



BETHLEHEM
AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



Pre-K Counts Family Handbook 2024-2025



Pre-K Early Childhood Program

Funding provided by:
PA Pre-K Counts Grant

Pre-K Philosophy

Our Pre-Kindergarten Program is based on the belief that:

Parents/Guardians are a child's first teacher.

Children learn through play.

Children are decision-makers.

Children are problem solvers.

Teachers guide learning.

The classrooms are divided into distinct learning areas:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| * Art | * Manipulative Toys |
| * Library | * Music |
| * Blocks/Construction | * Dramatic Play |
| * Computers / Listening Center | * Science |
| * Math | * Sensory Table |

Children's Learning:

Children's individual development and learning are constructed on a continuum that builds on prior experience and knowledge. Each child's unique learning style, ability and experiences join together to support progress along the continuum.

Our Pre-K program teaches the whole child. Students are provided with opportunities to learn, play, discover, and grow in areas that will enhance their academic, social, and emotional development.

Pre-K Counts Grant:

The Bethlehem Area School District's Pre-K program is fully funded by the Pre-K Counts Grant. Because of this, there are specific program requirements regarding attendance and participation.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES, & GUIDELINES

Attendance:

- Students enrolled in the Pre-K Counts program are considered full-time students and MUST attend school every day.

Absences:

- If your child is absent, you must have a note on the day your child returns to school.

<u>Types of Absences</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Examples</u>
Excused Absences	Those absences when a student is prevented from attending for mental, physical, or other urgent reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Illness• Family emergency• Death of a family member• Doctor appointments• Fire/Natural disaster• Others as determined by the Supervisor or Principal• Approved vacations/trips (no more than 5 total days per school year)
Unexcused Absences	Any absences that are not included in the above definition of excused absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Absences without a written note• Absences not noted above• Vacations/Trips that have not been approved• Any vacations/trips in excess of 5 days per school year• Transportation issues

<u>Number of Unexcused Absences</u>	<u>Action Taken by the School/District</u>	<u>Reason</u>
5 Unexcused Absences	The teacher will call you or meet with you.	This call/meeting will include a discussion regarding the reasons for the absence and ways the school can help.
7 Unexcused Absences	Bethlehem Area School District will also mail a letter home and place one in your child's file.	
10 Unexcused Absences	The teacher will contact you to schedule a meeting at the school. Your attendance at this meeting is mandatory. If you cannot be reached by phone, an alternate method will be tried. Please be aware that if you do not attend the meeting, your child may be permanently removed from the Pre-K program.	<p>Students with 10 unexcused absences are considered <i>chronically absent</i>. A formal meeting is required to determine if the child will remain in the program. All absences <i>beyond 10 excused absences will require a doctor's note</i>.</p> <p>Absences beyond ten (10) days without a doctor's note will be considered UNEXCUSED.</p>
12 Unexcused Absences	The Pre-K secretary will call or meet with you. Bethlehem Area School District will also mail a letter home and place one in your child's file.	
18 Unexcused Absences	The secretary/supervisor will contact you to schedule a <u>team</u> meeting at the school. Your attendance at this meeting is mandatory. If you cannot be reached by phone, an alternate method will be tried. NOTE: If the school cannot reach the parent and/or the parent does not respond, the child will be removed from the program without this meeting.	<i>Students with 18 unexcused absences may be permanently removed from the program.</i>

Vacations/Trips:

- Please do not plan vacations/trips in excess of 5 days during the year.
- There is an official district approval form that must be completed and submitted at least 10 days prior to the trip. Please contact your child's teacher or the school secretary for this form.
- No more than 5 days per school year will be marked "excused".
- Any trips in excess of 5 approved days will be "unexcused" and may result in your child's permanent dismissal from the program.

Tardiness:

- The school day is from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. or 9:15 a.m. - 2:15p.m.
- If your child is not at school within 10 minutes of their start time, he/she will be marked tardy.
- The accumulation of minutes tardy may add up to absences.
- When students are late to school they miss valuable instructional time. Tardiness is not only disruptive to the start of your child's day but also to others in the classroom. Please note that tardiness letters will be sent and/or meetings/calls will be scheduled when your child reaches 5 unexcused tardies. Subsequent meetings will be scheduled at the discretion of the teacher, principal, and/or program supervisor.
- If your child is late to school, he/she will not have a lunch choice.

Early Dismissal:

- If your child needs to leave school early for an appointment, please notify the teacher ahead of time in writing.

Illnesses:

- In order to ensure a safe and healthy environment, please keep your child home if he/she has had within the last 24 hours or still:
 - has a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
 - has diarrhea
 - cannot eat or drink without vomiting
 - has symptoms of a possible communicable disease
 - has a rash or sore that is red and warm to the touch
 - one or both eyes have yellow matter or are itchy/red
 - chicken pox, mumps or measles
 - has persistent cough
 - has a runny nose with infectious mucus (green/yellow)
 - has untreated lice or their eggs (nits) on hair or scalp (nurse will periodically check for the presence of nits)
 - is too ill to go outside for a daily walk or exercise

- If your child is sent to school ill, or becomes ill in school, the nurse will assess your child's condition and will contact a parent/guardian or emergency contact person, as needed.
- If your child has had any contagious illness, a doctor's note indicating that your child is no longer infectious is required for your child to return to school.

Medications:

- If your child may need to take medication during school hours, please contact the nurse for further information.

Toys/Electronics or items from home:

- Children are not permitted to bring toys or electronics from home. They create distractions and could be damaged or lost.

Clothing Restrictions:

- Children should be sent to school in comfortable play clothing. Keep in mind that they can get messy or dirty.
- Rubber soled shoes are strongly encouraged.
- Velcro shoes are encouraged.
- Sandals, flip-flops, jellies, and other open-toed shoes can be dangerous on the playground. Students may be excluded from recess if the teacher determines that footwear may be unsafe.
- Please label all clothing with your child's name. Permanent markers are available at the school.
- PLEASE SEND AN EXTRA PAIR OF UNDERWEAR, PANTS, SHIRT, AND SOCKS. THESE WILL BE KEPT AT SCHOOL IN CASE OF A BATHROOM ACCIDENT OR SPILL.

Hygiene & Bathroom Skills:

- Please work with your child so that he/she knows how to use tissues and can blow his/her nose independently.
- Teachers and/or Teacher Assistants will not provide assistance to students when they use the toilet. It is important for children to be able to do the following:
 - wash his/her hands after using the toilet
 - wipe after toileting
 - pull up/down pants
 - button & zip pants
 - belts are discouraged

Meals:

- Healthy meals and snacks are provided to the children. Please do not send in any snacks or beverages (candy, soda, gum or other treats) to school with your child.
- ALL meals are funded by the PA Pre-K Counts Grant.
- Students should be able to use utensils when eating.
- If your child does not like the lunch choices provided by the District, you are encouraged to pack a healthy lunch instead.

Visitors:

- All visitors to the classroom must sign in at the main office upon entering the building.
- If you would like to visit the classroom or meet with the teacher, please contact the teacher to schedule an appointment ahead of time.

Volunteers:

- Parents interested in volunteering in the classroom/school, are required to complete all necessary district paperwork. This includes parents who chaperone field trips. Please contact the school secretary for details and paperwork.

Parent Pick-Up:

- The child can only be released to an adult whose name has been provided to the school by the parent.
- Everyone including parents must have a photo ID with them. The teacher/assistant will ask to see ID.
- If you are sending someone to pick up your child at school who is not on the list, you must send a note that day or permanently add a pick-up person to the list in the main office. We will not accept phone calls, voicemails, etc.

Updated Emergency Information:

- Please inform the main office and classroom teacher of any phone number and/or address changes.
- Also, please be sure that your emergency contact information is up to date. Emergency contacts should be someone outside of your household.

Legal Documents:

- It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide a copy of all legal documents to the Pre-K secretary and teacher for your child's file. This includes, but is not limited to, custody paperwork, guardianship forms, PFAs, etc.

Additional District Policies:

- All Pre-K students are required to follow all BASD policies. Please refer to the BASD website for the full policy manual or contact the main office.

Photographing Policy

Photographs and videotape footage of students and employees involved in various school-related activities are often used as part of the district's electronic and printed publications. If you do not want photographs or footage used in the district's publications, please complete and submit the appropriate photo refusal form available through the Pre-K Counts office by September 30th.

Emergency Preparedness Drills:

- Students will also be participating in fire drills, emergency crisis drills, and severe weather drills throughout the school year.

Unscheduled School Closings/Delays:

- The Pre-K program will follow the closing schedule of the Bethlehem Area School District. If the decision to close school has been made, announcements will be made on local radio and TV stations, the district's website, ParentLink and on Bethlehem Area School District's social media platforms.

Parent Link- Automated Phone Calls:

- All parents will receive a recorded message from the school district to announce delayed openings and/or school closings.
- Phone numbers must be current to receive these messages.
- Please notify the Pre-K Counts Secretary of any changes.

2-Hour Delays:

- If there is a 2-hour delay, Pre-K will begin two hours later, which is 11:00am. The end time will remain the same (2:00pm).

Contact Information

Schools	Teachers & Principals
<p>Calypso Elementary 1021 Calypso Ave. Bethlehem, PA 18018 610-691-0152</p>	<p>Teacher: Angelique Scicutella ascicutella@basdschools.org</p> <p>Principal: Kathleen Bast kbast@basdschools.org</p>
<p>Donegan Elementary 1210 East 4th St. Bethlehem, PA 18015 610-866-0031</p>	<p>Teacher: Laurie Latham (Rm. 235) llatham@basdschools.org</p> <p>Teacher: Jamie-Lynn Carrodo (Rm.236) jcarrodo@basdschools.org</p> <p>Principal: Erin Martin-Medina emartinmedina@basdschools.org</p>
<p>Fountain Hill Elementary 1330 Church St. Bethlehem, PA 18015 610-865-5881</p>	<p>Teacher: Rachel McSorley rmcsorley@basdschools.org</p> <p>Principal: Courtney Stambaugh cwertmanstambaugh@basdschools.org</p>
<p>Marvine Elementary 1425 Livingston St. Bethlehem, PA 18017 610-865-0012</p>	<p>Teacher: Joanna Peters (Rm.106) jmpeters@basdschools.org</p> <p>Teacher: Peter Demyan (Rm.105) pdemyan@basdschools.org</p> <p>Principal: Julissa Jimenez jjimenez73@basdschools.org</p>

Pre-K Office	Staff
Education Center 1516 Sycamore Street Bethlehem, PA 18017 610-861-0500 ext. 16818	Michelle Valencia, Pre-K Secretary mvalencia@basdschools.org Eric Fontanez, Supervisor of Equity Initiatives efontanez@basdschools.org

Signature Page

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read this handbook and understand its contents. I will contact my child's teacher or principal throughout the year if I have questions or need assistance.

Student Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Primary Phone Number: _____

Date: _____

Comments/Questions (Please list here)