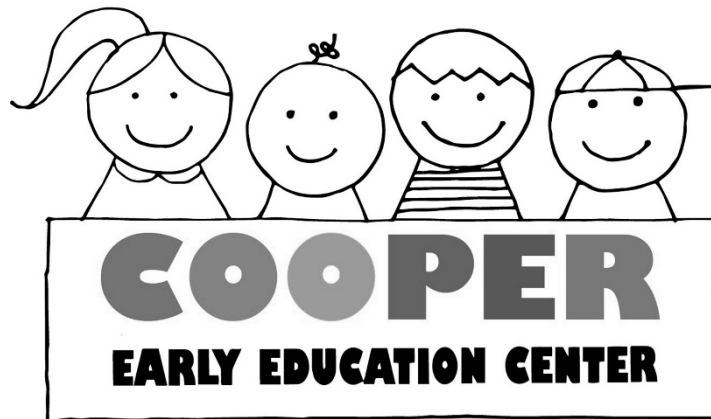


2025-2026

Cooper Early Education Center Family Handbook

816 Oak
Newton, KS 67114-3846
(316) 284-6510
Fax: (316) 284-6513

www.usd373.org



Vision: All young children and their families will receive early learning experiences necessary for their success as contributors to society.

Mission: To provide a safe environment and quality learning experiences for young children and their families to promote lifelong learning.

Welcome

We are delighted your child will be part of our preschool program! We hope this year will be a happy and exciting experience for your child.

Beginning preschool is an important step. Every child is special ~ with special needs, special interests, and special characteristics. Your child is important to you and important to us. It is our task to work as partners with you to help your child grow, learn, and develop.

Cooper is more than a preschool for your child. Our services are for the family; parents and children. We believe parents are their child's first and most important teacher and role model. Parenting young children is filled with a lot of joy and can be exhausting and overwhelming at times. To be the best parent you can be, you have to take time for yourself!

We hope this handbook will help you and your child adjust to this new school experience.

Cooper Early Education Center (serving Harvey County)

Programs	Ages Served	Operating Months	Health Services	Group Meetings
USD #373 Preschool	3-5 year olds	School Year	Yes	Yes
Parents as Teachers (PAT)	Prenatal - 3 year olds	Year Round	Yes	Yes
Infant Toddler Services	0-3 year olds	Year Round	Yes	No

Newton USD 373 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Persons having inquiries concerning the District's non-discrimination policies and compliance therewith may contact the school district's Compliance Coordinator at 308 E 1st Newton, KS 67114-3846 or call (316) 284-6200.

School Information

Classes are Monday - Friday.

AM Session: 8:15 - 11:30

PM Session: 12:45 - 4:00

Full Day Session: 8:15-2:45

The telephone number for Cooper is: (316) 284-6510

My child's teacher is: _____

Our Family Consultant is: _____

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Our Philosophy for Preschool

We believe:

- children should be valued as individuals.
- children need to feel safe and supported all the time.
- PLAYING and TALKING are the ways in which young children learn about themselves and the world around them.
- learning should be meaningful and fun.
- children need to be actively involved in learning.
- children learn through hands-on experiences.
- children learn through taking risks, making mistakes, and celebrating success.
- what children CAN DO rather than what children cannot do are the starting points in their learning.
- the process of learning is more important than the end product.
- children develop their Social, Emotional, Physical and Cognitive skills at differing rates.
- all aspects of a child's development are equally important and interwoven.
- children need to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning.
- children who are encouraged to think for themselves are more likely to act independently.
- children learn from everything that happens to them and do not naturally separate their learning into subjects.
- parents are the first educators of children and have a vital part to play in the establishment of their child's learning environment.



Life at Preschool

When you visit your child's Preschool, you will see a room full of children learning through play. The chart below lists some of the concepts and skills children learn through play.

When Children Do This:	They are Learning To:
Use blocks and wooden animals to create a zoo	Recreate the world around them (Geography and Social Studies)
Separate cups and plates at cleanup time	Group objects in categories (Math)
Finish a puzzle	Complete a task (Study Habits and Self-Esteem)
Gather paper, scissors and glue for a project	Plan and carry out a task (Study Habits and Independence)
Draw a picture	Use symbols (Reading/Writing)
Pour without spilling	Use their small muscle skills (Physical Coordination)
Scribble on paper	Use writing as a means of communication (reading and writing)
Listen to a story and talk about what happened	Love books, remember details and express ideas (Language Development)
Sing or do a finger play with the other children and the teacher	Participate cooperatively in a group (Social Skills)
Find ways of moving across the rug without their feet touching it	Think creatively to solve problems (Independence and Problem Solving)
Climb on outdoor equipment	Use their bodies in challenging tasks (Self-Esteem) (Reading/Writing Readiness)

Appointments, Arrival and Departure Times

- Do not leave young children unattended in the car when dropping off or picking up a child from the center. By law, this could be considered endangering the life of a child (K.S.A. 21-5601) and the police will be called.
- Do not leave a car running when unattended.
- A child will be released from the classroom to a parent, guardian, or a person listed on the child's Emergency Contact List by the parent/guardian who is at least 18 years old. The exception is when legal paperwork in the child's files states that a parent cannot pick up the child.
- Children should arrive at school no earlier than five minutes before starting time, (AM/Full: 8:10 am, PM: 12:40 pm). We cannot provide supervision for students prior to this time.
- Children may not play on school grounds before or after school.
- All absences must be called into the school office.
- Parents must report to the front office when picking children up for appointments during school hours.
- If your child will be leaving school early, please call the office.
- If you are going on vacation or your child is ill, please contact the school and let us know. An extended unexplained absence may mean your child's position is given to another child on our waiting list.
- The Preschool Programs meet five days a week (Monday through Friday, see preschool calendar for dates of operation.) Each half day session lasts for three hours and 15 minutes. The full day session lasts six hours and 30 minutes. During the preschool day, children participate in a rich variety of activities during which they experience many opportunities for learning. AM classes begin at 8:15 and are dismissed at 11:30. PM classes begin at 12:45 and are dismissed at 4:00. Full day classes begin at 8:15 and are dismissed at 2:45.

Absenteeism, Truancy and Tardy

Regular attendance at school is important for a student's success. Students are expected to be at school every day and report to class on time. This is a legal obligation as well as a school expectation.

DEFINITIONS

Chronic Absenteeism: is missing 10 percent or more of school for any reason whether the absence is excused, unexcused or due to suspensions. (approx. 2 days per month) (attendanceworks.org)

Truancy: Whenever a child is required by law to attend school and is enrolled in school, and the child is inexcusably absent therefrom on either three (3) consecutive school days or five (5) school days in any semester or seven (7) school days in any school year, whichever of the foregoing occurs first, the child shall be considered to be not attending school as required by law. A child is inexcusably absent from school if the child is absent therefrom all or a significant part of a school day without a valid excuse acceptable to the school employee designated by the Board of Education to have responsibility for the school attendance of such child.

Significant Part of a School Day: An absence of 120 minutes or more (2 hours) in any school day shall be considered an absence for a significant part of the school day.

Unexcused Absence: Even with a parent/guardian call or note, the following absences will not be considered excused, unless **prior** approval is obtained from the principal or designee.

- Vacations
- Minor illness (cold, stomach ache, or headache without fever)
- Haircuts
- Going shopping
- Car trouble
- Oversleeping

Excused Absence: includes the following:

- [student] Personal illness;
- [student] Health-related treatment, examination, or recuperation;
- Serious illness or death of a member of the family;
- Obligatory religious observances;
- Participation in a district-approved or school sponsored activity or course;

Absences pre-arranged (i.e. week long vacations) by parents and approved by the principal; and students of active duty military personnel may have additional excused absences at the discretion of the principal for visitations relative to leave or deployment.

All absences which do not fit into one of the above categories would be considered an unexcused absence. A student serving a period of suspension or expulsion from the district shall not be considered inexcusably absent.

Parents may excuse their student a significant portion of 10 days per year for student illness, professional appointments, serious illness or death of a family member, religious observances, or absences pre-arranged by parents and approved by the principal. Parents should contact the school office when their student is going to be absent.

There is no limit for specific absences excused by licensed medical personnel (physicians, dentists, optometrists, chiropractors). A detailed note, signed by the physician, must be provided within 3 days of a health-related absence. Other absences; for example, court appearances; will be managed on an as needed basis.

Tardy Policy (PreK-6th Grade)

A tardy is defined as entering the classroom after arrival or leaving the classroom before dismissal. Late arrival to school or class is always discouraged.

Accidents and Health Insurance

- The school is not responsible for accidents occurring on school property. Students are to be taken to their physician for treatment by the parent or other designated person.
- We encourage all families to have accident coverage on their children, prior to participation in any school-sponsored activity.
- Health insurance is available to qualified families through a state insurance program. Information may be attained in the front office or through the school social worker.

Asbestos

Copies of all of the district's asbestos inspection reports and management plans are available from Mr. Jason Smith, Maintenance Supervisor. All inquiries regarding the plan(s) should be directed to him at the Service Center at 100 S. Evans Newton, KS 67114 (telephone: 316-284-6500).

Clothing

Please dress your child in clothing that is easily washed so they may enjoy the activities provided. Since these activities include clay, painting, sand and water play, do not ask your child to "stay clean" as this will inhibit participation. **A spare set of seasonally appropriate clothes should be sent for emergencies. Please label spare clothing with your child's name.**

PE Shoes

- The physical education department recommends any soft-soled shoe that fits snugly around the foot be worn for physical education.
- Shoes that are not acceptable for PE include cowboy boots, hiking boots, snow boots, sandals, jellies, flip flops, dress shoes with hard slick soles, etc.
- Students without appropriate shoes will not be allowed to participate in activities that may be a safety hazard without appropriate shoes.

Crisis Information

Go to the district website, www.usd373.org.

Discipline

The preschool rules and discipline policy are very basic, yet extremely important to ensure safe, fun, and effective learning for everyone. The rules are posted in each classroom and reviewed often with the children. Parental support and follow-through are imperative to any successful discipline program. Should misbehavior become persistent, parents will be contacted to assist in identifying the problem, contributing factors, and to help develop a plan of action for changing the behavior. It is important that parents work with the staff to affect behavior changes when appropriate.

Toy Guidelines

Students are not allowed to bring toys, games, or other recreational items to school. This includes but is not limited to action figures, dolls, trading cards, electronic devices, board games, and stuffed animals.

Exceptions — Exceptions to this policy may be made by school staff for educational purposes, show-and-tell, or special events with prior approval from a teacher or administrator.

Responsibility of Parents/Guardians — Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their child understands and complies with this policy.

Parents/guardians should regularly check their child's backpack to ensure no prohibited items are brought to school.

Confiscation and Return of Toys — Confiscated toys will be held in the school office until a parent or guardian can retrieve them. The school will not be responsible for any loss, damage, or theft of confiscated toys.

Active Play

CEEC - Harvey County Educational Program: Cooper provides a preschool program for children ages 3 to kindergarten enrollment. This program takes place from either 8:15am-11:30am or 12:45pm-4:00pm. Children in full day preschool sessions attend from 8:15am-2:45pm. We strive to keep our program current with the ever changing standards that are required at school entry. Cooper Early Education Center is committed to ensuring children are supported and encouraged to engage in active play, develop fundamental movement skills and have limited screen time. We offer 60- 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activities per day. We encourage all children to participate in a variety of daily physical activity opportunities that are appropriate for their age, that are fun, and that offer variety. We encourage a least restrictive, safe environment for students at all times. Age appropriate activities will be scheduled with the flexibility to meet each individual child's needs and their various ages.

Recess Guidelines

Daily Recess: All elementary school students (PreK-6) will have at least a minimum of 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which the supervising staff will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity for the students.

Outdoor Recess During Inclement Weather: The following factors will be considered when making decisions about going outdoors for recess:

- Wind
- Temperature (too hot, too cold) Wind Chill (32 degrees or less)
- Ice/Snow/Rain - moisture

Teachers will be encouraged to include opportunities for students to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity during indoor recess.

Physical Activity and Punishment:

- Physical activity (e.g, laps, push-ups) will not be used as punishment for academic or behavior choices.
- Withholding of physical activity opportunities, such as recess or physical education class, shall not be used as punishment (academic or behavior). However, if behavior at recess is a problem, the administrator may limit participation in recess as a natural consequence for behavior at recess.

Playground Supervision

Staff will move around frequently and position themselves in order to observe the entire group. The playground will receive a daily check to make certain the area is

free of any harmful debris or equipment breakage.

Drug-Free Policy

See Appendix G.

Tobacco Control

Cooper Early Education Center is a Tobacco/Smoke-Free Zone. The entire campus of USD 373 is a tobacco/smoke - free zone, including vapes. The use, possession, or promotion of any tobacco product by staff members is prohibited at all times in any district facility; in school vehicles; at school-sponsored activities. We ask that all parents and staff respect our policy. We are committed to providing safe and healthy environments for the children in our care. Tobacco use is a major cause of preventable disease and death. Smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke have been found to cause heart disease, cancer, asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory problems. The residual contaminants from tobacco smoke (also known as "third hand smoke") can linger on carpets, or other fabric and surfaces long after the tobacco product has been extinguished. Exposure to nicotine through cigarette butts, e-liquids, or tobacco waste can cause nausea and vomiting, respiratory arrest, seizures and even death. Providing tobacco-free environments is one of the most important things we can do for our children's health. Staff members are required to practice effected handwashing multiple times per shift. This is strictly enforced with staff and we ask all parents to respect our policy.

Emergency Numbers

- You must provide your school with at least 3 **LOCAL** emergency phone numbers in the event your child becomes ill or is injured at school and requires your presence.
- Please remember to notify the school of any change of address or telephone number.

Enrollment Regulations

State law requires every student who enrolls in school for the first time must provide proof of identity within 30 days after enrollment.

Preschool enrollees, who have not attended school, must provide one of the following:

- A certified copy of the birth certificate or birth registration card (hospital certificate will not be accepted.)
- A certified copy of a court order placing the child in custody of DCF (Kansas Department for Children and Families—formerly known as SRS).

Surveillance

Please be advised that surveillance cameras may be used to monitor students riding in district vehicles and to monitor student behavior in or around any district facility.

Surveillance footage of personally identifiable students depicting their involvement in an altercation or other violation of law or district policy shall be considered a student record and shall be subject to current law for the release of student record information.

Health Issues

- The school must have up-to-date medical information regarding chronic health problems.
- If your child has asthma, food allergies, diabetes, seizure disorder or is taking medication regularly, please notify the school nurse.
- A release of information that allows the nurse to communicate with the child's doctor in the event of an emergency or to provide feedback about a medication's effectiveness may be requested.
- Over-the-counter medications may be given with signed permission from parents.
- Hearing, vision, speech and language screenings are done regularly at selected grades. If screening results indicate a concern or problem, parents will be notified.
- If a student is found to have live lice, the parent or emergency contact person will be notified at the end of their child's class session. The child will need treatment before returning. The family consultant or nurse will contact the family for completion of treatment at home. Recommended treatment includes checking all family members and contacts for lice, treating the home environment with a variety of topical treatments proven to be effective against head lice. Nits should be removed from the child's head. Verbal and written information will be given to the student's family to finish treatment prior to returning to school.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS SICK?

A child must be free from fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting for at least 24 hours without the use of any fever, diarrhea or nausea reducing medicine before returning to school.

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be called to pick up your child. A child should not come to school or attend a school event if one of the following conditions exists:

- diapered children with two or more loose/watery stools in a 24-hour period, or loose/watery stool not contained in diaper
- toilet trained children having loose/watery stools and not being able to make it to the bathroom
- any child with a stool containing blood or mucus not explained by medication, diet, or hard stools.
- severe coughing when the child gets red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched croup or whooping sounds after coughing
- difficult or rapid breathing
- yellowish eyes or skin
- sore throat or trouble swallowing
- unusually dark, tea-colored urine
- gray, white or black bowel movement
- headache and stiff neck
- fever 100.4°F or higher
- vomiting occurring more than once within a 24-hour period

CONTAGIOUS INFECTIONS/DISEASES

When a child is ill due to a contagious infection or disease, a doctor's written release may be requested before the child returns to school or attends any school event.

Children cannot attend school or school events for a certain period of time if diagnosed with certain diseases or conditions:

- SCARLET FEVER/STREP INFECTIONS - 24 hours after the start of treatment and fever free for 24 hours.
- RING WORM - After treatment.
- FEVER -fever is gone for 24 hours without using fever control medication.
- VOMITING -vomiting has stopped for 24 hours without the use of anti-vomiting medications.
- DIARRHEA -loose/watery stools have stopped for 24 hours.

Health: Taking care of health problems early is important so we require **a current physical and up-to-date immunizations** on all children. All children are required to have a yearly dental exam and follow up treatment.

Your child needs vaccines as they grow!

2024 Recommended Immunizations for Birth Through 6 Years Old

Want to learn more?
Scan this QR code to find out which
vaccines your child might need. Or visit
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/tool/child.html



VACCINE OR PREVENTIVE ANTIBODY	BIRTH	1 MONTH	2 MONTHS	4 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	7 MONTHS	8 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	15 MONTHS	18 MONTHS	19 MONTHS	20-23 MONTHS	2-3 YEARS	4-6 YEARS
RSV antibody	Depends on mother's RSV vaccine status							Depends on child's health status						
Hepatitis B	Dose 1	Dose 2			Dose 3									
Rotavirus		Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3										
DTaP		Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3					Dose 4					Dose 5
Hib		Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3				Dose 4						
Pneumococcal		Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3				Dose 4						
Polio		Dose 1	Dose 2				Dose 3							Dose 4
COVID-19								At least 1 dose of updated (2023-2024 Formula) COVID-19 vaccine						
Influenza/Flu								Every year. Two doses for some children						
MMR								Dose 1						Dose 2
Chickenpox								Dose 1						Dose 2
Hepatitis A								2 doses separated by 6 months						

KEY

- ALL children should be immunized at this age.
- SOME children should get this dose of vaccine or preventive antibody at this age

Talk to your child's health care provider for more guidance if:

1. Your child has any medical condition that puts them at higher risk for infection.
2. Your child is traveling outside the United States.
3. Your child misses a vaccine recommended for their age.

Breastfeeding:

Cooper Early education center (CEEC) is a Breastfeeding friendly facility, meeting Kansas Breastfeeding Childcare standards. CEEC is here to support new mothers and infants. We will offer a private room for staff, parents, or volunteers wanting to breastfeed during program hours. A sink is available in the staff lounge by the office to use as needed. A refrigerator is provided in two areas for milk storage as needed. Any family expressing a need for additional assistance with breastfeeding shall be directed to the Health Coordinator for further referral.

Nutrition Standards

Nutrition standards linked to Child and Adult Care Food Program Nutrition - Cooper Early Education Center - Children in the half day preschool sessions attend from either 8:15am-11:30am or 12:45pm-4:10pm and are served breakfast or lunch respectively and a snack during their session. The combined meal and snack served by the district food service provides one third to one half of a child's daily nutritional needs. Children in full day preschool sessions attend from 8:15am-2:40pm and are provided breakfast, lunch, and a snack. The combined meals and a snack served by district food service provide one half to two thirds of a child's daily nutritional needs.

Menus are picked by district food service and include a variety of food including fresh fruits and vegetables. All menus are prepared by the director of food service for the district. The director enters menus into two systems to ensure all components are met. All meals for the children are free. All meals and snacks will be served in a pleasant, well-lit, and ventilated area that promotes socialization. Children will be served food by food service staff on trays. Children will take their tray to an assigned table and empty the tray when mealtime is complete. Classroom staff, parents, and classroom volunteers will join the children at meal times and share the same menu (unless there are medical contraindications). Staff, parents, and volunteers will model appropriate behavior and manners, as well as positive attitude toward all foods served. Special diets that are medically prescribed by a physician to ensure that a child's health will be accommodated to ensure the child's health is not jeopardized and that individual needs are met. Staff will encourage interesting and pleasant table conversation across a variety of topics, not only those related to food and nutrition. Staff will be sensitive to cultures that do not encourage children to participate in meal conversation.

Food will not be used as punishment or reward. Each child will be encouraged, not forced to eat or taste his or her food. A variety of food is served to broaden children of all cultures' food experiences. The meals and snacks meet guidelines set by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Meal time is part of the daily activities at Cooper. Children in the morning session will receive breakfast and a morning snack and children in the afternoon session will receive lunch and an afternoon snack every day. Children in full day classes will receive breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack.

Because of health and sanitation regulations, **parents are not allowed to bring food/snacks for classroom children.** If a family does bring food/snacks to the classroom, it will not be served.

Volunteers

Head Start, a federally funded program, is one of our major funding sources that allows us to offer free preschool to Harvey County families. This grant requires a 20% match of funds through local resources. This is where we turn to our families for help! Every hour you spend volunteering in our program translates into dollars toward our match.

Here are some ways you can volunteer:

- In the classroom (arrange with your student's teacher)

- Participate in Policy Council
- Prepare materials for your student's teacher at home
- Help facilitate family style meals in our cafeteria (arrange with your student's teacher)

By volunteering you will not only be helping us meet our 20% match, but also showing your child helping others is important and showing them in yet another way that you care about their education. Feel free to get your extended families involved! We love to see grandmas and grandpas, uncles and aunts in our classrooms.

All volunteers will be required to submit to a criminal background check.

We value the students' and teachers' time at school and ask that you do not use your cell phone while you are volunteering at Cooper. Please, set your phone to silent or vibrate mode. If you have an emergency and need to use your phone, we ask that you step outside to make or take phone calls so the school environment is not interrupted.

Policy Council

Another way for you to support our program is to become involved in our Policy Council. The Policy Council makes decisions about important issues facing our program including curriculum, planning, budgeting and staffing. Talk to your child's teacher or the principal to see how you can get involved.

Safe School Hotline

Safe School Hotline is a tool that provides students, parents and educators a confidential means of reporting unsafe conditions that may imperil students and staff in a totally anonymous, non-threatening way. It can give school officials the information they need to enhance safety and improve the quality of education. Students or parents with something important to report can call the Safe School Hotline 24 hours a day with complete assurance of confidentiality. The Safe School Hotline Number is: **(877) 626-8203. Your name is never asked.**

Severe Weather

The following procedures are planned if bad weather conditions require us to dismiss early, to delay the starting time, or to close all or part of the schools for the day. Every attempt will be made to announce the decision by 7:00 a.m. if school is not held, or if the starting time is delayed. Official announcements will be made on the following radio stations: KFDI, KMXW-FM, KFTI-AM, KFXJ-FM, KYQQ-FM, KICT-FM and the following television stations: Channel 3, Channel 10, and Channel 12 and also on the district's website at: www.usd373.org. Parents who provide an

emergency number will be notified through the Connect 5 System of any changes to the regular schedule.

Schools will not generally be dismissed because of storms arising during the school day, as long as students and teachers can remain at school safely. The primary reason for this is to avoid the dangers of sending students home when the parent is absent. If school is dismissed prior to the regular dismissal time, every possible attempt will be made to notify the parents or guardians to be aware that the students are coming home. During threatening weather parents should take care to supply the school an alternate name to be used in case the parent cannot be reached.

If a tornado warning occurs during the hours your child is in school, he/she will remain at school until the all-clear signal has been announced by radio or TV. Regular tornado drills are scheduled and children are instructed by their teachers as to the safest location in school.

Sexual Harassment Policy

See Appendix D.

Special Education Referral

All schools in Newton USD 373 have access to the services of the Harvey County Special Education Cooperative. Assistance in meeting the educational and developmental needs of all children is available upon request. Requests for assistance may be initiated by school personnel, parents or guardians, or any community agency. Further information may be obtained from the school office. Students who are identified as exceptional shall have equal access to nonacademic and extracurricular activities.

For Hearing/Speech Disabled TDD Users, dial the Kansas Relay Center toll free number 1-800-766-3777. Calls handled by the Relay Center are strictly confidential. The Relay operator will voice to the hearing person the TDD User's message, then types back to the TDD user the hearing person's words.

A copy of Procedural Safeguards and Parent's Rights in Special Education is available through the building principal or the Harvey County Special Education Cooperative. The Harvey County Special Education Cooperative provides services to children with disabilities ages birth through 21. For more information, call (316) 284-6580. It is the policy of the Harvey County Special Education Cooperative to forward education records on request, to a school in which a student seeks or

intends to enroll.

Education and Disability Services

Children learn through play. Cooper classroom activities are play oriented. Weekly lesson plans are posted in each classroom. Children with a diagnosed disability will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is developed with the parents or guardians to provide individualized services. Staff work with all children on a regular basis to meet individual goals.

Social Services

Cooper Family Consultants (FCs) assist qualifying families in accessing community services such as energy and housing assistance and other community resources. The FCs also recruit and enroll children in the program and monitor their attendance. FCs offer parents or guardians support and training through regularly scheduled visits to help their child be ready for kindergarten and to help their family reach self-sufficiency. If your family is experiencing a need for any type of support, please contact your Family Consultant.

Mental Health

Cooper encourages healthy emotional and social development of children and families. Parenting classes and mental health consultation are provided. Consultation is also available for parents in the area of mental health. Contact your child's teacher or Family Consultant for further information.

Pets

Children are requested not to bring pets to school unless previous arrangements have been made with the principal.

Racial and Disability Harassment Policy

See Appendix C.

Record Management

The educational records of your child are covered under law. As a parent you have rights regarding these records. On November 19, 1974, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 became law. Under this law, the parents and students enrolled in any educational institution receiving federal funds are given certain rights concerning the educational records of their children.

1. **Types of Educational Records Maintained:** The types of educational records regularly maintained and directly related to each student include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. medical and health information;
 - b. date of school entry;
 - c. school grades and credits;
 - d. transcripts from previous schools attended;
 - e. school-wide test results.
2. Parent or Eligible Student Access to Records: You are entitled to have access to the educational records for your inspection and review.
 3. Access to Records: The following persons, organizations, agencies or institutions who have a legitimate interest may have access to the educational records of each student:

Access/Purpose

- a. School Staff with Legitimate Educational Interests in Records/Educational, social, personal development
 - b. Other Schools/Student seeks or intends to enroll in the schools
 - c. Authorized Representatives/Fulfillment of legal requirements of Federal and State Agencies and performance of audits and evaluations of programs
 - d. Authorized persons of Institutions or Agencies/In connection with financial aid for student
 - e. State and local officials/Information required to be reported by state statute
 - f. Accrediting organizations/Accreditation
 - g. Parents of a dependent student/Parent information
 - h. Courts and parties to legal action/To comply with subpoena or judicial order
 - i. Organizations conducting studies for educational agencies/ developing, validating, or administering student's tests or programs.
 - j. Appropriate persons/knowledge of info is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or others in an emergency
 - k. Child Welfare Agency Representatives if such agency is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student.
- Before any educational records will be released to anyone other than those parties specified above, you must give your written consent to said release.
4. Right to a Hearing: You are entitled to a hearing to challenge the content of your child's educational records. The records may be challenged on the following grounds:
 - a. the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student; or
 - b. to provide an opportunity for the correction or deletion of any such inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate data and to insert a written explanation of the parents respecting the content of the records.
 5. Responsibility of Maintenance: The Principal of each attendance center is

responsible for the maintenance of all the above listed types of records.

6. Right to Copy: Parent(s) and eligible student may have copies of the desired record at a cost charged to the parent(s) or eligible student.
7. Directory Information: The following information is defined as Directory Information -- name, address, telephone listing, parent, guardian name, and classroom.

If you believe any or all of the above directory information should not be released without your prior consent, please respond within 10 days to the Principal.

8. Court Order for Educational Records: Upon receipt of a subpoena or judicial order requiring educational records, you will be notified of such order unless you are a party to a court proceeding involving child abuse and neglect or dependency and the order is issued in the context of that proceeding.
9. Record of Requests for Access: Except for school staff members, the principal will maintain a record of those persons, agencies, or organizations who have had access to the records.

Eligible student means a student who has attained eighteen years of age, or is attending an institution of post-secondary education.

The parent or guardian must notify the school of any change in the student's dependency.

Telephone

- Parents should feel free to call the school concerning any matter dealing with their child.
- We request teachers and students not be asked to come to the telephone during class.
- Students' after school arrangements should be made prior to the school day.

Treasures from Home

While we do not wish to dampen your child's enthusiasm we would appreciate if TOYS are not brought from home. Treasures can be lost and broken—please have your child leave them at home.

Visiting the School

Parents and community members are encouraged to visit our school. Please arrange your visit by calling the office or your student's teacher and checking into the office when you come. All visitors must sign in at the office using a government issued ID to be scanned, regardless of the duration of the visit. Parents or guardians must have prior approval from school administration before observing classroom activities, lessons, or teacher-student interactions during instructional hours. Plan for a day in which you can make arrangements for someone else to care for any young children. When you visit, please remember that teachers will be involved in teaching and supervising children. They will not be able to visit with you at this time, but they may put you to work! We value an extra pair of hands.

Parents who want to make an appointment to observe in their child's classroom will need to sign complete a Parental Observation Requirements Form Parental Observation Requirements form that can be completed in the office.

Request for Observation:

- a. Parents or guardians who wish to observe classroom activities must submit a formal request to the school administration at least one week in advance.
- b. The request must include the purpose of the observation, the desired date(s) and time(s), and the specific classroom(s) the parent intends to observe.

Approval Process:

- a. The school administration will review each request on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as the educational benefit to the student, potential disruption to the learning environment, and adherence to school policies.
- b. Approval will be granted at the discretion of the administration, and parents will be notified of the decision in a timely manner.

Alternative Communication Channels:

- a. Parents are encouraged to engage with teachers and school staff through alternative communication channels, such as scheduled parent-teacher conferences, email correspondence, or participation in school events.
- b. These channels provide opportunities for parents to stay informed about their child's academic progress and address any concerns or questions they may have regarding classroom activities.

Withdrawals

When a student is moving, parents are to contact the school office in advance for proper withdrawal procedure.

Transportation

• **Transportation is not guaranteed!!**

- A child will be released from the bus/van **ONLY** to a parent, guardian, or person listed on the Emergency Contact List who is at least 18 years old. The exception is when legal paperwork in the child's file states that a parent cannot pick up the child.
- People on the Emergency Contact List not known to staff must provide photo identification to establish their identity prior to the child's release.
- If no one is available to take your child off the bus/van when he/she arrives after preschool, your child will be returned to Cooper and efforts will be made to contact parents or guardians, or an adult on the Emergency Contact List to pick your child up at Cooper.
- If a child is not picked up by the close of preschool, every attempt will be made to reach the parents or guardians, or other adults on the Emergency Contact List. If this is not successful the child will be considered abandoned, and Harvey County Protective Services/Local Law Enforcement will be contacted.
- Transportation will be terminated if a student is returned to Cooper for the 4th time. A warning phone call will be made by Cooper staff to parents or guardians after the 3rd return.
- Transportation will be terminated if there are 3 consecutive no call/no shows **OR** 6 total no call/shows. A warning phone call will be made by Cooper staff to parents or guardians after the 2nd consecutive **OR** 5th total no call/no show.
- Changes to the Emergency Contact List can only be made by a parent or guardian in person with the Cooper Office.
- If your child rides the school bus/van, please call the Cooper Office (316) 284-6510 to let them know of any changes to the regular schedule.
- The bus will wait 2 minutes for your student, if no activity occurs the bus will leave.
- Absolutely **NO** food, drinks, glass objects, live pets, balls, or balloons are allowed on the bus/van.

Punctuality

Punctuality in picking up your child is very important, as your child worries if he/she is left behind.

If a child is not picked up by the close of preschool, every attempt will be made to reach the parents or guardians, or other adults on the Emergency Contact List. If this is not successful the child will be considered abandoned, and Harvey County Protective Services/Local Law Enforcement will be contacted.

Board Policy

Board policies are regularly reviewed and revised. Any policy printed in this handbook is accurate as of the printing date. Should policies change, the most recent adopted policy of the Board of Education will be followed regardless of what is printed in the handbook.

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Appendix A: Discipline

Philosophy - We believe...

- it is the school's responsibility to provide a positive climate for learning.
- schools should emphasize positive incentives and recognition which promote self-discipline.
- discipline is an essential part of education.
- students have rights and responsibilities.
- school rules should be established and understood by parents, teachers and students.
- parents should be deeply involved in the discipline of their children.
- parents, teachers, and administrators should help students work toward self-discipline, self-control, and self-responsibility.
- disciplinary action should be in accordance with the policy of the Newton USD 373 Board of Education and as stated in the State of Kansas laws.

What happens if my child misbehaves?

Cooper staff avoid most behavior problems by planning appropriate classroom activities. Despite how well-planned a day is, conflict may erupt. Discipline problems will be handled in a matter-of-fact manner that encourages children to develop self-control. For example, "Tell him you don't like that" and "Ask if you can have a turn" are phrases you are likely to hear in the classroom.

Discipline Techniques:

Teachers will often redirect or distract a disruptive child in a firm, positive manner. Sometimes sitting nearby, holding, or talking to a child helps. At times children need time in a quiet area of the room to settle down. If a child continues

to misbehave over a period of time, the parents and staff will develop a plan to help the child.

Cooper teachers use the PATHS program and The Zones of Regulation. PATHS helps teach children to understand and express feelings as well as build basic problem-solving skills, social skills, and friendships. Also through The Zones of Regulation framework children learn to identify their feelings and gain self-regulation skills.

Appendix B: Emergency Safety Interventions Policy - GAAF

The Board of Education is committed to limiting the use of Emergency Safety Interventions ("ESI"), such as seclusion and restraint, with all students. Seclusion and restraint shall be used only when a student's conduct necessitates the use of an emergency safety intervention as defined in the policy. The board of education encourages all employees to utilize other behavioral management tools, including prevention techniques, de-escalation techniques, and positive behavioral intervention strategies. Please refer to the complete policy listed on the USD 373 website at: Last Revised: 07/24/2023

Appendix C: Racial & Disability Harassment Policy - JGECA

The board of education is committed to providing a positive and productive learning and working environment, free from discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color or national origin or disability. Discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin ("racial harassment or on the basis of disability ("disability harassment") shall not be tolerated in the school district.

Racial or disability harassment of employees or students of the district in any district education program or activity is strictly prohibited.

Racial harassment is unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Kansas Acts Against Discrimination. Disability harassment is unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability Act. All forms of racial or disability harassment are prohibited at school, on school property, and at all school-sponsored activities, programs or events.

The entire policy may be found at this link:

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ks/usd373/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=C5YT6G7567CB>

Revised: April 22, 2019; Last Reviewed: April 8, 2019, Rev. 8/17/21

Appendix D: Sexual Harassment - JGEC

The board of education is committed to providing a positive and productive learning and working environment, free from discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment. The district does not discriminate on the basis of sex in admissions, employment, or the educational programs or activities it operates and is prohibited by Title IX from engaging in such discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, will not be tolerated in the school district. Discrimination on the basis

of sex of employees or students of the district in any district education program or activity is strictly prohibited.

Sexual harassment is unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Kansas Act Against Discrimination. All forms of sexual harassment are prohibited at school, on school property, and at all school-sponsored activities, programs, or events within the United States

The entire policy may be found at this link:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/ks/usd373/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=C5YT6G7567CB#>

Last Revised: August 3, 2020; Last Reviewed: August 3, 2020, Rev. 8/17/21

Appendix E: Weapons Policy - JCDBB

A student shall not knowingly possess, handle or transmit any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon at school, on school property or at a school-sponsored event. This shall include any weapon, any item being used as a weapon or destructive device, or any facsimile of a weapon.

Weapons and Destructive Devices

As used in this policy, the term "weapon and/or destruction device" shall include, but shall not be limited to:

- any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
- the frame or receiver of any weapon described in the preceding example;
- any firearm muffler or firearm silencer;
- any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce, mine, or similar device;
- any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter;
- any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into a destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled;
- any bludgeon, sand club, metal knuckles, or throwing star;
- any knife, commonly referred to as a switchblade, which has a blade that opens automatically by hand pressure applied to a button, spring or other device in the handle of the knife or any knife having a blade that opens, falls, or is ejected into position by the force of gravity or by an outward, downward or centrifugal thrust or movement;
- any electronic device designed to discharge immobilizing levels of electricity, commonly known as a stun gun.

Penalties for Weapon Violations

Possession of a weapon and/or destructive device listed under the "Weapons and

Destructive Devices" heading above shall result in expulsion from school for a period of one calendar year, except the superintendent may recommend this expulsion be modified on a case-by-case basis.

Possession of, handling of, and/or transmitting a weapon of a type other than described under the "Weapons and Destructive Devices" heading above, an item being used as a weapon or destructive device, or a facsimile of a weapon may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Expulsion hearings for weapons violations shall be conducted by the superintendent or the superintendent's designee.

Students violating this policy shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency(ies) and if a juvenile to the Secretary for DCF or the Secretary of KDOC as appropriate.

Possession of an air gun at school, on school property, or at a school supervised activity will not be prohibited for students participating in an air gun-related activity sponsored by an organization held at school or when in transit to or from such activities held off district property.

Revised: 5/2012, 1/13, 5/12/2014, 9/28/2015, 7/11/2016

Appendix F: Bullying – JDDC

The board of education prohibits bullying in any form by any student, staff member, or parent towards a student or staff member, on or while using school property, in a school vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event. For the purposes of this policy, the term "bullying" shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Kansas law.

The administration shall propose, and the board shall review and approve a plan to address bullying as prohibited herein. The plan shall include provisions for the training and education of staff members and students and shall include appropriate community involvement as approved by the board.

Students who have bullied others in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. If appropriate, students who violate the bullying prohibition shall be reported to local law enforcement.

Approved: 09/08, 08/26/2013, 05/12/2014, 09/28/2015, 11/14/22

USD 373 Bullying Plan

Bullying means: Any intentional gesture or any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act or threat either by any student, staff member, or parent towards a student or by any student, staff member or parent towards a staff member that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, knows or

should know will have the effect of:

- Harming a student or staff member, whether physically or mentally;
- Damaging a student's or staff member's property;
- Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of harm; or
- Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to the student's or staff member's property.

Bullying also includes cyberbullying. "Cyberbullying" means bullying by use of any electronic communication device through means including, but not limited to, e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, pagers, online games, and websites.

Additionally, bullying means any form of intimidation or harassment prohibited by the board of education of the school district in policies concerning bullying adopted pursuant to K.S.A. 72-6147 or subsection (e) of K.S.A. 72-1138, and amendments thereto. USD 373 will not tolerate these actions by students, staff, or parents.

For the purposes of this plan and its authorizing policies, "parent" includes a biological, adoptive, or step-parent; guardian; custodian; or other person with authority to act on behalf of a student.

Similarly, a "staff member" means any person employed by the district.

Any act of bullying by either an individual student or group of students towards a student or staff member of the district is prohibited on or while utilizing school property, in a school vehicle, or at school-sponsored activities, programs, and events. This policy applies to students who directly engage in an act of bullying, to students who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying, and to all staff members and parents who engage in similar behaviors.

Training concerning identifying, reporting, investigating, and preventing bullying behaviors as outlined in district policies and this plan shall be provided to students and staff members using district resources available for such purpose and shall be provided through school assemblies, staff development, or other appropriate forums at least annually.

The board or the district administration on behalf of the board may seek student, staff, parent, and/or community input on the adoption, revision, and/or implementation of the board's bullying policies or plan as directed or approved by the board.

No teacher, administrator, or school district employee shall engage in, permit, or tolerate bullying.

Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness to bullying is prohibited. A student or staff member who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, retaliation or false reporting of bullying, shall be subject to discipline in accordance with school district policy

and procedures. The district administration and/or board may take into account the following factors when determining an appropriate disciplinary action for such prohibited conduct: the ages of the parties involved; the developmental and maturity levels, special education needs of the parties involved, and the severity of the behavior.

For the purposes of this Plan, and its authorizing policies, district administration includes building and district level administrators.

Discipline guidelines for student bullying may be found in student and employee handbooks. Offenses over time or single offenses which are severe in nature may result in discipline up to and including suspension and/or expulsion or termination from employment. Parents participating in prohibited bullying conduct aimed at district students and/or staff members may jeopardize their access to district facilities; district property; school sponsored activities, programs, and events; and/or district students and/or staff members through the district's communication systems. As appropriate, reports to local law enforcement will be filed to report criminal bullying behaviors.

(See Policies EBC, GAAC, GAACA, GAAE, JDDC, JGEC, JGECA and KN)

Revised: 9/2008, 1/2010, 5/2014, 4/25/2016, 8/6/2018 (K.S.A. No. change only)

Appendix G: Drug-Free Letter and Policies IDAB, JDDA, LDD

Dear Student, Parents and Guardians:

The Newton USD 373 Board of Education on August 6, 1990, adopted revised policies concerning drug-free schools. These policies are mandated in order for the district to continue to receive federal funds as provided in the 1989 amendments to the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, P.L. 102-226-103 St. 1928. Copies of the policies follow this letter.

The board of education and staff members are committed to this concept and have already incorporated drug education units as part of our curriculum. We feel it is important for parents to read and discuss these policies with their children.

The district is also required to provide you with a list of drug and alcohol counseling, treatment and rehabilitation programs. The following list was compiled from information provided by the Kansas Department for Children and Families.

Prairie View
Mental Health Substance Abuse
Treatment Program
PO Box 467 - Newton KS 67114
(316) 284-6400

Mirror Inc.
130 E 5th; PO Box 711
Newton KS 67114
(316) 283-6743

IDAB Support Programs

Support program information approved by the board shall be filed with the clerk and made available to staff as needed.

Drug Education - All students shall be made aware of the legal, social and health consequences of drug and alcohol use. Students shall be instructed on effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs or alcohol. Students shall be informed that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is both wrong and harmful.

The board's comprehensive drug and alcohol abuse and prevention program shall be included as part of the district's curriculum. The curriculum at each grade level shall be age-appropriate and developmentally based.

A student who voluntarily seeks assistance, advice or counseling from school personnel regarding drugs or drug abuse shall not be disciplined by school authorities because the student sought assistance.

Student Mental Health - The superintendent may develop and implement a student mental health awareness program. The superintendent shall identify community or area mental health agencies able to provide assistance.

Dropout Prevention - The superintendent may develop and implement programs to prevent students from dropping out of school or to encourage dropouts to return to school.

The staff shall incorporate the philosophy and goals of this policy into the schools' programs.

At-Risk Students - The superintendent shall be responsible for developing a program for identifying and working with at-risk students.

Guidance - The guidance program shall be organized to serve all students. Counselor(s) shall provide guidance services consistent with district philosophy, job descriptions and board policies.

Homebound Instruction - Homebound instruction may be provided to a student as deemed necessary by the superintendent or by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or Section 504 team.

Revised: 8/10/2015, 3/13/23; Reviewed: 1/23/23

Drug-Free Schools JDDA

Maintaining drug-free schools is important in establishing an appropriate learning environment for the district's students. Unless otherwise specified in this policy, the possession, use, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of illicit drugs, controlled substances, and/or alcohol by students at school, on or in school property, or at school sponsored activities or events is prohibited. The possession, use, sale or distribution of drug paraphernalia or drug lookalikes is similarly prohibited.

Possession, use, and/or being under the influence of a controlled substance by a student for the purposes of this policy shall only be permitted if such substance was:

1. Obtained directly from, or pursuant to a valid prescription or order, issued to such student from a person licensed by the state to dispense, prescribe, or administer controlled substances;
2. In the case of use or possession, approved and administered, if administered at all, in accordance with board policy JGFGB and/or board policy JGFGBA; and
3. Use, if at all, in accordance with label directions.

Student Conduct

As a condition of continued enrollment in the district, students shall abide by the terms of this policy.

Students shall not manufacture, sell, distribute, dispense, possess, use and/or be under the influence of illicit drugs, controlled substances or alcoholic beverages at school, on or in school district property, or at any school activity, program, or event; nor shall they be in possession of, use, sell, or distribute drug paraphernalia or drug lookalikes in such locations. Any student violating the terms of this policy will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials, and will be subject to district discipline which may include suspension and/or expulsion.

Students who are suspended or expelled under the terms of this policy will be afforded the due process rights contained in board policies and Kansas statutes, K.S.A. 72-6114, et seq. Nothing in this policy is intended to diminish the ability of the district to take other disciplinary action against the student in accordance with other policies governing student discipline. If a student agrees to enter and complete a drug education or rehabilitation program, the cost of such a program will be borne by the student and his or her parents.

A list of area drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation programs, along with names and addresses of contact persons for the programs, is on file with the board clerk. Parents or students should contact the directors of the programs to determine the cost and length of the program.

A copy of this policy will be provided to all students and the parents of all students. Parents of all students will be notified that compliance with this policy is mandatory.

Revised: 09/2008, 09/2012, 02/24/2014, 2/24/2016, 8/6/2018 (KSA No. only)

Reviewed: 09/28/2015

LDD Federal Government-Drug Free Schools

The unlawful possession, use, sale or distribution of illicit drugs and the possession, use, sale, or distribution of alcohol by students at school, on or in school property, or at school sponsored activities or events is prohibited. This policy, and any curriculum used in conjunction with it, shall be evaluated periodically using criteria developed by the superintendent and approved by the board. The board shall receive a report after each of these reviews is conducted.

Revised: 09/2008, 09/2012, 11/09/2015

Appendix H: USD 373 Transportation Guidelines

Our first priority is transporting students to and from school safely. With that in mind, the cooperation of everyone involved is needed. Please read the following guidelines to your children and if there are any questions, please call Sheila Zwahlen, Director of Transportation, at 316.284.6505 or 316.284.6506.

- A. The driver is in charge of the pupils and the bus. Students must obey the driver promptly and respectfully.
- B. Students are to scan their ID cards when entering and exiting the bus. (This does not apply to Cooper students)
- C. Passengers must be on time; we have schedules to keep and cannot wait for those who are tardy. Please call 284.6505 or 6506 if not riding.
- D. Passengers must conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting for the bus.
 - Never stand in the roadway.
 - Stand single file in an orderly manner and board in like manner.
 - Please do not move toward the bus until the service door is opened. The bus will stop at least 6 ft. from the nearest student. If a student must cross the road, the student should check traffic, then make eye contact with the driver or watch for the driver's signal to cross.
 - Do not board a bus unless the driver is present.
- E. The driver will assign a seat to each passenger. If the driver gives permission, the student may change seats only when the bus has come to a stop.
- F. Any damage to the bus is to be reported immediately to the driver, this includes seats that have been cut. Students will be charged for any damage to school property.
- G. When disembarking remember the **Danger Zones** and cross ten feet in front of the bus. Observe the directions of the driver; look to be sure no traffic is approaching from either direction. If not crossing the road, move clear of the bus immediately and stay clear. NEVER CROSS BEHIND THE BUS.

- H. When loading at Chisholm, stay behind the yellow line for your safety.
- I. Students are advised to listen to their home radio station for storm warnings and should not attempt to reach school when so forewarned. (Unsafe conditions include heavy snows, floods, extreme windchill.)
- J. No rider shall be allowed to disembark at any designated bus stop other than their assigned stop without prior notification. Notification must be made by a phone call or by email.
- K. Non-qualified riders must obtain prior approval to ride any route.
- L. Glass containers, live animals, pets, balls, bats, balloons, skate boards, or weapons are NOT allowed. If seating arrangements do not allow room for large items, other arrangements need to be made for transporting. (i.e. pillows, sleeping bags, instruments, and fundraiser items).

PASSENGER CONDUCT

Passengers shall:

- Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Remain quiet when approaching a railroad crossing in order for the bus driver to listen for a train.
- Use low conversational volume while the bus is in motion. Unnecessary conversation with the driver is prohibited.
- Not throw anything out of the bus windows. o Keep the bus clean and sanitary at all times.
- Keep their hands, arms, head and feet inside the bus at all times.
- Keep the aisle free of feet, backpacks, musical instruments, etc.
- Not open, eat, and/or drink anything while on the bus. o Never tamper with the controls or the equipment on the bus.
- Not fight or scuffle on the bus or at the bus stop.
- Not smoke, vape, possess liquor or illegal drugs while on the bus.
- Not endanger the safety of others, or commit acts of vandalism, swear, or use obscene language, unacceptable signs, or commit moral offenses while waiting for or riding on the bus.

Passengers who fail to follow the above expectations of the USD 373 Transportation Guidelines may receive a bus referral. Consequences are as follows:

First Violation - Warning with a report sent to parents.

Second Violation - 3 day suspension from riding any bus.

Third Violation - 10 day suspension from riding any bus.

Fourth Violation - Suspension from riding any bus for the semester.

Fifth Violation - Expulsion from riding any bus for the remainder of the school year.

Students who receive a referral will be off both route and activity buses for the specified time of the referral.

Appendix I: Absences and Excuses (See AEB, IHEA, JBE and JDD) JBD

When a student is absent from school an attempt shall be made to contact the parent or guardian to determine the reason for the absence. The principal has been designated to determine the acceptability and validity of excuses presented by the parent(s) or the student.

Procedures for notifying parents on the day of a student's absence shall be published in the student handbook.

Excused/Unexcused Absences

The definition of "excused absence" includes the following:

- Personal illness;
- Health-related treatment, examination, or recuperation;
- Serious illness or death of a member of the family;
- Obligatory religious observances;
- Participation in a district-approved or school sponsored activity or course;
- Absences pre-arranged by parents and approved by the principal; and
- Students of active duty military personnel may have additional excused absences at the discretion of the principal for visitations relative to leave or deployment.

All absences which do not fit into one of the above categories would be considered an unexcused absence. A student serving a period of suspension or expulsion from the district shall not be considered inexcusably absent.

Significant Part of a School Day

An absence of 120 minutes or more (2 hours) in any school day shall be considered an absence for a significant part of the school day.

Make-Up Work

It is the student's responsibility to obtain make-up assignments from teachers following an excused or unexcused absence.

Revised: 9/28/15, 9/13/21

Appendix J: Truancy (See AEB, IDCE, JBD and JQ) JBE

Unless reporting would violate the terms of any memorandum of understanding between the district and the authority to which reports would be made, the building principal or designee shall report students who are inexcusably absent from school to the appropriate authority.

Truancy is defined as any three consecutive unexcused absences, any five unexcused absences in a semester, or seven unexcused absences in a school year, whichever comes first. Truancy shall not apply to students who have attained a high school diploma, a general educational development credential, or a high school equivalency credential. Exceptions also exist for students attending the Kansas academy of mathematics and science and for students who are part of a recognized church or religious denomination objecting to a regular public high school

education under circumstances specified in state law.

For truancy purposes, being enrolled and continuously attending a public school; a private, denominational, or parochial school taught by a competent instructor for a period of time which is substantially equivalent to the period of time public school is maintained in the school district in which the private, denominational, or parochial school is located; or a combination of attendance in both a public school and a private, denominational, or parochial school may satisfy compulsory attendance requirements. School year means the period from July 1 to June 30. Students who are absent without a valid excuse for a significant part of any school day shall be given an unexcused absence for truancy accounting purposes considered truant.

Prior to reporting to either the Department for Children and Families (if the student is under 13) or the county or district attorney (if the student is 13 or more years of age but less than 18 years of age), a letter shall be sent to the student's parent(s) or guardian notifying them that the student's failure to attend school without a valid excuse shall result in the student being reported truant.

Waiver of Compulsory Attendance Requirements

Students 16 or 17 years of age may be exempt from compulsory attendance regulations if:

- The student is regularly enrolled in and attending a program recognized by the board as an approved alternative educational program;
- the parent(s) or person acting as parent provides written consent to allow the student to be exempt from the compulsory attendance requirement and the student and the student's parent or person acting as parent attend the counseling session required by law and signs the appropriate consent and waiver form;
- the student is not subject to truancy law in accordance with law or this policy;
- the child is regularly enrolled and continuously attending school as required by law and is concurrently enrolled in a postsecondary education institution; or
- the student is exempt from compulsory attendance requirements pursuant to a court order.

Involvement of Law Enforcement

Law enforcement officers may return truant children to the school where the child is enrolled, to the child's parent or guardian, or to another location designated by the board to address truancy issues.

Reporting to Parents

If a truant child is returned to school by a law enforcement official, the principal shall notify the parent or guardian.

Dual Enrollment Students

Eligible students who are enrolled in a board-approved dual enrollment program shall not be considered truant for the hours during the school day they attend classes at a Regent's university, community college, technical college, vocational educational school, or Washburn University.

Revised: 9/2012 ,9/28/2015, 7/11/2016, 9/2022, 3/13/2023

Reviewed: 1/23/23

Appendix K: Parental Observation Requirements Form

Parent/Guardian Information:

- Parent/Guardian Name:
- Student Name(s):
- Grade(s):
- Teacher(s):

Date of Observation Request:

I, _____, understand and agree to the following terms for observing my child's classroom:

Purpose of Observation:

- I acknowledge that the purpose of my observation is to gain insight into my child's learning environment and classroom activities.

Observer Conduct:

- I understand that as an observer, I am expected to maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of students and teachers.
- I agree not to disrupt or interfere with classroom activities, instruction, or student interactions.
- I will refrain from using electronic devices during the observation unless explicitly permitted by the teacher.

Non-Disclosure Agreement:

- I agree not to disclose any confidential information observed during my visit, including personal information about students or discussions among staff members.

Duration of Observation:

- I understand that my observation will be limited to the agreed-upon time frame, as determined by the teacher or school administration.

Feedback and Questions:

- I acknowledge that any feedback or questions regarding the observation should be addressed with the teacher or school administration after the observation period.

Acknowledgment of Responsibility:

- I understand that I am solely responsible for my conduct during the observation and will adhere to the guidelines outlined in this agreement.

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have read and agree to the terms outlined above for observing my child's classroom. I understand that failure to comply with these terms may result in the termination of my observation privileges.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date:

Thank you for your cooperation in maintaining a positive and productive learning environment for all students. Please return this signed form to the school administration before your scheduled observation date.

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USD 373 School Contact List

Cooper Early Education Center
816 Oak Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6510
Principal: Alyssa Vanderhoof
Email: alyssa.vanderhoof@usd373.org
Assistant Principal: Denise McFall
Email: denise.mcfall@usd373.org

District Office
308 E 1st Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6200
Superintendent: Fred Van Ranken
Email: fred.vanranken@usd373.org

Harvey County Special Education
Cooperative
308 E 1st Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6580
Director: Reagan Seidl
Email: reagan.seidl@usd373.org

Education Technology Center (ETC)
111 W 7th Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6251
Director: Brenda Thompson
Email: brenda.thompson@usd373.org

Northridge Elementary School
1900 Windsor Dr. Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6540
Principal: Kate Bremerman
Email: kate.bremerman@usd373.org

Slate Creek Elementary School
901 E 4th Newton KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6550
Principal: Tenae Alfaro
Email: tenae.alfaro@usd373.org

South Breeze Elementary School
1020 Old Main Newton, KS 67114
Phone (316) 284-6560
Principal: Joey Menninga
Email: joey.menninga@usd373.org

Sunset Elementary School
619 Boyd Newton. KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6570
Principal: Michael Kirkpatrick
Email: michael.kirkpatrick@usd373.org

Santa Fe 5/6 Center
130 W Broadway
Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6270
Principal: Brandon Simmelink
Email: brandon.simmelink@usd373.org

Chisholm Middle School 900
E 1st Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6260
Principal: Tiffany Stephey
Email: tiffany.stephey@usd373.org

Newton High School
900 W 12th Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 284-6280
Principal: Chad Nulik
Email: chad.nulik@usd.373.org

Director of Communications:
316-284-6222
Carly Stavola
Email: carly.stavola@usd373.org

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**Receipt of 2025-2026
Cooper Early Education Family Handbook**

I have received, read, understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures found within this handbook.

Student's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____