



2024-2025

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARENT HANDBOOK

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JPS HINDS
PRE-K
COLLABORATIVE



Michael L. Cormack, Ed.D.
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Greetings JPS Families:

I am pleased to welcome you and your child to our school community. As the Deputy Superintendent of Jackson Public Schools, I am excited to have the opportunity to work with you and your family as we start your child's educational journey together.

Early Childhood Education is critical to a child's success, and we are committed to providing your child with a safe, nurturing, and engaging learning environment. You will be amazed at how much your child will learn and grow this school year. Your child's days will be filled with many wonderful experiences and opportunities for learning that, along with a cooperative parent/teacher relationship, will ensure your child's success throughout the school year. Our highly qualified teachers and staff are dedicated to helping your child develop their social, emotional, and academic skills through hands-on experiences, play-based learning, and meaningful interactions.

As a parent, you play a vital role in your child's education, and we value your partnership in helping your child reach their full potential. Therefore, we encourage you to get involved in your child's learning by volunteering in the classroom, attending parent-teacher conferences, and participating in school events and activities.

Our school district is committed to ensuring every child has a strong start with access to high-quality early childhood education. We offer a range of programs and services to support your child's learning, including special education services, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, and the National School Breakfast & Lunch program.

I look forward to getting to know you and your child throughout the school year. Together, we can create a positive and enriching educational experience for your child and lay the foundation for a lifetime of success.

Sincerely,

Michael Cormack, Jr., Ed. D.
Deputy Superintendent



Dear New JPS Pre-K Parent,

As the Director of Early Childhood for Jackson Public Schools, I am both privileged and pleased to welcome you and your child to our Pre-Kindergarten Program. I look forward to supporting your family as your young scholar embarks on the beginning of their exciting educational journey.

Our Pre-K program will offer your child endless possibilities for learning and developing based on your child's growth and individual needs. We focus on developing "the whole child," which simply means we help your child build their academic, social, and emotional skills to ensure they are ready for kindergarten. Also, each of our highly-skilled teachers is committed to providing the high-quality education your child needs and deserves.

Whether this is the first child you're sending to JPS or the continuation of a legacy of learning in our schools, we thank you for entrusting us with this great honor. We are here to help your child get a strong start to their learning journey. With your help and support, your child will flourish and develop in extraordinary ways throughout their academic career.

This handbook is a guide to help you navigate the Pre-K program and includes additional resources, ideas, and information to support your child's learning at home. However, if you have any questions throughout the year, you can contact your child's teacher, teacher assistant, or principal to understand how your child is progressing or how you can support your child and your child's school.

Best regards,

Felicia Thomas, Ed. D.
Director of Early Childhood

JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS'

VISION, MISSION, COMMITMENTS & CORE VALUES



VISION

At Jackson Public Schools, we prepare scholars to achieve globally, to contribute locally, and to be fulfilled individually.

MISSION

At Jackson Public Schools, we develop scholars through world-class learning experiences to attain an exceptional knowledge base, critical and relevant skill sets, and the necessary dispositions for great success.

JPS COMMITMENTS

The JPS Strategic Plan, “Excellence for All: The Strategic Plan for Educating Jackson Scholars, reflects our need to lay a strong foundation while maintaining the flexibility to innovate: two characteristics integral to any successful 21st-century school district. Though not completely exhaustive, this plan speaks both to our aspirations for better service to scholars and families and descriptions of key commitments we are making to prioritize our work.

▶ **A STRONG START:** Scholars perform better in school and complete more years of education when they engage in high-quality early learning. Providing comprehensive access to high-quality Pre-Kindergarten opportunities exposes young scholars to positive learning experiences that will prepare them to develop the skills needed for success in school and life. We will ensure that every four-year-old in Jackson has access to high-quality, full-day early learning opportunities, supporting our vision of every child entering kindergarten ready to experience school success.

▶ **INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING:** Scholars will achieve at high levels when teaching and learning are built around their individual strengths, needs, cultures, interests, and dreams. It is critical that each adult in Jackson Public Schools recognizes each scholar as an individual and ensures equitable learning opportunities that facilitate the development of skills, knowledge, confidence, and voice.

To graduate global citizens prepared to solve the problems of tomorrow, we must embrace schooling that is radically different from current and past practices. Innovation will be encouraged in classrooms, schools, out-of-school times, and across the district, as space is created for new ideas and ways of “doing school.” We will encourage teaching and learning that is relevant and personalized to scholars’ interests, responsive to their identities, and reflective of the types of critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving required by tomorrow’s world.

▶ **TALENTED AND EMPOWERED TEAMS:** Scholars’ achievement is improved when they are taught by educators who know them as individual learners and who can differentiate instruction in ways that ensure all scholars have access to high-quality curriculum and can achieve high expectations. We will ensure we focus on improving our candidate pools and developing the capacity of the most significant school-based influences on scholar achievement: the teacher and principal.

▶ **JOYFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:** Scholars learn better when they are in environments they view as safe, supportive, and positive. This means our schools and classrooms must be designed and led in ways that encourage and nurture the joy of learning, foster a sense of belonging, build trusting relationships, and encourage risk-taking and questioning that are essential to lifelong learning.

We will create learning environments that provide relevant content, clear learning goals, and frequent feedback and support, as well as opportunities to build the academic and social skills needed for success. Also, we will endeavor to create a strong sense of belonging and meaningful relationships with scholars to help guide them towards their greatest potential.

▶ **A CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXCELLENCE:** A culture of accountability and excellence must permeate the entire district for us to achieve the goals outlined in this strategic plan. In addition, each individual faculty and staff member must hold her or himself to the highest possible standards and support our Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Commitments. Thoughtful planning, deliberate and consistent use of systems and data analysis, and a deep commitment to professional learning will enable us to build—and sustain—a districtwide culture of accountability and excellence.

JPS CORE VALUES

At Jackson Public Schools, we believe in the importance of equity, excellence, growth mindset, relationships, relevance, and positive and respectful cultures. Our core values are as follows:

▶ **EQUITY:** Our vision of equity, put simply, is “all means all.” We ensure equity by celebrating each scholar’s individuality, interests, abilities, and talents; providing each scholar in each school with equitable access to high-quality instruction, courses, and resources; and holding high expectations for all scholars to graduate college-ready and career-minded. Similarly, we recognize and value the individual abilities, experiences, and talents of our staff; providing all staff with equitable access to opportunities for development and growth; and ensuring that such opportunities are provided through clear and transparent processes.

▶ **EXCELLENCE:** High expectations for our scholars help to prepare them for college and career paths. High expectations from and for all adults fosters ownership, consistency, and transparency. Every member of our district performs with an attention to detail and the quality that each task demands in order to achieve great outcomes.



- ▶ **GROWTH MINDSET:** Our leaders—scholars and staff—thrive in environments where belief in their abilities is affirmed. Everyone in the organization embraces the ideal that effort and perseverance lead to success.
- ▶ **RELATIONSHIPS:** It is essential to develop relationships through mutual respect of culture, social context, and community. This allows us to create a community of safety, trust, productive vulnerability, and genuine connection as we celebrate successes and value opportunities for constructive feedback.
- ▶ **RELEVANCE:** Scholars experience relevant education that is engaging, motivating, and inspiring, leading to a lifelong commitment to learning. Our scholars must learn to connect with each other, the larger community, and the 21st-century world, developing agency to commit to positive change in Jackson, in Mississippi, and the world.
- ▶ **POSITIVE AND RESPECTFUL CULTURE:** Scholars and staff thrive in learning environments where growth and achievement are the highest priorities and climates are safe, positive, and respectful. These environments engage and excite all scholars, leaving them hungry for more knowledge. All adults contribute to a positive and respectful culture allowing

BELL SCHEDULE & DISTRICT CALENDAR

REGULAR BELL SCHEDULE

SCHOOL EVENT	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH
School Opens	7:00 am - 7:24 am	7:20 am	7:45 am
Homeroom Block	7:25 am - 7:29 am	7:25 am - 8:00 am	8:05 am - 8:30 am
Instruction Begins	7:30 am	8:00 am	8:35 am
Instruction Ends/Dismissal Time	2:30 pm	3:30 pm	4:05 pm

EARLY RELEASE: 80% DAY SCHEDULE

SCHOOL EVENT	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH
School Opens	7:00 am - 7:24 am	7:20 am	7:45 am
Instruction Begins	7:30 am	8:00 am	8:35 am
Instruction Ends/Dismissal Time	1:15 pm	1:50 pm	2:35 pm

EARLY RELEASE: 60% DAY SCHEDULE

SCHOOL EVEN	ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE	HIGH
School Opens	7:00 am - 7:24 am	7:20 am	7:45 am
Instruction Begins	7:30 am	8:00 am	8:35 am
Instruction Ends/Dismissal Time	12:00 pm	12:30 pm	1:15 pm

The district will delay the start of school, when possible, to address inclement weather if necessary. If additional inclement weather days are needed, adjustments to the calendar will be made.

DATE	EVENT
July 4, 2024	Independence Holiday (Districtwide Closure)
July 29, 2024	First Day for Teachers
August 2, 2024	JPS District Convocation
August 5, 2024	First Day for Students
August 27, 2024	Professional Development for Teachers (80% Day for Scholars)
September 2, 2024	Labor Day Holiday (Districtwide Closure)
September 13, 2024	Teacher Professional Development Day (No School for Students)
September 24, 2024	Professional Development for Teachers (80% Day for Students)
October 18, 2024	Teacher Professional Development Day (No School for Students)
October 21, 2024	Parent-Teacher Conference Day (No School for Students)
November 1, 2024	Fall Break (Districtwide Closure)
November 19, 2024	Professional Development for Teachers (80% Day for Students)
November 25–29, 2024	Thanksgiving Break (Districtwide Closure)
December 20, 2024	Winter Holiday Early Release (60% Day for Students)
December 23, 2024–January 3, 2025	Winter Holiday Break (Districtwide Closure)
January 6, 2025	Teachers, Staff & Students Return
January 20, 2025	Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Districtwide Closure)
January 28, 2025	Professional Development for Teachers (80% Day for Students)
February 13, 2025	Teacher Professional Development Day (No School for Students)
February 14, 2025	Parent-Teacher Conference Day (No School for Students)
February 25, 2025 *	Professional Development for Teachers (60% Day for Students)
March 10-14, 2025	Spring Break (Districtwide Closure)
March 25, 2025	Professional Development for Teachers (80% Day for Students)
April 18-21, 2025 **	Easter Break (Districtwide Closure)
May 23, 2025	Last Day for Students
May 26, 2025	Memorial Day (Districtwide Closure)
May 27 & 28, 2025	High School Graduations
May 28, 2025	Last Day for Teachers
June 16, 2025	Juneteenth Holiday (Districtwide Closure)
June 2–27, 2025	Summer School

OVERVIEW OF JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Jackson Public Schools offers a variety of early childhood programs for children ages three-to-five-years old. The JPS-Hinds Pre-K Collaborative is the largest collaborative in the state.

JPS-HINDS PRE-KINDERGARTEN

The JPS-Hinds Pre-K Collaborative serves scholars in 62 classrooms across the district. Our program is funded through local and state matching funds as part of the Collaborative. The maximum enrollment is 20 scholars per class.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Dr. Felicia Thomas, Director of Early Childhood
601-960-4002



VAN WINKLE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Jackson Public Schools increased its Pre-Kindergarten capacity by creating space for an additional 300 scholars at Van Winkle. This innovative approach, in partnership with the Hinds County Resource Agency Project Head Start, enables JPS to authentically engage four-year-old children at this location.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Ms. Ashanti Barnes, Principal, Van Winkle Early Childhood Center
601-923-2547

MONTESSORI PROGRAM

McWillie Elementary offers the Montessori program for PreK-3 and PreK-4 students. Montessori is an individualized educational program designed to meet the needs and interests of the child. The safe and nurturing Montessori environment offers child-centered learning activities, a holistic approach to working with children, and a school-wide focus on respect, responsibility, and independence. The Montessori curriculum includes practical life, sensorial, math, language, and culture, which includes science and social studies. This program is tuition-based with a limited number of vouchers. McWillie is a Montessori-accredited school and is a member of Magnet Schools of America.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Dr. Sara Harper, Principal, McWillie Elementary
601-987-3709

SPECIAL EDUCATION EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

Jackson Public Schools offers a special education preschool program for children ages 3 to 5 who have been identified as having a developmental delay. We provide educational services through either our school-based program or the community-based program.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Tremecia Melvin, M.Ed., Preschool Case Manager
601-960-4009

PRE-K PHILOSOPHY

The Jackson Public Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program uses the Mississippi Beginnings Curriculum, which provides scholars with a strong start. Through a combination of curriculum, coaching, and professional development, we can sustain improvements and high-quality teaching. Pre-K teachers expose children to a vocabulary-rich, nurturing environment where learning occurs through multiple opportunities and interests. The curriculum provides the framework for students to be taught according to stages of child development and according to each child's individual needs. Pre-K is intentional and focuses on the whole child. Teachers are highly knowledgeable about child development and the subjects and standards required to teach Pre-Kindergarten students.



GOALS

The following goals have been established for Pre-Kindergarten students:

- Develop rich oral language and a robust vocabulary.
- Acquire knowledge of skills and concepts taught in each subject area.
- Develop social skills and emotional control.
- Transition smoothly through instructional routines of learning through play in centers, small groups, and age-appropriate environments.



ASSESSMENTS

Our teachers continuously evaluate Pre-K scholars using a variety of techniques, procedures, and tools to determine each child's needs. Teachers and teacher assistants use the information obtained from ongoing assessments to create and update lesson plans that address the individual and collective needs of scholars in the classroom.

- The Pre-Kindergarten students are formally assessed throughout the year using the following:
- MKAS2 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- Brigance Early Childhood Screens III
- Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Four-Year-Old Children Observational and Performance-Based Checklist
- Opening the World of Learning (OWL) Screening Assessment and Progress Monitoring

GRADING

Our Pre-Kindergarten Program does not issue letter grades. However, during parent-teacher conferences, your child's teacher will allow you to see your child progress using the results from either the MKAS2 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) report or the early learning observational checklist or the OWL assessment. You will be given a checklist of your child's progress for the mid-term progress reports and report card periods.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are opportunities for parents to hear a report on your child's progress and to get better acquainted with your child's teacher. During these conferences, you will discuss strategies to work with your child's teacher to ensure your child has a successful school year. At least three parent-teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the year. You will be notified prior to each conference. Your attendance is strongly encouraged.

CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Jackson Public Schools is dedicated to ensuring each child experiencing homelessness has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education available to other scholars. The mission of the Jackson Public Schools McKinney-Vento Program (MVP) is to support scholars and families experiencing homelessness or in transitional housing.

This commitment includes services to preschool students and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness. The district will designate a McKinney-Vento liaison to assist in identifying, supporting, and ensuring the rights of homeless scholars and families. These rights include waiving certain requirements, such as proof of residency, when scholars are enrolling and allowing categorical eligibility for certain services, such as free lunch.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Mrs. Tiffany Jones, McKinney-Vento Coordinator
601-960-8707 or 601-960-8885

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The JPS Office of Exceptional Education Services provides a variety of support services to students with disabilities. Eligible students may receive services between 3 and 21 years of age. Schools offer programs that provide academic, behavioral and related service supports in a specialized learning environment. Support services are provided in all district schools. Services offered through the Department of Exceptional Education include:

- Assistive Technology Evaluation and Services
- Behavioral Intervention Services
- Educational Services
- Homebound Services
- Language/Speech Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Psychological Services, including pre-school and school-age assessments
- Specialized Medical Care



The Office of Exceptional Education Services is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act — 1997 Reauthorization (IDEA 2004) in the identification, evaluation, eligibility, and individualized educational programming for children with disabilities. The Jackson Public School District Office of Exceptional Education is governed by State Board Policy 7419.

The JPS Pre-K special education preschool program serves children ages 3 to 5 who have been identified as having a developmental delay. We provide educational services through either our school-based program or the community-based program (Head Start, childcare centers, private preschools, and home-based services)

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
John Hopkins Elementary	170 John Hopkins Road, Jackson, MS 39209	601-923-2540
Johnson Elementary	1339 Oak Park Drive, Jackson, MS 39213	601-987-3501
McWillie Elementary	4851 McWillie Circle, Jackson, MS 39206	601-987-3709
Van Winkle Elementary	1655 Whiting Road, Jackson, MS 39209	601-923-2547

CURRICULUM

The Pre-Kindergarten Program and the Special Education Preschool Program use Mississippi Beginnings Curriculum to support pre-school teachers in providing a rich, play-based, intentional developmentally-fitting instruction for scholars. Mississippi Beginnings builds social-emotional, language, literacy, math, and vocabulary skills. Mississippi Beginnings focuses on the whole child. All scholars have an opportunity for a strong start that builds from Pre-K to high school.

PROGRAM FEATURES AND BENEFITS:

- All instruction and components include English and Spanish versions, with daily English language development lessons.
- Develops early literacy and numeracy skills in the context of evidence-based instruction with an emphasis on early childhood literacy.
- Pre-K teachers teach across the curriculum using thematic-based instruction.
- Provides guidance for teachers with a variety of materials to implement eight thematically organized units.
- Aligned to Early Learning Guidelines

The Pre-Kindergarten Program and the Special Education Program also use Waterford, a comprehensive, technology-based early reading, math, and science program with integrated assessments and teacher tools for Pre-K through second grade. This personalized learning software adapts automatically to give each student a unique learning experience tailored to his or her own skill level and pace, making it ideal for all early learners.

Reading skills include phonics, phonological awareness, comprehension and vocabulary, language concepts, writing, and fluency. Math and Science skills include numbers and operation, geometry, operations and algebraic thinking, measurement and data analysis, scientific exploration and methods, and earth, life, and physical science.

TEACHER REQUIREMENTS

All Jackson Public Schools Pre-K teachers meet the requirements described below.

TEACHERS ARE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW ONE OF THE PATHWAYS BELOW:
Hold a Pre-K/K (153) License, or
Hold a K-3 (116) License or Hold a K-4 (152) License AND Complete twelve (12) early childhood college credit hours OR Attain a passing score on the MSBE Approved Licensure Assessment to add 153 (Pre-K/K) endorsement OR Complete an early childhood training program, or
Hold a K-6 (120) License AND Complete requirements to add N-1 (150) supplemental endorsement OR Attain a Passing Score on the MSBE Approved Licensure Assessment to add 153 (Pre-K/K) endorsement OR Complete 12 early childhood college credit hours OR Complete an early childhood training program

ASSISTANT TEACHERS ARE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW ONE OF THE PATHWAYS BELOW:

Early Childhood associate degree, or
Associate degree OR 60 college credit hours AND 12 early childhood college credit hours, or
Completion of an early childhood training program, or
High School Diploma/GED AND Verification of Workkeys® scores AND 12 early childhood college credit hours

TEACHER REQUIREMENTS

All teaching staff (teachers and assistant teachers) and program administrators complete at least 15 contact hours of professional development annually for program instructional staff specific to the education of Pre-Kindergarten children.

Administrators that manage Pre-Kindergarten teachers shall gain the required hours of professional development through online or on-site training. This variety of content could include program administration, parent engagement, and early childhood instructional content approved or offered by the Mississippi Department of Education and/or Mississippi Department of Health.



POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is vital to a child’s academic success. When a child is excessively absent it hinders the progress of the child. Scholars who are absent for 15 or more consecutive days can be dismissed from the Pre-K Program, unless the parent or legal guardian notifies the school of the cause of the absences and the school determines the absences are excused.

TARDINESS

Teachers begin their school day promptly to maximize the instructional day. When your child arrives late it requires one member of the teaching team to break away from the classroom instruction to assist them, which disrupts the learning environment. Your child is considered late if he or she arrives after 7:45 a.m. Please make every effort to have your child at school on time each day.

BEHAVIOR

The Pre-K Program follows the district’s behavior process called Positive Behavior Intervention Support or “PBIS.” PBIS is a proven research and evidence-based discipline program that emphasizes school-wide systems of support which include strategies for defining, teaching, modeling, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. PBIS emphasizes teaching students to behave in ways that contribute to academic achievement and school success and that support a school environment where students and school staff are responsible and respectful. PBIS also emphasizes the need for school staff to promote appropriate behaviors by teaching, modeling, reinforcing, and monitoring appropriate behaviors and by treating much minor misbehavior as “teaching moments” rather than punishment opportunities.

PBIS recognizes that effective school discipline is anchored to meaningful corrective instruction and guidance that offers students an opportunity to gain experience from their mistakes and contribute to the school community. PBIS also involves ongoing monitoring of discipline data to ensure equitable school-based discipline practices are implemented in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

The Pre-K classrooms are designed so that the children are engaged in various activities, which will assist in preventing serious behavior problems. However, if a child’s behavior becomes violent where the teachers and children are not safe, we will adhere to the district’s Code of Conduct.

Keep in mind that you know your child much better than we do so your support and input are critical. We believe that creating a safe and loving environment can help prevent unacceptable behaviors. You can assist by learning some of the strategies and techniques used in the classroom so you can use them at home to ensure consistency. This will contribute to helping your child display appropriate behaviors in class and at home.

POTTY TRAINING

Scholars are expected to be fully potty-trained prior to enrolling in Pre-K.

JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRE-K PROGRAM NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Jackson Public Schools Pre-K Program admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation to all rights, privileges, programs and activities of the school. JPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation in administration of its educational policies, educational programs, or extracurricular activities. Furthermore, JPS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation in the hiring of its certified or noncertified personnel.

FAMILY GUIDE TO MISSISSIPPI'S EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

The Mississippi Early Learning Standards provide the foundation for instruction in classrooms as teachers use these goals to plan instruction and activities for your child. The following is a variety of activities you can use at home to extend your child's learning. For a complete listing of the standards, please visit our website at www.jackson.k12.ms.us.



LANGUAGE & LITERACY

CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP SKILLS IN LISTENING FOR A PURPOSE	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Follow along and respond appropriately to music and movement activities such as the “Hokey Pokey”</p> <p>Respond verbally to books and stories</p> <p>Listen to books or stories on CD at the listening center</p>	<p>Play some classic games like “Simon Says” or “Mother May I?” Give 1-step commands at first and then progress to 2 or 3 steps. “Simon says turn around then clap your hands then touch your toes.”</p> <p>Read a favorite story together and ask your child to give a signal each time they hears a particular word. For example, “Clap your hands when you hear me say the word bear.”</p>
CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP SKILLS IN LISTENING FOR A PURPOSE	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Identify common environment sounds or animal sounds</p> <p>Clap hands for syllables in names or other familiar words</p> <p>Substitute different beginning sounds for common words</p> <p>Repeat finger plays and poems such as “Humpty- Dumpty”</p>	<p>Go outside and identify sounds you hear.</p> <p>Teach your child some hand clapping chants or jump rope rhymes you remember from childhood.</p> <p>Play silly rhyming games and substitute sounds.</p> <p>Recite nursery rhymes together. Emphasize the rhythm and rhyme that you hear.</p>
CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF NEW VOCABULARY	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Create a story for a wordless book</p> <p>Help create a language experience chart after participating on a field trip</p>	<p>Talk to your child while you are engaged in household activities like cooking, gardening, or fix-it chores. Explain what you are doing and tell them the names of the tools you are using. Spatula, spade, or wrench will soon become part of your child's growing vocabulary.</p> <p>Discuss the day's events after your return from an outing or special event.</p>

LANGUAGE & LITERACY (CONTINUED)

CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE (SPEAKING) SKILLS	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Ask questions for information and to solve problems</p> <p>Engage in turn-taking conversations</p> <p>Tell real or make-believe stories</p>	<p>Give your child lots of opportunities to engage in conversation with adults.</p> <p>Let them order for themselves in a restaurant or answer the telephone using phrases you have rehearsed ahead of time.</p> <p>Create silly stories together while you are riding in the car or while you are waiting at a restaurant.</p>
CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP STRATEGIES THAT WILL ASSIST IN READING	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Use puppets or flannel board to retell a story</p> <p>Identify letters using alphabet play dough cutters</p> <p>Discuss the characters in a story</p>	<p>Practice reading environment print: street signs, store names, and favorite foods.</p> <p>Cut out logos from the ad section of the newspaper or the grocery store circular. Paste them on paper or put them in a photo album to make a book that your child will love to read often.</p> <p>Discuss books with your child after reading them together. Ask “how” and “why” questions to extend their learning.</p> <p>Use newspapers and magazines for letter-find activities. Children love to find and circle letters in their names.</p>
CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP AGE-APPROPRIATE WRITING SKILLS	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Use scribble writing and letter-like forms</p> <p>Copy word cards at the writing center</p>	<p>Invite your child to “write when you write.”</p> <p>Let your child write on old calendars, order forms, check registers or grocery lists. Provide a “grown-up” pen or pencil.</p> <p>Encourage all forms of writing, from scribbling to forming letters.</p>

MATHEMATICS

CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF NUMBERS	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Count on finger play or rhymes</p> <p>Match blocks with animals in the block center in one-to-one correspondence</p> <p>Count sets of objects during group time or independent play</p> <p>Participate in putting together large floor puzzles</p>	<p>Build one-to-one correspondence by letting your child set the table. Show them how to put one plate, one cup, and one fork at each place.</p> <p>Develop the concept of part-to-whole by doing puzzles. Make your own puzzles by cutting magazine pictures and gluing them back together again.</p> <p>Encourage counting frequently in daily routines, such as counting the forks as you put them away. Create games around counting common objects, such as counting the number of doors, windows, and telephones in your home.</p> <p>Choose books from your local library that encourage counting.</p>
CHILDREN WILL SORT AND CLASSIFY OBJECTS	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Sort the counting objects into groups according to color or size</p> <p>Sort through a box of classroom buttons and makes up rules for organization</p>	<p>Let your child help put away flatware by sorting all the knives, forks, and spoons.</p> <p>Have your child help sort laundry before you wash by putting all the socks in a pile, all the shirts in a pile, and all the towels in a pile.</p> <p>Let your child play with collections of similar items, such as a box of shells or buttons. Have your child tell you how they chose to group and organize them.</p>

MATHEMATICS (CONTINUED)

CHILDREN WILL CREATE AND DUPLICATE SIMPLE PATTERNS	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Snap, clap or stomp a rhythmic pattern</p> <p>Create a pattern using manipulatives (toys), such as peg boards, or color block</p> <p>Recognize patterns in the environment</p>	<p>Point out the way items are arranged at the grocery store. "Look, here is where all the cereal goes. And all the frozen food is over here."</p> <p>Let your child help you put away groceries according to a plan: all the cans together, all the boxes together, and all the refrigerated items together.</p> <p>Play some music with a strong beat and clap hands and knees in an alternating pattern. Or face each other and clap your hands together and then clap your own hands. Say the pattern together, "Clap, together, clap, together, clap, together." Add a third motion to increase the difficulty. "Clap, together, knees, clap, together, knees."</p>
CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP A SENSE OF SPACE AND UNDERSTANDING OF BASIC SHAPES	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Find common shapes in the environment</p> <p>Combine the unit blocks to make new shapes</p> <p>Use positional words such as over, under, behind</p>	<p>Make a SIGN BINGO game by drawing shapes on a piece of paper – circle, square, triangle, octagon. Then watch for those shapes in signs as you ride along. When you spot a triangular YIELD sign, color in the triangle or color the octagon when you see a STOP sign.</p> <p>Play games with your child at the table. Ask your child to move the napkin or fork over, under or beside the plate.</p>
CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP MEASURING SKILLS	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Measure water in the sensory table</p> <p>Place objects in order according to size</p> <p>Use classroom objects to measure the length of a table or shelf</p>	<p>Cook together and allow your child to measure ingredients, or put a set of measuring cups and spoons in your child's tub. Encourage your child to fill and empty the cups. Ask which holds more? Pour from one cup to the other. How many small cups does it take to fill a bigger cup?</p> <p>Provide your child with objects, such as paperclips to measure items in your household. Whose shoe is longer? Yours or theirs?</p>

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP SKILLS IN INITIATIVE AND EXPLORATION	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Select new activities during free play or center time</p> <p>Make patterns using colored feathers and sticks</p> <p>Complete classroom chores without being asked.</p> <p>Take the initiative to create and complete a project without adult assistance</p> <p>Organize an outdoor game to play with friends</p>	<p>Encourage your child to create and complete a project by themselves.</p> <p>Provide a wide variety of materials for him/her to explore, including books on a range of topics.</p> <p>Encourage them to try new things.</p> <p>Prompt them to ask questions.</p>
CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP SKILLS IN ATTENTIVENESS AND PERSISTENCE	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Read a book their teacher has read many times in class</p> <p>Tie thier friend's shoelaces when they become untied</p> <p>Walk all the way across the balance beam on the playground</p> <p>Race with friends to zip jacket faster</p> <p>Build a tall tower in the block area attempting several times to balance a long block on the top</p> <p>Attempt to draw a picture of an animal they saw on a recent class trip and stick with the task until the picture is completed.</p>	<p>Recognize, point out, and reward persistence.</p> <p>Demonstrate how they can set out to master something and move through setbacks to do so.</p> <p>Resist solving problems for them. Try to let them figure it out and step in only when you are certain that they have done all they can.</p>

SCIENCE

CHILDREN WILL USE PROCESSES OF SCIENCE TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENVIRONMENT	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Observe collections of natural items in the science area.</p> <p>Identify objects by touch</p>	<p>Go on a nature walk and collect small items as you walk along. Try to collect several samples of each item – leaves, rocks, or twigs. When you get home, ask your child to look carefully at each rock, for example and find ways that they are different – shape, color, size.</p> <p>Talk about how different items feel while you are on an outing or shopping. Ask your child to find objects that might be soft? Furry? Or rough?</p>
CHILDREN WILL LEARN ABOUT HEALTH SCIENCE	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Identify healthy foods</p> <p>Sort the plastic food in the dramatic play area into groups of fruits and vegetables</p> <p>Discuss safety rules for the playground</p>	<p>Talk about the different colors of healthy foods. Make a simple chart and have your child color in a square for each food they eat(s) during a day – a brown square for cereal or a green square for broccoli.</p> <p>At the end of the day, have them decide if they “ate a rainbow.”</p> <p>Talk about ways to stay safe before going on outings to stores, restaurants, or playgrounds.</p>
CHILDREN WILL LEARN ABOUT EARTH SCIENCE	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Draw a picture of the weather outside</p> <p>Read an outside thermometer and record observation in a weather journal</p>	<p>Look at the night sky for several weeks around the same time and locate the moon. Is it behind a tree, over the garage, or across the street? Does it change places? Does it seem higher or lower in the sky? Does it change shapes? Invite your child to draw a picture showing all the different ways they have seen the moon.</p> <p>Talk to your child about the weather. Does it feel hot, cold, or windy? Or is it cloudy or rainy?</p>

SCIENCE (CONTINUED)

CHILDREN WILL LEARN ABOUT LIFE SCIENCE	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Observe the life cycle of insects or amphibians</p> <p>Use picture cards and match animals with their offspring</p> <p>Assist with planting a tree or other plant</p>	<p>Look under rocks or around the foundation of your house to discover the tiny crustaceans called “pill bugs” or “pill bugs.” Put them in a plastic jar lid with some soil and a small rock and watch them move around. Talk about what all living things have in common – they move, breathe, and eat. Ask your child why they think they are called “pill bugs.” (They curl up in a ball when they are touched.) After an hour or so, put them back where you found them.</p> <p>Check out books from your local library about animals, plants, and other science concepts.</p> <p>Let your child plant seeds or small plants in your garden and watch them grow.</p>
CHILDREN WILL LEARN ABOUT PHYSICAL SCIENCE	
IN THE CLASSROOM, YOUR CHILD MAY...	IDEAS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT HOME
<p>Describe how water flows through a tube in the sensory table</p> <p>Describe the difference between liquid and solid objects</p>	<p>During bath time, provide several different objects for your child to play with in the tub – a rubber duck, a metal spoon, and a plastic bowl, for example. Talk about why some sink and some float. Do some “experiments” to see if you can change what they do. Fill the bowl with water, for example, to see if it will sink.</p> <p>Put an ice cube in a bowl and watch it melt. Check it every few minutes and discuss the changes your child sees. Or make homemade popsicles by adding your child’s favorite drink to ice cubes trays and placing plastic wrap over the top of the tray and inserting a Popsicle stick. Let your child predict what will happen and then observe the tray every thirty minutes to check the changes.</p>

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

CHILDREN WILL PARTICIPATE IN GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITIES	
In the classroom, your child may...	Ideas to support your child at home
<p>Peddle and steer a tricycle</p> <p>Walk on a balance beam</p> <p>Climb a slide ladder</p> <p>Walk, gallop, jump, and run in rhythm to simple tunes and music patterns</p>	<p>Show your child how to roll socks together to make a ball and practice tossing them into an empty laundry basket.</p> <p>Make a bean bag by filling a small zip-lock bag with beans or rice and taping securely closed. Encourage your child to balance the bean bag on different parts of the body. Can they walk with it on their shoulder? Jump with it on their head?</p> <p>Play the mirror game. Face your child and ask them to copy your movements – put hand on head, touch nose, etc. Then switch places and you copy their movements.</p>
CHILDREN WILL PARTICIPATE IN FINE-MOTOR ACTIVITIES	
In the classroom, your child may...	Ideas to support your child at home
<p>Tear paper or tape</p> <p>Use a paper punch</p> <p>Use writing tools</p> <p>Use scissors and art materials</p> <p>String beads or put pegs into boards</p> <p>Work with play dough</p>	<p>The kitchen is a great place to develop the fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination needed for handwriting. Give your child lots of opportunities to use tongs, tweezers, spatulas, hand juicers, and clothespins. Learn to use chopsticks together if you don't already know how.</p> <p>Provide writing utensils for your child daily. Give them reasons to write. "Can you help me write this recipe or make a list for the store?"</p> <p>Let your child cut magazines or newspaper before you recycle.</p> <p>String O-shaped cereal on lengths of yarn and hang over an outside bush or tree limb for the birds and squirrels to enjoy.</p> <p>Make snacks with pretzel sticks and cheese cubes. Spear the cheese with the pretzel and enjoy.</p>

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

CHILDREN WILL EXPLORE CREATIVE EXPRESSION THROUGH VISUAL ART	
In the classroom, your child may...	Ideas to support your child at home
<p>Use makers, paint, crayons, modeling clay, collage materials, and play dough</p> <p>Explain a painting or drawing to another person</p> <p>Show interest in illustration in books or pieces of artwork in the environment</p>	<p>Give your child markers or crayons and a variety of surfaces to draw on – newspaper, waxed paper, foil, pages from an old phone book, cardboard, or Styrofoam.</p> <p>Make some homemade paint from food color and water or food color and liquid starch. Or add water to backyard soil for a wonderful "mud paint."</p> <p>Use one of the homemade paint ideas above and finger paint to music.</p> <p>Visit a local landmark, mural, library, museum or art gallery and talk to your child about what they see. Explain what an artist is. Let your child become an artist at home.</p>
CHILDREN WILL PARTICIPATE IN MUSIC AND MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES	
In the classroom, your child may...	Ideas to support your child at home
<p>Create a movement that responds to the beat of a song</p> <p>Use props to respond with expression to music of various tempos</p> <p>Sing a song with the group during circle time</p>	<p>Help your child learn about different kinds of music. Find the jazz station (WJSU 88.5 FM) on the radio and listen together for a while. Talk about the sounds of the instruments and how the music makes you feel. Then try a different station with a different style of music.</p> <p>Roll a section of newspaper tightly and tape it together in several places to form a stick. Cut it in half and make a pair. Turn on some lively music and encourage your child to play their drumsticks on a variety of surfaces around the house – the kitchen table, the back of the sofa, their own knees. Ask your child, "what makes the best drum?"</p> <p>Sing songs together. Sing in the car, at home or outside. Recall some from your own childhood.</p>

SOCIAL STUDIES

CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP CONFIDENCE AND POSITIVE SELF-AWARENESS	
In the classroom, your child may...	Ideas to support your child at home
<p>Participate in classroom jobs and contribute to the classroom community</p> <p>Identify community workers in the puzzles, stories, or pictures on the wall</p> <p>Pretend to be a store salesperson or mail carrier during dramatic play</p>	<p>On a trip to the grocery store, point out the different jobs people do: bag groceries, scan the food, or stack the vegetables. Emphasize the jobs that they do – not the titles. For example, “That man is cutting the meat and putting it in packages so we can buy it.”</p> <p>Go out and meet the person who delivers your mail (or cleans the street or helps people cross.) Help your child write a thank you note to them for the jobs they do.</p> <p>Assign your child regular household jobs. Talk about how everyone in the family should help make the home a comfortable place to live.</p>
CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP RESPECT FOR DIFFERENCES	
In the classroom, your child may...	Ideas to support your child at home
<p>Read a story about a child with a disability or about people from other cultures</p> <p>Learn some words of other languages</p> <p>Taste a snack from another culture</p>	<p>Look through magazines and cut out “people pictures.” Point out differences in skin color, hair color or style. Use positive words to talk about each color – warm brown, clear blue, etc.</p> <p>Visit outdoor festivals or ethnic celebrations. Try out new foods and recipes. Read books together like Everyone Cooks Rice by Norah Dooley or Bread, Bread, Bread by Ann Morris.</p>

SOCIAL STUDIES

CHILDREN WILL DEVELOP GEOGRAPHIC THINKING	
In the classroom, your child may...	Ideas to support your child at home
<p>Draw a simple map of classroom or school</p> <p>Build a familiar street with blocks</p> <p>Identify objects that are near and far</p> <p>Take a walking field trip to explore the community</p>	<p>Hide a small treasure and give your child directions for the search using positional/directional words. “Go out the door and across the porch. Look under the tree.”</p> <p>Point out landmarks along a familiar path – from home to school, for example. “Next the bus will turn right at the gas station sign.”</p> <p>Help your child make a simple map of their room. Draw the outline of the room on a piece of paper. Point out the windows and doors. Invite them to draw their bed and other furniture in the room. Help them with locations. “Your bed is right here, under the window.” For added fun, draw the furniture on a separate piece of paper and cut out. Then they can rearrange it to make a new room.</p>



2024-2025 Early Childhood Handbook Parent and Student Acknowledgment Form

This Parent Handbook provides information to the parents of students enrolled in the Early Childhood Programs in Jackson Public Schools.

I understand that the parent handbook is a work in progress and changes to this document can be made throughout the school year.

My signature verifies that I have received a copy of the handbook and that I have access to an electronic copy.

Scholar's Name (Print): _____

Parent or Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent of Guardian Signature: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

After reviewing this handbook, please sign and return this form to your child's teacher.



JPS HINDS
PRE-K
COLLABORATIVE