN

HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN POLICIES & PROCEDURES

TUITION, SCHEDULE, CDC BEFORE & AFTER CARE INFORMATION

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PA PRE-K COUNTS & MTSD FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCREENING APPLICATION

WELCOME TO MTSD PRE-K

Welcome to Millcreek Township School District. Preschool is such an important part of your child's life, and we are so excited to be a part of it! MTSD Pre-K programs provide fully integrated, enriched, student-centered, hands-on learning environments that engage students in a structured curriculum. Learning is centered around social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. We have carefully aligned our Pre-K curriculum with the District's kindergarten curriculum to assure all students participating have a smooth and seamless transition to kindergarten. Each Pre-K classroom has an experienced team of professionals, led by a certified teacher and a Pre-K assistant.

We welcome and encourage parent involvement! We believe that home and school are a child's two most important worlds. It is important to us that you feel completely comfortable as a parent or family member when you walk into one of our Pre-K programs. Through quality early learning experiences provided daily in the Millcreek Township School District Pre-K Program, children form the building blocks needed for future academic success and lifelong learning. If you have questions at any time please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully, The MTSD Pre-K Program Team



DR. SUSAN GREENAWAY Supervisor of Pre-K Programming

Superintendent

DR. JOHN CAVANAGH

TREVOR MURNOCK Assistant Superintendent



PREPARING YOUR STUDENT FOR SUCCESS FROM AN EARLY AGE

Research shows children are born with an incredible capacity and desire to learn. It is critical that their first academic steps be in the right direction.

Research also shows children who are given the opportunity to participate in a quality early learning experience thrive when they enter kindergarten. These students have a higher percentage of secondary education than students who do not participate in a Pre-K program.









HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION IN A REAL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

FIVE UPDATED SCHOOL BUILDINGS



CLASSROOMS WITH CERTIFIED TEACHERS











Our Pre-K students are given a significant advantage by being in our school buildings. They become familiar with MTSD schools, teachers, and programs -- making it a smoother transition into Kindergarten. Our Pre-K curriculum is aligned to the PA Early Learning Standards, in addition to the MTSD Kindergarten curriculum.

Within each school, the Pre-K students are included in appropriate school activities that enhance their learning, like 'Reading Buddies,' parent activities, and collaborative class projects.

MTSD Pre-K Teachers are PA-certified in Early Education. Many hold master's degrees and additional teacher certifications. Both Pre-K Teachers and Pre-K Assistants participate in district-aligned and annual individualized professional development.



The Key to a Successful **Ist Day** AT MTSD PRE-K

Introduction

As wonderful as this new experience may be, it can also be quite stressful for the young child. New situations and change can, at times, be unsettling for all of us. For many children this may be their first experience of separation from parents or care givers at home. It is common for even the most out-going child to be anxious the first day of school.

Remember the MTSD Pre-K staff will be available to provide support and assistance making your child's first school days happy days!

Helpful Tips

- Prepare your child for the new school experience by explaining what to expect. Answer all questions directly and honestly.
- Convey a positive attitude. Young children are aware of our feelings. Your enthusiasm will assure your child that school can be a fun and exciting place.
- Establish a routine involving both the night before a school day as well as morning preparation. Rituals and routines will add predictability and are comforting in unfamiliar situations.
- Bring something from home. This is acceptable and often reassuring in helping the child with the initial adjustment to school. This item may be a treasured blanket or even a photo from home.
- Clearly state to your child where you will be and when you will return. It may also be helpful to discuss what will happen when you are reunited.

Saying, "See you soon!"

Maintain a clear good-buy routine. This may include warning the child you are leaving in 3 minutes, a kiss and hug, or a wave from the window. Once you tell your child you are leaving, it is important to follow through. Extending the good-bye with "Ok, just one more kiss, and then I really, really have to go." tends to heighten anxiety rather than relieve it. Avoid sneaking out; this seems to encourage children to become less trusting and makes the second day of school even harder.



The Importance of Family Involvement

We encourage families to observe our classrooms prior to preschool registration. Meeting the teachers and seeing the classroom environment is a very important step in choosing the early learning community which best fits your family's needs.

There are scheduled orientation days for families and students to meet their teacher and see their classroom before school starts, as well as two parent teacher conferences at mid-year and year-end to go over student progress and review portfolios.

MTSD Pre-K Programs have an open-door policy for families, we welcome guest speakers and guest readers. Families will find sign-up sheets for such events and are encouraged to participate as much as their schedule will allow. If you have a hobby, skill, song, or family tradition you would like to share, we invite you to do so.

Teachers plan special events into the school day, such as 'Muffins for Mom' and 'Donuts for Dad' days. Teachers also plan sing-alongs, plays, and graduation ceremonies to incorporate family participation.



Have a question or suggestion? Contact us: 814-836-6091 www.mtsd.org/prek greenaway@mtsd.org 3740 West 26th Street, Erie, PA

Your Student's Learning Environment

Research shows the learning environment plays a key role in a child's ability to learn and feel comfortable in their school setting. In our Pre-K programs you will find students and families are always greeted with a warm welcome. Our classroom environments convey very important messages to our students such as:

- You are in a good place Students' work is displayed attractively at a level which children can see it. The room is welcoming and friendly.
- You are able to be independent, to build self-esteem, and to do many things on your own here - Materials are stored on low shelves so students can reach them without help. Materials are organized logically and are located in areas in which they can be used. Environmental print is everywhere, and labels are prevalent to encourage independence.
- You belong here and are an integral part of our community Each child has a cubby, or basket, labeled with his or her name or picture on it. Pictures of children and their families are displayed.
- This is a place you can trust and feel safe and comfortable to explore and try out your ideas – Equipment and materials are arranged consistently so children know where to find the things they need. Shelves are neat and uncluttered; materials are labeled so children can make choices easily. There is a well-defined illustrated schedule displayed so children learn the order of events that occur each day and know what to expect. Daily routines stay consistent.
- This is a safe place to explore and try out your ideas Areas are protected and well defined. All interest areas include all items needed for students to be successful (e.g. smocks in the art, water, and sand areas). Toys are rotated frequently and new things are added to keep the interest of children.



Each of our classrooms are welcoming environments, promoting learning and showcasing students' work throughout the school year.

How Children Develop & Learn



Child development may be divided into four areas social/emotional, physical, language and cognitive. These four categories are closely related and often overlap. It is important for educators and parents to remember that development in one area affects and is influenced by development in all other areas. Pre-K teachers are actively aware of this and are constantly paying attention to every area when guiding your child's learning.

Social & Emotional Development

Social/emotional development in the preschool years is about socialization. It is about becoming a competent and confident person, as well as the process by which children learn the values and behaviors accepted by society.

MTSD Pre-K teachers focus on three goals for social/emotional development:

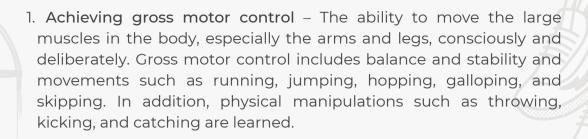
- 1. Achieving a sense of self The ability to know oneself and relate to other people; both children and adults.
- 2. Taking responsibility for self and others The ability to follow rules and routines, respect others, and take initiative.
- 3. Behaving in a prosocial way The ability to show empathy and get along in the world. For example, sharing and taking turns.

Physical Development

Physical development involves gross motor (large muscle) and fine motor (small muscle) skills. Pre-K teachers work hard to create a classroom environment which promotes individual physical development. As children learn what their bodies can do, they gain self-confidence. This selfconfidence promotes a student's willingness to try new and challenging tasks, creating a positive cycle, which effects learning as a whole over time.

Physical Development (Continued)

MTSD Pre-K teachers focus on two goals for physical development:



 Achieving fine motor control – The ability to use and coordinate the small muscles in the hands and wrist with dexterity. As these fine muscles develop, children are able to perform self-help skills and manipulate small objects such as scissors and writing tools. It is important to note the achievement of fine motor skills generally lags behind gross motor development.





Language Development

Language development includes understanding and communicating through words, spoken and written. In Pre-K, a child's ability to communicate thoughts and feelings through spoken language takes on new importance as language becomes the principle tool for establishing and maintaining relationships with adults and other children.

It is important to remember that language development is closely related to cognitive development because words represent objects and ideas.

Language and literacy skills go hand in hand. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing develop interdependently in children.

MTSD Pre-K teachers focus on two goals for language development:

- 1. Listening and speaking The ability to use spoken language to communicate with others. Teachers look for the student's ability to enlarge one's vocabulary, express oneself, understand the oral speech of others, participate in a conversation, and use language to solve problems. It is important to note that as children learn to listen and speak, they gain control of themselves and their world. They relate to others and gain and store more information.
- 2. **Reading and writing** The ability to make sense of written language. Students will begin to understand the purpose of written symbols and words and how they work. They will gain knowledge of the alphabet and begin to write letters and words.

Cognitive Development

Cognitive development refers to the mind and how it works. It involves how children think, how they see their world, and how they use what they learn.

MTSD Pre-K teachers focus on three goals for cognitive development:

- 1. Learning and problem solving The ability to be purposeful about acquiring and using information, resources, and materials. As children observe events around them, teachers are observing: are they able to ask questions, make predictions, and test possible solutions, as learning reaches beyond just acquiring facts.
- Thinking logically The ability to gather and make sense of information by comparing, contrasting, sorting, classifying, counting, measuring, and recognizing patterns. As children use logical thinking, they organize their world conceptually and gain a better understanding of how it works.
- 3. Representing and thinking symbolically The ability to use objects in a unique way. For example; using a cup to represent a telephone, pretending to be a mommy or a firefighter, portraying the world through charts or pictures (e.g. making a graph to show the weather over time or drawing a picture to show what happened in a story). Such representations and symbols show that students are able to use materials and their imaginations to explore abstract ideas.





WHAT DO MTSD PRE-K STUDENTS LEARN?

Literacy

MTSD Pre-K teachers thoughtfully and purposefully interact with children and plan experiences that support emerging literacy. A print-rich environment that allows children to practice literacy skills in real-life experiences, combined with explicit teaching of key concepts, is the foundation of literacy learning in Pre-K. As children's excitement about their newfound ability to read and write increases, teachers create multiple opportunities for continued literacy learning.

Components: increased vocabulary and language, phonological awareness, knowledge of print, letters, and words, comprehension, understanding books and other texts, literacy as a source of enjoyment.

Mathematics

MTSD Pre-K teachers' knowledge of the substance of math content provides facts and concepts needed to promote and extend children's mathematical thinking. Teachers use multiple opportunities throughout the day to help children build competence in math. When children give each person at the table a cracker, pour water from one container to another, put all the big buttons in one pile and the smaller ones in another, or clap a rhythmic pattern, they are learning math.

Components: number concepts, patterns and relationships, geometry and special sense, measurement, data collection, organizational, and representation Science

Scientific facts are important, but how they are put together into meaningful ideas is more significant. Pre-K children learn science by exploring the world around them. When you provide an environment with many varied materials, they try out things to see how they work, they experiment, they manipulate, they are curious, and they ask questions. As they seek answers to their questions they are learning to enjoy and appreciate their surroundings. These activities are scientific to young children.

Components: physical science; physical properties of objects, life science; living things, and the earth and the environment

Social Studies

In Pre-K, everyday experiences pertinent to children's lives are the foundations for learning social studies. Board games or the challenge of riding around a tricycle path teach mapping skills. Children learn about time (history) from the established daily routine. When the teacher sets up a play grocery store and helps children learn about jobs, buying, and selling, they are helping the children learn about economics. Preschoolers learn about civics by learning to cooperate and resolve differences within their classroom setting.

Components: Spaces and geography, people and how they live, people and the environment, people and the past.







The Arts

MTSD Pre-K teachers expose students to a wide variety of experiences in the arts throughout the day. Children mix paints; pound and shape clay; build structures with blocks, boxes, and Lego's; dance; dramatize stories; clap rhythms; and sing chants and songs. Pre-K children love to get their hands into materials and move their bodies.

Components: Dance, music, theater, or performing arts (what we preschool teachers call dramatic play), and visual arts.

Technology

Children learn technology by exploring how things work. If you view technology from a broad perspective, you can see how it can be integrated into all aspects of the Pre-K classroom. MTSD Pre-K teachers know technology as the study of tools, machines, materials, techniques, and sources of power that make work easier and that solve problems. When children figure out what kind of tool they need to build a structure using wood scraps, they are solving a technological problem. When children sing songs into a tape recorder or create colored lines on the screen by dragging a mouse, they are using technology tools.

Components: awareness of technology, basic operations and concepts, technology tools, people and technology

Process Skills

Methods of learning are called process skills. Children are learning methods of communicating, thinking mathematically, doing what scientists do, conducting social science research, creating as artists, and using technology through each curricular content area.

Components: observing, exploring, problem solving, connecting, organizing, communicating, and representing information.

"IT LOOKS LIKE I'M PLAYING, BUT..."



Each Pre-K classroom has a variety of learning centers at which students will play. During the Pre-K day, the children are given multiple opportunities to play at the centers of their choice. Play is very important for this age group. It is how they learn. The Pre-K teaching team circulate among the children as they are playing to encourage their development through conversation, acknowledgement, modeling, and reinforcement.

You might think the children are 'just' playing. But they are truly learning!

- Art: It looks like I am playing, but I am developing my creativity, small motor skills, problem solving, sharing skills, cooperation, independence, and responsibility.
- **Blocks:** It looks like I am playing, but I am developing motor skills, math concepts (e.g. number, size, shape, space), oral language, social skills, eye-hand coordination, self-control, and my imagination.
- Dramatic Play: It looks like I am playing, but I am developing social skills, emotional skills, independence, oral language, my imagination, responsibility, and executive functioning.
- Library: It looks like I am playing, but I am developing alphabet knowledge, oral language, print knowledge, listening skills, eye-hand coordination, concepts about the world, and the desire to read.
- Literacy: It looks like I am playing, but I am developing letter and sound recognition, and learning sight words, to write, and to comprehend.
- Math: It looks like I am playing, but I am developing oral language, social skills, small motor skills, concepts about quantity, shape, size, and patterns, and an interest in math.
- Science: It looks like I am playing, but I am developing a curiosity about the world, sensory skills, problem solving, language skills, and experience with the scientific process (i.e. observing, predicting, experimenting, recording, reporting).
- Social Studies: It looks like I am playing, but I am learning about maps, my community, the earth and land forms, and cultures.
- Writing: It looks like I am playing, but I am developing eye-hand coordination, small motor skills, alphabet knowledge, self-confidence, vocabulary, and an interest in print.



PROGRESS MONITORING

HOW DO WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

Pennsylvania has helped guide preschools to develop programs which will lay a solid foundation for life-long learning, through the use of the Early Learning Standards which define the ways in which children learn, the ways teachers can support children's learning, and the expectations of learning and development for children when they enter kindergarten.

Prior to starting the Pre-K year, parents are requested to complete an Ages & Stages Questionnaire about their child. This information is given to the preschool teacher at the start of the school year, allowing her to tailor your child's Pre-K experience to his/her needs.

During the school year, teachers chart a student's developmental progress through the use of portfolios. Each student's portfolio includes teacher observations, student work samples, and formal assessments. Portfolios are an excellent way to track a student's progress over time.

Teachers formally assess children three times a year:

- 1. Initial evaluations occur within the month of September, and show the teachers and staff where each child is within the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards. This information gives each teacher a starting point for future lesson planning.
- 2. Mid-year evaluations show each student's progress throughout the first half of the school year and are followed by a mid-year parent teacher conference to review student progress and discuss strengths and any areas for future improvement.
- 3. Year-end evaluations show a student's year-to-date progress. Year-end evaluation information is compiled and shared with parents at year-end.

Although student portfolios stay in the classroom, teachers keep parents abreast of their children's progress through formal and informal communication throughout the school year.

Should parents have a specific concern about their child's development, they may schedule a meeting to discuss their concerns with the teacher and/or Pre-K Program Supervisor, at any time. Parents are also able to access their child's portfolio by signing it out for review.



Policies, Procedures, & Important Information FOR MTSD PRE-K

Contacting the Teacher

Email is the best way to contact your teacher. If you prefer to leave a phone message, there is a phone in each Pre-K classroom.

Please do not worry if the teacher does not immediately respond to your email or phone message. Instructional times, as well as arrival and departure times, are very busy times for the children and the teacher.

When your teacher is available, they will email or call you back. Also, you can set up a conference with the teacher if you wish to discuss anything. Feel free to arrange a meeting time with your child's teacher.

Arrival & Departure Procedures for Parents

Please make sure that you are signing in and out every single day upon arriving and departing. This is very important for many reasons, and it is essential to our daily operations.

When you sign in/out you must remember the following:

Sign In:

- Provide your child's name.
- The time you entered the classroom.
- The person who dropped the child off.
- The emergency contact number you can be reached at on THAT DAY!
 - PLEASE NOTE THIS NUMBER MUST HAVE AN AREA CODE AND WE MUST BE ABLE TO REACH YOU IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY!
- The person who will be picking up your child.

Sign Out:

- The time your child is picked up.
- YOU MUST SIGN YOUR CHILD OUT FOR THE DAY WITH A SIGNATURE!
- Only parents and persons to whom the child may be released as noted on the Parent Consent & Emergency Contact Form can pick up your child. Be prepared to bring your ID at pick up until the Pre-K team knows you. Also, inform anyone who intermittently or rarely picks up your child to also bring their ID
- After you sign out your child, please remember to empty his/her mailbox every single day. Important information goes home on a daily basis.

Potty Training

We do understand that even toilet trained children will occasionally have accidents. By definition, 'accidents' are unusual incidents and happen infrequently. In these instances, the Pre-K teams do help children change their clothes, encouraging independence as much is as possible.

Children must have sufficient toilet self-help skills for the Pre-K classroom environment. Students need to be aware and able to communicate their need to use the restroom and have at least basic independence using the restroom in the school setting. MTSD Pre-K classrooms are not physically structured nor staffed in such a way to regularly dedicate the time it takes to change children's diapers and pull-ups.

If you have questions about your child's skill level, please contact us to discuss your circumstances.



Supply List

The following list includes items that your child will need to bring to school to ensure the first day goes as smoothly as possible:

- A backpack or small tote that has your child's name clearly written somewhere on the bag.
- One folder (this is a take home folder to go in their bag every day).
- A Ziploc bag with your child's name written clearly on it that contains a change of clothes in it. Please make sure that throughout the year the clothes are updated so that they are seasonally appropriate and include the following:
 - Fresh underwear
 - Socks
 - Shirt and/or Sweater
 - Pants
 - Please note that every time clothes are sent home fresh ones will need to be returned the next day in case of an accident.
- If your child is wearing pull-ups, you will need to pack and clearly label a fresh box of wipes and the pull-up of your choice.
- Lunch: Because lunch falls within our preschool schedule and is a very important social part of our day, you will need to either pack lunch (please be sure your child's name is clearly written on your child's lunch bag/box) or buy lunch from the school cafeteria.
 - You will be provided with a monthly school lunch menu.
 - Should your child buy lunch, you will need to fill out the daily lunch form found near the sign in and out sheets.
 - Please be sure to specify what menu option your child will be purchasing that day and what type of milk he/she will be purchasing.
- Naptime Essentials:
 - Pillow
 - Sleeping bag or blanket
 - One warm fuzzy from home (stuffed animal or plush toy)
 - Crib Sheets (these fit the cots perfectly)
- You will be provided with a Pre-K Open House flyer which will list any additional supplies needed for your child's Pre-K experience.

Packing Lunches

- Please pack your child's lunch in a bag or lunch box that has his/her name on it.
- Please remember to pack utensils the child may need for his/her lunch.
- Always remember to pack a napkin for your child every day.
- If there are any special instructions you have for your child's lunch, please place a note inside, and we will be sure to read it.

Snacks

Snack is an important part of our school day. Your child will be assigned a snack day monthly. On your child's snack day, we ask you bring a healthy snack to share with your child's class. If you are not able to provide a snack to share with your child's class, please contact our MTSD Pre-K Program office at 814-836-6091.

If your child has food allergies or if your family has an alternative diet, please make the staff aware of any foods that should be avoided.

Visiting & Volunteering

As is true in all of our schools, Millcreek Township School District asks that all parents check in at the school office when visiting the building. Whether volunteering, observing, or dropping an item off for your child or your child's teacher, proceed to the office first. Once there, sign the visitor's book and obtain a badge to wear.

Throughout the year you may want to volunteer in your child's classroom. Volunteer requirements include current clearances and health assessment w/ TB test. For detailed information regarding how to become a volunteer, refer to our website and visit the Parent Resources page.

Please keep in mind all of this is done in an effort to keep our students safe and to keep interruptions to the classes to a minimum. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Transitions

Students entering Pre-K can meet their teacher during a Pre-K Open House before the school year starts. During the Open House, the students and their families meet the teacher, get a chance to see and play in their classroom, take a tour of the school, and can ask questions and learn about the upcoming school year.

During the school year, students are increasingly exposed to experiences to help them prepare to move on to Kindergarten. For example, they may eat lunch in the cafeteria with the other students in the school to help them be prepared for this in future years.

Toward the end of the school year, students moving on to Kindergarten the next school year have several opportunities to prepare for their upcoming transition. Students may have the opportunity to meet the Kindergarten teachers and take a tour of their future classrooms. Teachers plan Pre-K graduation experiences to help the children and their families celebrate their preschool experience and their academic advancement. For students participating in an early intervention program, the Pre-K team meets with the school age team to share information to help ensure the student's success for transitioning to Kindergarten.

Required Program Forms & Student Files

When a child is enrolled in one of our programs, the parents complete the application along with required program forms. These forms are kept for each student in a student file, kept confidential and in a locked space. All forms must be kept up-to-date throughout the school year. Let your child's program staff know immediately if any changes occur.

Required documents in the student files include:

- Agreement form: This form designates which schedule option you have chosen for your child and clearly lists the required payment policies. The Agreement form lists persons designated by the parent to whom their child may be released. Agreements must be completed and submitted with the annual registration fee before a student may begin preschool. Refer to our webpage for tuition information.
- Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form: This form identifies the family's contact information as well as indicates persons to whom the child may be released if parents are unavailable. Only identified family members and those listed as 'designated to release to' persons may pick up the child. Individuals new to staff are required to provide identification before the child is released to him/her. Additionally, the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form includes medical information, such as allergies or other medical conditions, as well as doctor and insurance information.
- Child Health Report: Each enrolled child must have a current health record completed by your child's doctor at enrollment. A new health assessment and immunizations are required each year your child is in our preschool program. The Office of Child Development regulations further require participating children have documentation of an annual flu shot or an exemption from the flu shot letter from the parent on file each school year. Please provide this to your child's teacher for his/her student file.
- Parent Permission form: Parents are required to sign this form when they have received the Parent Program Guide for Preschool. Parents can sign the photo release, the permission to share student academic information, and hand sanitizer sections on this form as they deem appropriate.
- Medication forms, if applicable: Children are not permitted to have any medicines on their person or in their book bag. If your child has a medical condition requiring medicine, the MTSD Medication Guidelines must be followed. Inform your child's teacher immediately if your child has any medical conditions.

Be sure to inform the preschool teaching team of any changes you need to make to your forms. Additionally, the Pre-K teaching team will ask you to review your Agreement form and the 'Emergency Contact – Parental Consent' form at least twice during the school year: typically, at the start of the school year and in January.

Attendance

With exceptions to illness or physical injury, quarantine, death in the family, school sponsored tours and trips, non-school-sponsored education experiences with pre-approval, medical and dental appointments, required court attendance, family emergency, hazardous travel and severe weather conditions, or religious observations, all children are expected to be at school. Our goal is to have children come to school every day especially since missing just one day can seriously impact the learning and experience of the child. Please note the following policy:

- If your child will be absent from school, please contact your child's teacher by 8:45 in the morning by leaving a message on the classroom answering machine.
- If your child is absent due to illness or appointments, please be sure to let your child's teacher know.
- If a child is absent without communication from the parent/guardian, the preschool teacher must call to find out why the child is absent.
- Please provide your child's teacher with written excuse on the day your child returns to school.

Emergency Evacuation Plans & Safety Drills

The MTSD Pre-K Program Emergency Evacuation Plan is aligned with the MTSD school safety requirements.

The Emergency Evacuation Plan uses the Standard Response Protocol to outline what students and staff are to do in an emergency that necessitates a response of:

• "Hold,"

• "Evacuate,"

• "Lockdown,"

• "Secure,"

• "Shelter"

The Emergency Evacuation Plan identifies locations within the school and outside the school to where students are to evacuate if needed in response to an emergency. Also, maps of evacuation routes are located in each program space.

Teachers participate in the Emergency Plan training each school year and when, if needed, the plan is updated throughout the school year. Students and teachers practice emergency drills on a regular basis. Each preschool classroom maintains a list of all drills in which the class has participated.

Weather-Related Delays, Early Dismissals & Cancellations

Weather may cause the school district to have a 2-hour delay, an early dismissal, or a school closure. Please follow inclement weather reports on the local TV and radio stations for school delay, dismissal, and closure notifications. Whatever the district implements, please remember your discretion will best determine your child's attendance during inclement weather.

2-Hour Delays:

- (In the event of a 2-hour delay, stay tuned to the TV and radio stations should the school delay change to cancelation due to worsening weather conditions.)
- Given the size of the school district, time is needed to ensure passable parking lots and walkways for everyone's safety, as well to ensure full staffing. As a result, the Pre-K programs will operate on a delay.
- Note: In the event of an exceptional weather-related challenge, Pre-K families will be notified through the District's Infinite Campus Notification System. Pre-K Programs will begin at 11:00 am, instead of 9:00 am. Drop off time begins no earlier than 10:45 am.

Early Dismissals:

• When the school district enacts an early dismissal, the MTSD Pre-K Program will dismiss at 1:30 pm. Parents are required to pick up their children early.

School Closings:

• When the school district closes, Pre-K will implement the MTSD Pre-K Flexible Learning Plan

Extra Clothes

Whether from over exuberant water play or a toileting accident, it is always helpful to have an extra set of clothes at school. Please send an extra set of seasonally correct clothes, including underwear and socks, to school with your child. It would be helpful to have clothes stored in a labeled gallon size Ziploc bag.

Outdoor play happens throughout the school year unless the weather is inclement. Please be sure to dress your child for outdoor play, including coats, hats, boots, gloves, and snow pants, when appropriate. Mark each piece of clothing with your child's name.

Going Outdoors

Students will participate in outdoor activities daily weather permitting. The Pennsylvania Position statement on "weather permitting" states students can participate in outdoor activities daily if the temperature is above 24 degrees with wind-chill. We believe these outdoor experiences are vital to your child's learning experience, and any child well enough to attend school is well enough to participate in outdoor activities.

Student Illnesses, Allergies, & Medications

If your child is ill, please keep him/her home from school. This includes occurrences when your child has a fever, is vomiting, has diarrhea, or has cold symptoms. As you can imagine Pre-K classrooms are a great place for sharing colds and other germs. Children must be fever and symptom free, without the aid of a fever reducing medicine, for at least 24 hours prior to returning to school. We appreciate your cooperation as we attempt to minimize the spread of illness.

Please make the staff aware if your child has been exposed to or contracted a communicable disease (e.g. chicken pox) as we need to inform other parents. There are medically vulnerable students enrolled in our classes. Also, please make the staff aware of any allergies your child has or develops.

Prescription Medications: If your child must receive prescription medications while at school, a permission form must be completed. The form, available from your child's teacher or the school nurse, must include specific information about the time and dosage of medication to be administered, as well as the physician's signature. All prescriptions must be clearly marked and in the original bottle from the pharmacy.

Health Assessment & Flu Vaccine

Due to the fact that MTSD Pre-K and Pre-K Counts programs operate under the PA Department of Education, as well as under the PA Department of Public Welfare Office of Child Development regulations, all students participating in preschool must have a current (with in the past year) health assessment (physical) on file.

Should your child be in need of a physical, you do have 30 days after your child's start date to return the completed and signed physical form to the classroom teacher. Any student who does not have a physical within 30 days of their start date is unable to return to preschool until their physical has been completed and the teacher has the appropriate forms on file. Health Assessments must be completed annually for preschool students.

The PA Office of Child Development regulations further require participating children provide documentation of having a flu shot or an exemption from the flu shot letter from the parent each school year. Please provide this to your child's teacher.

Inclusion

The MTSD Pre-K Program welcomes all students in an inclusive environment. Inclusion is defined as "including children with disabilities in early childhood programs, together with their peers without disabilities; holding high expectations and intentionally promoting participation in all learning and social activities; facilitating individualized accommodations; and using evidence-based services and supports to foster development, friendships with peers, and a sense of belonging." (HHS/ED Policy Statement, 2015)

Children of all abilities, needs, backgrounds, cultures, religions, and economic circumstances participate in our programs. We are committed to providing developmentally appropriate experiences that support the access and participation of each child. Families are encouraged and supported to collaborate with staff to ensure each child has the opportunity for optimum success. We communicate with families daily and have meetings as needed. We work with therapists, special educators, and other professionals to integrate accommodations, modifications, and strategies when students need their services. We can help families as they secure additional help and resources.

If your child has an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), we request you share this with your preschool teacher at enrollment. We will follow these plans, supporting your child in making sustained and meaningful progress.



Family Support

Additional support for families and staff can be found through the following resources:

- Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation:
 - https://www.ecmhc.org/
- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, Practical Strategies for Teachers/Caregivers:
 - http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#teachingskills
- Common Sense Education:
 - https://www.commonsense.org/education/toolkit/familyengagementresources
- The Incredible Years:
 - https://incredibleyears.com/
- National PTA:
 - https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Parents-Guides-to-StudentSuccess
- PA Department of Education:
 - https://www.education.pa.gov/Schools/safeschools/equityandinclusion/ EPH/Family/Individual /Pages/default.aspx
- Pyramid Model:
 - http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/





Student Success & Classroom Managment Plan FOR MTSD PRE-K

Guiding Belief Statements

The MTSD Pre-K Program works under the district's overarching mission to provide a highquality educational experience that prepares the students to reach their potential as life-long learners and responsible citizens. There are five critical belief statements that our program follows and underscores our mission:

- Families play a critical role in student success.
- Each student is important and is treated with dignity and respect.
- All students should have the opportunity to participate in academic programs that are relevant and rigorous.
- A learning community embraces diversity and allows individuals to achieve their maximum potential.
- Learning is a life-long experience and does require different approaches.
 Working within this mission and these guiding beliefs, the MTSD Pre-K Program envision providing every child the educational experiences he or she needs to be successful in his or her academic career and life.

Student Success Plan

With the Mission and Guiding Belief Statements in mind, qualified and caring staff provide each child with guidance that helps him/her acquire a positive self-concept and self-control via the following program practices and structures.

Activities / Curriculum / Schedule:

- Activities are developmentally appropriate for whole group, small group, and individual student needs.
- Differentiation occurs based on students' strengths and needs, interests, and learning styles.
- The physical environment and atmosphere are engaging, positive, and respectful.
- Schedules are developmentally appropriate, providing a consistent flow to the children's day that meets their cognitive, social & emotional, and physical needs.
- Each program implements a positive behavior management system aligned with the system used by the school. Characteristics such as responsibility, caring, and teamwork are modeled and reinforced on a daily basis.
- The strategies of re-direction, distraction, and active listening to determine the underlying cause of the behavior are utilized when an unacceptable behavior occurs or is about to occur. (Corporal punishment and shaming are never permitted. Also, discipline shall never be related to food, rest, or toileting.)

As children are learning and developing their social and emotional skills, staff support their growth by ensuring the following:

- Correct behaviors are taught, modeled, coached, and reinforced. Behavior guidance is constructive, positive, and suited to the age of the child.
- Interventions are proactive rather than reactive, are minimally intrusive as possible, use positive techniques, and are respectful of the student's human dignity.
- Classroom rules are clear, positive, in child-friendly language, developed with student input, visible, and reinforced.
- Children are encouraged to solve as many of their problems as possible, with staff guidance as necessary. (Physical or emotional danger require immediate staff intervention.)

The overall key behavior expectations for students are:

- Act in ways that promote the physical safety and welfare of children and others.
- Respect of rights, feelings, and property of others.
- Cooperate with other children and adults and follow established consequences.

Additional Student Supports

When the above strategies and practices in the 'Student Success Plan' section do not result in the appropriate behavior, the following may occur based on the nature of the inappropriate behavior:

- The child may be removed from the activity. The child and staff member will engage in a brief discussion to decide upon a solution to the behavior and how the student can make a better choice the next time s/he finds him/herself in a similar situation. The child is supported as he/she transitions back into the same activity or is redirected to a different activity.
- 2. Occurrences of inappropriate behavior may require staff to complete a Behavior Report which will be reviewed with the parent. The parent, the student, and the staff person will determine if additional supports such as an individualized behavior plan is needed.
- 3. If needed, several data/monitoring strategies are available to use to monitor student behavior and collect data to inform decisions on how best to work with the student.
 - a. Anecdotal journal: Daily, or periodically throughout the school day as needed, document observed behaviors objective notes, dates, times.
 - b. Charts/Logs Behavior Frequency Counts: For specific behaviors being considered, tally the number of times the behavior occurs in a given timeframe and/or record time and context each time behavior occurs during the day.
 - c. Identify and document antecedents to specific behaviors of concern and document the subsequent consequence of the behavior. Look for trends.
 - d. Have a conversation with the student about the behavior. Gather input from the student (and/or the family).
 - e. School records: Consider attendance information, incident reports, behavior reports, student interest inventory, academic strengths.
 - f. Individual behavior management plan documentation.
 - g. Parent and staff conferences may be required to discuss the behavior and establish a plan of action.
 - h. An individualized behavior plan may be required. The appropriate staff person will gather data regarding the frequency, timing, and context in which the student is engaging in inappropriate behaviors. Working with the appropriate Child Development Personnel and the child's family, a behavior plan will be developed that outlines direct instruction and managed reinforcements that works to decrease/eliminate the child's inappropriate behaviors.
 - i. A referral to the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit may be made for the possibility of a more formal evaluation to determine if the child needs more support than is available at the MTSD Pre-K Programs.
- 4. Other, as appropriate per the student's needs.

Alignment with Federal Policies

The MTSD Pre-K Programs' Student Success & Classroom Management Policy ins in compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Civil Rights Compliance

Suspension-Expulsion

All efforts, as noted above, are made to help ensure student success. In the extremely rare situation when the severity and/or frequency of a child's inappropriate behavior jeopardizes the health, safety, or well-being of him/herself or others within the program, the MTSD Pre-K Program Supervisor reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a child from the program.

Staff Support

Staff received supports to ensure their proficiency working with children with challenging behaviors.

- Located in each campus, each MTSD Pre-K Program follows the positive behavior support system of the school. Staff are provided an orientation to their school's system. Staff reinforce their school's Character Pillars, verbally recognizing students, handing out recognition cards, and accumulating credits toward a program/class goal when they demonstrate Character Pillars.
- The MTSD Pre-K Programs supervisory team responds with any request from staff if/when they experience challenges working with their students. Strategies are shared specific to the staff and student needs, including materials are created/provided (e.g. If-Then charts, visual schedules). Individualized behavior management plans are developed, implemented, and monitored.
- Each year staff complete a self-assessment. They are encouraged to consider their self-assessment results and the students they have that year to select specific trainings that align with the students they have. Training sessions on the topic of working with challenging student behaviors is available to all staff.
- Observations occur by the MTSD Pre-K Program supervisory team and outside supports (e.g. IU Behavior Specialist) to help identify strategies the staff can use with challenging students. Modeling of strategies is also provided.





Flexible Instruction Plan

FOR MTSD PRE-K

Introduction

The goal of the MTSD Pre-K Program is to provide in-person learning experiences for participating children. In-person learning best facilitates students' social/emotional development while they are actively engaged in foundational academic experiences with their peers in a research-based, Pre-K structured environment.

There may be instances where remote Pre-K instruction could be necessary. Remote Pre-K programming may be required in response to health-related quarantine/isolation requirements outlined by the CDC. There are additional situations in which remote Pre-K instruction may be necessary: inclement weather closing, Act 80 day and teacher in-service days built into the school year calendar, and emergency-related building closures (e.g. flooding, sewer, building damage, health-related cleaning).

This Pre-K Flexible Instruction Plan outlines how remote instruction will function in the event of situations outlined above.

Program Calendar & Schedule

The MTSD Pre-K Program follows the MTSD 2024-25 calendar (attached). This calendar provides 180 days of instruction for students. Pre-K classes follow this calendar; thus Pre-K students are provided 180 days of instruction.

In the event of a situation which necessitates the need to implement remote Pre-K instruction, the impacted students will be provided remote instruction options as noted in the next section.

Remote Instruction Options for Families

The development of this Flexible Instruction Plan is based on a previously utilized remote learning plan, pulling from it the components which worked. Additionally, staff and parents complete anonymous surveys at the end of each school year. Staff survey areas solicit their input regarding communication, support from the MTSD Pre-K Program supervisory team, program practices, and an open comment section. The parent survey solicits their input regarding if their child likes coming to the program, suggestions for improvement, notes on the strengths of the program, parent-staff and student-staff relations, supervision, input regarding the Pre-K Flexible Instruction Plan, and an open comment section. Additionally, periodic Pre-K team meetings and informal conversations throughout the school year also provide insight to the development of this Flexible Instruction Plan.

The MTSD Pre-K Flexible Instruction Plan provides instruction through correspondence via email and/or picking up materials from the school.

- Teachers will prepare and send home materials and directions for learning activities that will occur at home. The students will return their work to their teacher.
- The teacher will work with each parent to either mail (email or USPS) or provide a pickup time at the school to be able to share the materials and directions for learning at home.
- Teachers will include projects that can be accomplished at home with common household items. An example is a student can practice writing his/her letters in a pan filed with a thin layer of sugar or flour.
- Teachers may offer a virtual meeting to the class via Google Meet or Zoom. To the extent possible, these will be scheduled to accommodate the schedule of those choosing to participate in them.

In the event of an unplanned school closing (e.g. due to inclement weather), teachers will email their Pre-K families providing a list of activities with directions they can do at home that are aligned with what would be occurring in the classroom that day. These activities will be described with appropriate detail in the email realizing the families may not have access to a printer at home.

Remote instruction will be planned for 30 minutes per day. Additional content and activity suggestions may be provided, but are not required.

Instruction & Assessment

As with in-person instruction, teachers are following the PA Early Learning Standards and Pre-K Program curriculum as they plan and implement lessons remotely.

The learning cycle includes teachers continually assessing each student's progress and achievement. This guides their next instructional decisions and each student's learning progression.

As your child completes his/her work, please provide assistance only as needed. Teachers need to see what the students can, and cannot, do to determine how best to facilitate their next steps in learning.

Please feel free to share information and ask questions about your child working from home with your child's teacher (e.g. notes, email, phone call, virtual conference request). You are always a critical part of your child's educational team. We continue to value your input.

Tracking Instructional Time

Students are expected to participate in teacher directed learning experiences each remote learning day. For correspondence learning, students will follow the timeline provided by the teacher. Teachers will track students' activities through their returned work and correspondence with their parents to help ensure students are completing 180 days of instruction.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

If needed, parent-teacher conferences will occur virtually. If an on-line meeting can work for the parent, the teacher will schedule a conference via Google Meet or Zoom. If it works better for the parent, a phone conference can be scheduled.

There are two scheduled Pre-K Parent-Teacher Conference days during the school year. Additionally, parents and teachers can request a conference at any point during the school year as needed.

Technology

Technology is not required for remote learning in the correspondence instruction option.

PDE Notification of FI Plan Usage

In the event of a whole class or school closure necessitating the use of this Flexible Instruction Plan, the Pre-K Program Specialist will be notified within 24 hours of the Plan's implementation, including the reason it is necessary.

Parent Notification of Situations Necessitating the Need for Pre-K Remote Learning Options

MTSD will inform parents of school and/or class closures via its mass notification system and district website (www.rntsd.org). Individual isolation/quarantine cases will be handled confidentially with the parent being emailed directly.

Be sure your contact information in Infinite Campus is accurate and up-to-date to ensure you receive these messages. Parents can request corrections be made through their Parent Portal.

Questions & Comments

Facilitating remote learning at home, in addition to your other work and family obligations, presents unique challenges. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher and/or the MTSD Pre-K Program supervisor at 814-836-6091 with any questions or concerns you may have.

Parent / Teacher Acknowledgement of Receipt of this Pre-K Remote Learning Plan

After receiving this Pre-K Flexible Instruction Plan, please review it and keep it on hand for reference. Complete and sign below to acknowledge you have received this Plan.

Parent's Name (printed)

Parent's Signature

Child or Children enrolled in the MTSD Pre-K Program

MTSD CALENDAR 2024-2025

July						J	anuar	y	-						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr				Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	1	No School	
1	2	3	4	5						1	2	3	20	No School	1
8	9	10	11	12				6	7	8	9	10	24	End of Quarter 2	1
15	16	17	18	19				13	14	15	16	17	27	Recording Day/No School	
22	23	24	25	26				20	21	22	23	24	21	Teacher Days	100
29	30	31		108562				27	28	29	30	31	20	Student Days	94
		Augus	t						F	ebrua	ry	1			
Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	29	First Teacher Day		Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	24	K-8 In-Service AM/Parent Conf PM/No Schoo	1
			1	2	30	Teacher In-Service		3	4	5	6	7	24	9-12 Parent Conf/No School	
5	6	7	8	9				10	11	12	13	14			1
12	13	14	15	16				17	18	19	20	21			1
19	20	21	22	23	2	Teacher Days	2	24	25	26	27	28	20	Teacher Days	120
26	27	28	29	30	0	Student Days	0			102152			19	Student Days	113
	Se	ptemb	ber							March	1				
Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	2	No School		Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	2		
2	<u>3</u>	4	5	6	3	First Student Day		3	4	5	6	7	2		
9	10	11	12	13				10	11	12	13	14			
16	17	18	19	20				17	18	19	20	21			
23	24	25	26	27	20	Teacher Days	22	24	25	26	27	28	21	Teacher Days	141
30					20	Student Days	20	31					21	Student Days	134
	October								April						
Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	14	In-Service/No School		Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	1	End of Quarter 3	
	1	2	3	4					<u>1</u>	2	3	4	4	Rec/In-service/No School	
7	8	9	10	11				7	8	9	10	11	14-18	No School	
14	15	16	17	18				14	15	16	17	18			
21	22	23	24	25	23	Teacher Days	45	21	22	23	24	25	17	Teacher Days	158
28	29	30	31		22	Student Days	42	28	29	30			16	Student Days	150
	No	ovemb	er		5	End of Quarter 1				May					
Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	11	K-8 Parent Conf/9-12 In-Serv/Rec/No School		Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	26	No School	
				1	12	K-12 Parent Conf/No School					1	2			
4	<u>5</u>	6	7	8	27	Early Dismissal		5	6	7	8	9	20		
11	12	13	14	15	28-29	No School		12	13	14	15	16			
18	19	20	21	22	19	Teacher Days	64	19	20	21	22	23	21	Teacher Days	179
25	26	27	28	29	17	Student Days	59	26	27	28	29	30	21	Student Days	171
	December								June						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	23-31	No School		Мо	Tu	We	Th	Fr	<u>12</u>	Last Student Day	
2	3	4	5	6				2	3	4	5	6	13	Last Teacher Day/Recording	4
9	10	11	12	13				9	10	11	<u>12</u>	13			4
16	17	18	19	20				16	17	18	19	20			-
23	24	25	26	27	15	Teacher Days	79	23	24	25	26	27	10	Teacher Days	189
30	31				15	Student Days	74	30				3	9	Student Days	180

	End of Qu	arters	Tentative Report Card Dates			
Qua	arter 1 ends No	ovember 5, 2024	Quarter 1 - November 12, 2024			
Qua	arter 2 ends Ja	nuary 24, 2025	Quarter 2 - January 31, 2025			
Qua	arter 3 ends Ap	oril 1, 2025	Quarter 3 - April 8, 2025			
Qua	arter 4 ends Ju	ne 12, 2025	Quarter 4 - June 19, 2025			
20	23/2024 PSSA	Testing Days	2023/2024 Keystone Testing Dates (Algebra 1, Biology, and Literature)			
Date	Grades	Content Area	December 4.19, 2024 Winter Even Window Mays 1			
April 21-25, 2025	3-8	English Language Arts	December 4-18, 2024 - Winter Exam Window Wave 1 January 6-17, 2025 - Winter Exam Window Wave 2			
April 28-May 2, 2025	3-8	Mathematics	May 12-23, 2025 - Spring Exam Window Wave 2			
April 28-May 2, 2025	4 & 8	Science	July 28-Aug 1, 2025 - Summer Exam Window			
April 28-May 9, 2025	3-8	Make-up	July 20-Aug 1, 2025 - Summer Exam Window			



Health & Safety Plan Policies & Procedures

FOR MTSD PRE-K

Introduction

This MTSD Pre-K Program Heath Safety Plan outlines critical policies and procedures to help ensure the health safety of the MTSD Pre-K Program students and staff.

This Pre-K Program Health Safety Plan addresses both the MTSD Pre-K Program's role in preventing and mitigating the spread of illness in the school environment, as well as parents' role to prevent the spread of illness in the school environment. Additionally, this plan includes information on reportable illness, the Medication Policy, the Allergy Action Plan, the Asthma Action Plan, and the Seizure Action Plan.

The content of this plan is based on guidance from the Center for Disease Control, Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide, 5th Edition, Caring for Our Children, 4th Edition and is aligned with MTSD policies and procedures.



PREVENTION & MITIGATION OF ILLNESS IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

- Staff will teach and periodically review proper handwashing protocol (i.e., use soap and water for 20+ seconds).
- Staff and students wash hands upon arrival, before and after eating, after using the restroom, and between transitions from one major activity to another. When soap and water is not readily available, hand-sanitizing lotion that is at least 60% alcohol content can be used when written parent permission is on file.
 - For the Pre-K environment, hand-sanitizers will be stored out of reach of the Pre-K students and will only be used with adult supervision.
- Staff will teach and periodically review proper respiratory etiquette (i.e., covering your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, washing your hands after sneezing, coughing, and/or using a tissue).

Cleaning & Sanitizing

- Staff will clean and sanitize Pre-K classroom learning materials on a scheduled basis and as needed. (Building Custodians clean and sanitize Pre-K classrooms as they do other spaces and classrooms in the building).
- Items that students may have their own set of, such as a caddie or pencil bag of often used materials, will be cleaned and sanitized when needed.

HOME SCREENING, REQUIRED EXCLUSIONS FOR THE PROGRAM, AND RETURNING TO SCHOOL

Home Screening

Parents are to screen their children's health every day. Children who are ill:

- Are not able to comfortably participate in program activities.
- Have a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the rest of the class and their ability to maintain an instructional focus.
- Pose the risk of spreading harmful diseases to others.

If a child is showing any one of the following within 24 hours of drop-off to school, s/he is not to attend their MTSD Pre-K Program. Parents are encouraged to consult with their family doctor when their children experience any of these symptoms:

- Abdominal pain that lasts for 2 hours or more.
- Development of a rash or sores.
- Diarrhea.
- Fever of 100 or greater within previous 24 hours.
- Loss of taste and/or smell.
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- Sore throat.
- Taken fever-reducing medicine within past 24 hours.
- Unusual or significant congestion / runny nose.
- Unusual or significant cough.
- Unusual or significant headache.
- Unusual or significant irritability.
- Unusual or significant lethargy.
- Unusual or significant muscle or body aches.
- Vomiting.



Returning to School

The student is able to return to their MTSD Pre-K Program when:

• The child is fever free for 24 hours AND has had no fever-reducing medicine for 24 hours AND all symptoms are at least improved enough to comfortably participate in the program.

Other illnesses common for young children have additional condition-specific guidelines for when the child can return to the program:

- Chickenpox (varicella)- can return after all lesions have dried or crusted (usually 6 days after the onset of the rash).
- Head lice or nits can return the day after treatment has started.
- Impetigo can return 24 hours after medical treatment has started.
- **Pink or red conjunctiva** (i.e., whites of the eyes) with white or yellow eye mucus drainage can return the day after medical treatment has started.
- Scabies can return after treatment has been given.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (i.e., strep throat or other streptococcal infection)- can return 24 hours after medical treatment has started.

Note: This is not an all-inclusive list. Guidance from Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide, 5th Edition, Caring for Our Children, 4th Edition, and the CDC will be used to determine the child's return to the program.

Important Notes

- Persistent or recurring symptoms not associated with infectious condition: If one or more symptoms persist, excluding the fever symptom, the parent is encouraged to consult with his/her family doctor to determine if it is appropriate for the child to return to school with the lingering or recurring symptom(s). If the doctor determines it appropriate, s/he can provide a note identifying the symptom(s) that persist and state that the child is cleared to return to school. This note must be signed by the doctor and provided to the child's teacher/program staff by 3 pm the day before the child returns.
- Child develops symptoms during the program: If a child develops any of the above symptoms during their time in the class/program, the parent will be contacted. Depending upon the severity of the symptom, the parent may be required to pick his/her child up before the end of the class/program.
- Minor illnesses/minor symptoms: Children experiencing minor illnesses/minor symptoms are not required to be absent from school. Minor runny, noses, slight headache, slight fatigue, occasional sneezing, and occasional coughing not associated with a fever or breathing difficulties should be monitored, but do not require absence from school as long as the child can comfortably participate in the program. If the program staff determine the child is not comfortably participating in the program, the parent will be notified to come pick up his/her child.

Reportable Diseases

The parent/guardian must notify the MTSD Pre-K Program staff person within 24 hours after their child or any member of the immediate household has developed a known or suspected infectious or vaccine-preventable disease. When a child has a disease or illness that may require exclusion, the parent/guardian should inform the staff person of the diagnosis.

The MTSD Pre-K Program will inform parents as follows:

- The MTSD Pre-K Program will inform parents of enrolled children when there is a suspected outbreak of a communicable disease or an outbreak of an unusual illness that represents a public health emergency in the opinion of the Department of Health.
- If a student or staff person is infected with a vaccine-preventable disease, MTSD PreK Program will inform parents of children who are unvaccinated for that vaccinepreventable disease and may have been exposed to that disease.
- If there are 2 or more cases of an infectious condition in a program or class, MTSD Pre-K Program will notify parents of children in that program or class that their child may have been exposed to that infectious condition.
- The purpose of these notifications is to make parents aware of their children's possible exposure to an infectious disease so they may monitor their children for symptoms and are encouraged to consult with their health care provider if they have any concerns.
- Confidentiality will be maintained regarding the persons who have the communicable disease.

The PA Department of Health maintains a list of reportable diseases. The MTSD Pre-K Program is required to report when a student or staff person has any of the illnesses as indicated in the Appendix A: List of Reportable Diseases to the PA Department of Health.

Seizure Action Plan

If a student is being treated for a seizure disorder, the parent completes a Seizure Action Plan form. The parent meets with the program team to review and sign the plan prior to the student's participation in the program. See Appendix H for a template Seizure Action Plan.

If there is a medication related to the student's seizure disorder that needs to be on site while the student is in the program, the appropriate medication forms must be completed. See Appendix B for MTSD Medication Policy #210, Appendix C for MTSD Medication Guidelines for Policy 210, Appendix D for the Authorization for Medication for Policy 210, and Appendix E for the Medication Log for Policy 210.

Note: Any medication must be documented on the MTSD Authorization for Medication form, and any administration of the medication must be documented on the MTSD Medication Log, even if it is noted on the Seizure Action Plan.

Allergy Action Plan

If a student is being treated for an allergy, the parent completes an Allergy Action Plan form. The parent meets with the program team to review and sign the plan prior to the student's participation in the program. See Appendix F for a template Allergy Action Plan.

If there is a medication related to the student's allergy that needs to be on site while the student is in the program, the appropriate medication forms must be completed. See Appendix B for MTSD Medication Policy #2101 Appendix C for MTSD Medication Guidelines for Policy 2101 Appendix D for the Authorization for Medication for Policy 2101 and Appendix E for the Medication Log for Policy 210.

Note: Any medication must be documented on the MTSD Authorization for Medication form, and any administration of the medication must be documented on the MTSD Medication Log, even if it is noted on the Allergy Action Plan.

Asthma Action Plan

If a student is being treated for asthma, the parent completes an Asthma Action Plan form. The parent meets with the program team to review and sign the plan prior to the student's participation in the program. See Appendix G for a template Asthma Action Plan.

If there is a medication related to the student's asthma that needs to be on site while the student is in the program, the appropriate medication forms must be completed. See Appendix B for MTSD Medication Policy #210, Appendix C for MTSD Medication Guidelines for Policy 210, Appendix D for the Authorization for Medication for Policy 210, and Appendix E for the Medication Log for Policy 210.

Note: Any medication must be documented on the MTSD Authorization for Medication form, and any administration of the medication must be documented on the MTSD Medication Log, even if it is noted on the Asthma Action Plan.

Medication Policy

The MTSD Pre-K Program follows the MTSD Medications Policy# 210. If a child has a medication that may be needed while in the program as authorized by a medical professional, a medical plan for that child will be developed and communicated prior to the student's participation in the program. See Appendix B for MTSD Medication Policy #2101 Appendix C for MTSD Medication Guidelines for Policy 2101 Appendix D for the Authorization for Medication for Policy 2101 and Appendix E for the Medication Log for Policy 210.

Notice of Supplemental Forms

Supplemental forms and policies are given to families during the enrollment process. For copies of these forms, please email greenaway@mtsd.org.







MTSD PRE-K TUITION & SCHEDULE INFORMATION

TUITION: 2024-2025

Tuition for MTSD Pre-K is about \$45.70 per day and \$**8,226** for the school year. Your student will be in front of a certified teacher and learning in a real school setting, preparing them for the next level early on! Payments are made monthly, on the first day of each month, over nine months.

SCHEDULE

Monday - Friday, five (5) days per week Drop Off: 9:00 - 9:15 am Pick Up: 3:00- 3:15 pm

BEFORE & AFTER CARE

Before and After care is offered at our Asbury & Belle Valley locations and is operated by the CDC.

- Before Care: Dropoff as early as 7:00 a.m.
- After Care: Pickup by 6:00 p.m.

For more information, call CDC: **(814) 480-9472** or visit their website at:

https://www.cdcenters.org/programsservices/school-age-msd.html



CLASSROOMS WITH CERTIFIED TEACHERS







FIVE UPDATED SCHOOL BUILDINGS











PA PRE-K COUNTS & MTSD FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCREENING APPLICATION

Please Note:

- This form is a screening tool and does not guarantee funding assignment or enrollment.
- The information is confidential to the PA Pre-K Counts Program and to the MTSD Scholarship Program.
- This scholarship application is not required until your child has been offered an MTSD Pre-K placement.

Directions

The MTSD Pre-K Program has financial assistance for qualifying families (e.g., Pre-K Counts, EITC Scholarships). (Note: The funding is not unlimited so gualifying for financial assistance does not guarantee you will be awarded financial assistance.) To qualify for financial assistance for the MTSD

	100%	300%
Household/Family Size	(Head Start)	(Pre-K Counts)
1	15,060	45,180
2	20,440	61,320
3	25,820	77,460
4	31,200	93,600
5	36,580	109,740
6	41,960	125,880
7	47,340	142,020
8	52,720	158,160

Pre-K Program, the family must first demonstrate a financial need. Using the chart above, determine your financial need relative to your family size. If you feel you may qualify for financial assistance, complete pages 2-5 in their entirety. Then scan/email completed pages 2-5 to greenaway@mtsd.org or USPS mail them to:

> Millcreek Township School District Pre-K Program Office 3740 West 26th Street Erie, PA 16506

Upon receipt and review of completed Financial Assistance Screening Applications, the MTSD Pre-K Program Office will reach out to you let you know the status of your Financial Aid Screening Application.

If your family meets the 100% Federal Poverty Guidelines, or your family gualifies for food stamps, you are eligible for Head Start early childhood education. Please refer to page 6 for additional information. Families eligible for Head Start are encouraged to enroll their children in the Head Start program. In addition to educational programming, Head Start provides comprehensive services to enrolled children and their families (e.g., health check-ups and services, meals, family support services, transportation, before/after care program services at select locations, community connections).





6



Child's Last Name		Child's First Name	Middle Initial				
Address							
City	State Pe	ennsylvania	Zip Code				
School District of Residence	I		County				
Child's Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)	Age 23	45	Gender Female	Male			
Name of Parent/Guardian con	npleting this form	n (Last, First)	Gender Female	Male			
Relationship to the Child — Father — Mother — Guardian — Other: Role — Primary Guardi — Secondary Gua Employment Status of Parent, — Employed Full-time — Employed Part-time	anLegal rdianOthe	Employment S applicable):	Biological Foster Adoptive Other: uardian Employment Status of 2nd Parent/Guardian <i>(if</i>				
Employed Part-time Unemployed Other:		Unempl	Employed Part-time Unemployed Other:				
Household Income Source(s) (Employment S Social Security S Child Support A	Self-Employment			on			
Other:							

Verification of Income

- Income verification must be attached to the submitted Financial Assistance Application.
- Verification documents must be less than 12 months old.
- All income of all members of the household must be reported and verified.
- Previous year's income tax statement is required for income verification.
- Refer to pages 7-8 for additional income verification guidelines.

List Household Members Below for Determination of Family Size (required): *(Include the enrolling child first)*

	Name	Relationship to Child	Age
1		Enrolling Child	
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

Per PKC Statute, Regulations, and Guidelines, the following members of the household are included in family size:

- Parent of the child (biological or adoptive mother or father, stepmother or stepfather, caretaker, or spouse who exercises care for the child)
- A biological, adoptive, unrelated or foster care child or stepchild of the parent or caretaker who is under 18 years of age and not emancipated.
- A child who is 18 years of age or older but under 22 years of age who is enrolled in high school, a general educational development program, or a post-secondary program leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate and who is wholly or partially dependent on the income of the parent or caretaker or spouse of the parent or caretaker.
- Others supported by the income of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child enrolling or participating in the program. If counted toward family size, any applicable income of these persons must also be counted for eligibility purposes.

Note: A family size value of one (1) with an income of \$0 is entered when a foster child is applying for Pre-K Counts.

Othe	Other Child Eligibility Criterion (must check all that apply):				
	Behavioral Supports (attach verification if this criterion is selected): A Child who was referred to PA Pre-K Counts from an appropriately credential health or mental health practitioner who is not employed by the PA Pre-K Counts program, or A child who is receiving mental health treatment.				
	Child Protective Services: A child who is a foster child, a kinship care child, or receiving Children & Youth services.				
	Education Level of Parent/Guardian: Parent/Guardian does not have a high school diploma or GED or post-secondary degree.				
	English Language Learner: A child whose first language is not English and who is in process of learning English is considered an English Language Learner.				
	Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (attach verification if this criterion is selected: A child who is currently enrolled in the Preschool Early Intervention program with an active IEP.				
	Incarcerated Parent: A child for whom one of the child's parents is currently in prison.				
	 Homeless: A child who lacks fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to one of the following: Children who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement. Children who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. Children who are living in cars, parks, public places, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings. 				
	Migrant (non-immigrant) Seasonal Student: A migrant child has moved from one school district to another in order to accompany or to join a migrant parent or guardian, who is a migratory worker or migratory fisher, or fishing work including agri-related business such as meat or vegetable processing, working in nurseries such as Christmas and evergreen trees farming.				
	Teen Mother: A child whose mother was under the age of 18 when the child was born.				
	Other:				

Form Completion & Accuracy Acknowledgement

To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application and the associated income documentation is accurate. I understand that I may be asked to verify or substantiate information provided. I understand that incomplete and/or inaccurate information may result in cancellation of any financial assistance I may be awarded.

(mm/dd/yyyy)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Child or Children you are applying to enroll in the MTSD Pre-K Program Parent/Guardian Printed Name

FAMILIES ELIGIBLE FOR HEAD START

Families eligible for Head Start (100% of FPL or below OR family qualifies for food stamps) are encouraged to enroll their children in the Head Start program.

In addition to educational programming, Head Start provides comprehensive services to enrolled children and their families (e.g., health check-ups and services, meals, family support services, transportation, before/after care program services at select locations, community connections).

Important information for families eligible for Head Start:

Contact information for Head Start providers

- Erie County ELRC contact: <u>https://nwirelrc.org/</u>; 814-836-5898
- Head Start ECLKC contact: <u>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/</u>; 1-866-763-6481
- Child Development Centers, Inc.: <u>http://www.cdcenters.org</u>; 814-480-9505

Asbury Child Development Center, Inc. 3814 Asbury Road; Erie PA 16506 814-670-0838

Downtown Child Development Center, Inc. 121 East 10th Street; Erie PA 16501 814-480-0645 Elk Valley Head Start 2556 Maple Avenue; Lake City PA 16423 814-670-0838

Century Child Development Center, Inc. 504 East 27th Street; Erie PA 16504 814-670-0838

Cascade Child Development Center, Inc. 950 West 7th Street; Erie PA 16502 814-413-0133 Roosevelt Child Development Center, Inc. 2300 Cranberry Street; Erie PA 16502 814-413-0720

• Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Inc.; 345 East 9th Street, Erie, PA 16503; 814-454-4514

Application and/or assistance with referral available upon request

Brochure or website with information about Head Start

- PA Head Start Brochure: <u>https://s35719.p133.sites.pressdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Head-Start_-Early-Head-Start.pdf</u>
- Head Start ECLKC: <u>https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/</u>
- PA Dept of Human Services: <u>https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Children/Pages/Head-Start.aspx</u>
- PA Promise for Children: <u>https://papromiseforchildren.com/</u>
 - <u>https://papromiseforchildren.com/help-them-learn/head-start-and-early-head-start/</u>

INCOME VERIFICATION GUIDELINES

Whose Income is Counted

- The parent or caretaker of the child
- The parent or caretaker's spouse
- Children's, excluding a child's earned income
- Others residing with the child, in instances when these persons are counted toward family size

Time Period

• The period of time for income verification is the 12 months immediately before the month in which the application or reapplication for enrollment of a child is made, or for the calendar year immediately before the calendar year in which the application or reapplication is made.

Income Verification Guidance

- The following are included when verifying income:
 - Earned income from all sources including gross wages from work, cash, and in-kind payments received by an individual in exchange for services and net income from self-employment.
 - Unearned income including cash and contributions received by an individual for which family allotments or other regular support from an absent family member; pensions; public assistance (including temporary assistance for needy families, supplemental general assistance, or general relief money payments); and dividends, interest, net income, net royalties and periodic receipts from estates or trusts.
 - Unearned benefits received periodically by an individual, such as unemployment compensation, workman's compensation, gambling or lottery winnings, or retirement benefits.

Income Deductions

- The following are deducted when determining family income:
 - Voluntary or court-ordered child support or child support paid by the parent or caretaker or family member to a present or former spouse not residing in the same household.
 - A medical expense not reimbursed through medical insurance that exceeds 10 percent of the family gross monthly income.

Verification of Income

- Acceptable verification of earned income from employment includes income tax return, pay stubs reflecting earnings, W-2 forms, the IRS Form used for reporting tips, a written employer statement of anticipated earnings or other document that establishes the parent's or caretaker's anticipated earnings from employment.
- Acceptable verification from self-employment includes tax returns, business records or other documents establishing profit from self-employment.
- Acceptable verification of unearned income includes a copy of a current benefit check, an award letter that designates the amount of a grant or benefit, such as a letter from the Social Security Administration stating the amount of the social security benefit, a bank statement, a court order, or other document or data base report that established the amount of unearned income.
- If a family receives or pays child support, the eligibility agency shall verify the amount of support received or paid by the family by documents from the PA Department of Human Services.

Income Exclusions

- The following are excluded when determining family income:
 - Employment earnings of an individual who is an emancipated minor.
 - Tax refunds, including earned income tax credits.
 - Withdrawals of bank, credit union or brokerage deposits or money borrowed.
 - Loans or grants, such as scholarships or income from federal student aid or participation in work-study program.
 - Payments to volunteers in service to America, such as Americorps or Foster Grandparent programs.
 - Any foster care payments by a foster care placement agency, including payments to permanent legal custodians or adoption assistance payments by county children and youth agency.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What do students do during a Pre-K day?

The MTSD Pre-K program values the importance of early learning experiences as the building blocks for future success. Our Pre-K curriculum is aligned to the PA Early Learning Standards and the MTSD Kindergarten curriculum. We provide an integrated, enriched, student-centered, and hands-on learning environment that meets the social/emotional, physical, and cognitive needs of students ages 3-5.

What are the student to teacher ratios?

There is a maximum of a 10:1 ratio in each classroom. MTSD Pre-K classes have one PA Early Childhood Education Certified Teacher and one Pre-K Assistant in each room. Classes may have up to 20 students per classroom.

What is the schedule?

Monday - Friday for a total of five days per week.

- Pre-K students dropped off between 9 and 9:15 am
- Pre-K instructional day: 9:15 to 3 pm
- Pre-K students picked up between 3 and 3:15 pm

What ages are accepted?

Students ages 3 & 4 are accepted at the MTSD Pre-K Program. Preference is given to 4 yr olds.

Can non-Millcreek families enroll?

Yes! However, preference is given to Millcreek families. Non-Millcreek families will be notified if their application has been accepted after the priority date for Millcreek families has passed.

Is there an application fee?

No, but there is a Registration Fee. This fee is not charged unless the student is enrolled into the program and is \$35.







www.mtsd.org/prek greenaway@mtsd.org





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the cost?

Cost may vary depending on family eligibility for Pre-K Counts, scholarships, and other funding. Tuition for MTSD Pre-K is \$8,226 or \$45.70 per day. For more information, visit the financial assistance page on our website:

www.mtsd.org/prek/financial-assistance

If you are interested in Before & After Care pricing, please visit the CDC website: https://www.cdcenters.org/programs-services/school-age-msd.html or call CDC at 814-480-9472. The CDC accepts MTSD Pre-K children at our Asbury & Belle Valley locations.

Are there discounts for Millcreek families or siblings of current students?

No, but there are other financial assistance opportunities available. Please review the information on the financial assistance page of our website.

What financial options are available to help families with costs?

For qualifying families, Pre-K Counts and EITC Scholarships are available. There is also a specific fund through the Millcreek Education Foundation dedicated to supporting MTSD Pre-K families in need. ELRC funding is accepted by the CDC for pre-k before and after care. Please review the financial assistance options available by visiting the financial assistance page of our website.

What is Pre-K Counts?

Pre-K Counts is a state initiative to help ensure children ages 3-4 have the chance to learn in a high-quality Pre-K environment, become excited about school, and be prepared for Kindergarten. Pre-K Counts is a scholarship program for families who earn up to 300% of the federal income poverty level.









FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What happens if all the Pre-K Counts spots are taken at my desired location? Tuition spots?

Families may give preferences on their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice locations. If a desired location is full, they may enroll at another preferred location with available spots. For Pre-K Counts families, if all available spots are taken at a desired location, families may choose to pay for a tuition spot at that location if there are any available.

Are breakfasts and lunches included?

No, but qualifying families can receive free and reduced meals. Please review the Free and Reduced Meal Information on the Food Services page of our website: https://www.mtsd.org/who-we-are/district-offices/food-service

What benefits are there to choosing MTSD Pre-K over other area options?

- Pre-K Teachers are PA certified teachers in Early Education, many hold master's degrees and additional teacher certifications. Pre-K Assistants are also high-qualified. Both Pre-K Teachers and Pre-K Assistants participated in district-aligned and individualized professional development each year.
- MTSD Pre-K students become familiar with MTSD schools, teachers, and programs, making it a smoother transition into Kindergarten.
- Transitions from Pre-K to Kindergarten is a smooth process with strong collaboration between the Pre-K teams, Kindergarten teams, and support services.
- The MTSD Pre-K program values the importance of early learning experiences as the building blocks for future success. Our Pre-K curriculum is aligned to the PA Early Learning Standards and the MTSD Kindergarten curriculum.
- Within each school, the Pre-K students are included in appropriate school activities that enhance their learning (e.g., 'Reading Buddies,' parent activities, collaborative class projects, school-based student performances).

814-836-6091







APPLICATION/ENROLLMENT CHECKLIST

1 Fill out the application

The MTSD Pre-K program application is now through a Google Form! Certain questions are required, so if they are not filled out, you will not be able to submit your application. If you have questions on the application, please email or call our office!

Fill out two screening questionnaires

Once the application has been submitted, directions will be emailed to you at the email address provided in your application. You will need to complete these two questionnaires and return both of them to greenaway@mtsd.org

3 If needed, fill out the financial assistance application

Financial assistance is available for eligible families. If you are unsure if your family qualifies for financial assistance, please review the information found on our Pre-K Financial Assistance page of our website!

Check your email regularly for an acceptance notification

If your application has been accepted and approved, MTSD Pre-K will reach out to you at the email you supplied on your application. At this time, you will have the opportunity to move forward in the enrollment process. Follow the directions provided in the acceptance email.

5 Complete mandatory registration forms

Upon accepting your child's spot in MTSD Pre-K, you will need to fill out mandatory forms before enrollment can be finalized. This information will be emailed as attachments to you, with directions on how to complete them.

CHECKLIST CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE









APPLICATION/ENROLLMENT CHECKLIST

6 Complete registration online application through Infinite Campus **with a computer, not a mobile device**

In the same email from MTSD Pre-K noted in step 4, there will be a link to complete online registration. Use this link to complete the registration online application.

If you need help, you can call 814.835.5300 ext. 0 to make an appointment to come in and use our registration kiosks. You will need to bring the required documents listed on our registration page: www.mtsd.org/registration/register-your-child-now

Please Note:

- The registration application will say "K-12" and this is correct, please still fill out this application for Pre-K
- There will be a section asking for proof of residency. Since MTSD Pre-K accepts non-Millcreek families, non-resident families can upload blank documents for this section to bypass the mandatory fill requirement. **This is for Pre-K only** and our team will review each application for accuracy.
- This process is to ensure your student's information and your information is available in our system. We use Infinite Campus for a variety of reasons throughout the school year, including important communication with families!

Materials to have ready to upload:

- Child's Birth Certificate
- Immunization or Shot Record (Fax to 814.835.5308)
- Custody/Court Order if applicable
- IEP if applicable

7 Confirmation and Start Date

Once successfully completed, you will receive a confirmation email for your child's MTSD Pre-K enrollment and his or her start date. At that point, your child will be successfully enrolled in MTSD Pre-K!

~ENROLLMENT COMPLETED~

