MARY D. LANG Kindergarten Center

Parent and Student Handbook

2025-2026

April Reynolds, Principal

409 Center Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348

610-444-6260

WELCOME LETTER FROM MS. REYNOLDS

Welcome to Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center! I am thrilled to have you and your child join our school community. Kindergarten is a special time filled with growth, discovery, and the joy of learning, and we are honored to be part of your child's journey.

This handbook has been thoughtfully prepared to help familiarize you with our school's policies, procedures, and daily routines. Many of the guidelines outlined have been designed with your child's safety and well-being in mind, as well as to support the smooth and effective operation of our school. By working together and following these procedures, we can ensure a nurturing, engaging, and successful school experience for every student.

At Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center, a strong partnership between home and school is essential. We are committed to creating a positive, supportive learning environment where every child can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

I look forward to a wonderful year ahead filled with exciting milestones, meaningful connections, and lasting memories. Together, we will lay the foundation for a lifelong love of learning and create M&Ms (Magic and Miracles).

Warmest regards,

April Reynolds
Principal

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Kennett Consolidated School District is to inspire innovative thinkers by fostering inclusive, supportive relationships, and developing resiliency through rigorous, relevant, educational experiences.

VISION STATEMENT

Kennett Consolidated School District is an inclusive community that nurtures, prepares and empowers ALL, showing everyone they matter in their journey to succeed in the world.

CORE VALUES

Our core values serve to guide our actions and improve our working relationships as members of the Kennett Consolidated School District.

Integrity: We will interact with honesty and respect
Resilience: We are focused on finding solutions and see challenges as opportunities
Student-Centered: We keep students as the focus of our work and are committed to including student voice in our decision-making and programming
Accountability: We are responsible to each other so that our work improves the education of students
Collaboration: We strive to create, maintain, and encourage mutually beneficial relationships with the community, ensuring effective communication to enhance student success

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ABSENCE PROCEDURES & ATTENDANCE

Attendance

Attendance in school is required by law and is essential for student success. The Board requires that students attend school every day it is in session, except for valid reasons such as illness, family emergencies, or medical appointments. Regular attendance positively impacts student achievement—academically, socially, and emotionally.

When a student is absent, schools promptly notify parents/guardians by email, text, and phone. Parents must submit a written excuse within three days. The first ten absences can be excused with a parent note. After ten absences—even if some were excused with medical notes—any further absences require a medical professional's note; parent notes will no longer be accepted.

Absence notes and email addresses for attendance clerks can be found at the Attendance section of the kcsd.org website.

Please refer to the School Board Policy on Attendance (No. 204) for more information

Excused/Lawful Absences

The laws of the State of Pennsylvania require that a child attend school from the time they are 6 until they are 18 years old. As agents of the state, it is our responsibility to take note of any patterns of absence and address them. A student may be excused from school for the following reasons:

- Illness: Including being dismissed by school staff for health reasons.
- Professional Health Care: Visits to licensed practitioners for therapy or medical services.
- Family Emergency: Urgent family situations.
- Recovery from Accident: Healing from injuries sustained in an accident.
- Required Court Attendance: Necessary legal obligations.
- Death in the Family: Attending family matters following a death.
- Participation in Specific Events: Projects sponsored by 4-H or FFA groups (with prior written request).
- Musical performances for national veterans' organizations (with a signed excuse).
- Religious Holidays: Observing holidays recognized by a bona fide religious group (with prior written request).
- Educational Tours or Trips: Non-school-sponsored tours or college visits (with prior documentation and approval).
- Other Urgent Reasons: Includes circumstances related to homelessness and foster care.

*Note: The District may place limits on the number and duration of some absences.

Unexcused/Unlawful Absences

Absences without a valid written excuse are considered unexcused. Examples include babysitting, waking up late, or vacations. Absences are deemed unexcused until a valid written excuse is provided within three days.

If a student accumulates three or more unexcused absences, the school will notify the family and may offer a School Attendance Improvement Conference to address and improve the student's attendance. Continued issues may lead to involvement of community programs or legal action. Truancy-related suspensions or transfers are not permitted.

Virtual/Flexible Instruction Days (FIDs)

A parent note is required when a student does not participate in a virtual/Flexible Instructional Day, as these days are mandatory and fall under the attendance policy. Please ensure that written excuses are submitted to account for any missed participation within three days.

Absence Procedures

1. If a student is absent from school for any reason, a digitally generated notification will be sent via phone, email, and text

2. A written excuse must be submitted within three (3) days of an absence and can be sent via email, Talking Points, or sent back to school with your child. The excuse should include: name, date of absence, reason and parent signature.

3. Parents are requested not to ask that children be excused from attending school for reasons other than listed above.

4. Any absence not followed by a written excuse within **3 school days** will be considered unexcused.

5. Parents of any student with more than three (3) illegal absences will receive a **Notice of Violation letter (NOV)**.

6. If your child is out of school, but you feel he/she is well enough to try to keep up with some of his/her schoolwork, please contact the office and work will be provided for the student. **Please allow the teacher <u>one day</u>** to prepare work for you. You may pick it up in the office.

<u>ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES</u>

1. Students who arrive by bus will arrive at approximately 8:45 - 9:05 am.

2. Parents can drop off students from 8:45-9:00 am using the Mulberry Street door. Students should not be dropped off for school before 8:45 AM; no student supervision is provided by the school before that time.

a. Students will remain in their vehicles in the drop-off area (Mulberry Street) until an adult comes to their vehicle to let them out. This is done to protect all students and ensure safety.

3. Early morning childcare is available through the Y-CARE program at each of the elementary schools. Contact the YMCA directly to set up this childcare.

4. Attendance is taken promptly at 9:05 am in each classroom.

5. Students who arrive late, after 9:05 am, must be signed in by an adult in the office.

Early Dismissal

1. Parents who wish to have a student dismissed **before 2:45 pm** should send a signed note to the office or come to the office to request an early dismissal.

2. Students will be dismissed from the office and **will not** be permitted to wait outside the building to be picked up.

3. Students will be called to the office for dismissal upon your arrival.

4. **Parents must come into the building to pick up a student.**

5. After 2:45 pm, parents must wait for the student to be dismissed at the end of the school day. This protocol is necessary to minimize disruptions to our office procedures at the end of the school day.

Pick-up Dismissal

1. All students being picked up at the end of the school day will be escorted to their vehicles by an adult.

2. Any student being picked up by a parent **must** have a pick-up note; otherwise, they will be sent home on their assigned bus. Please **do not send a Talking Points message** to your child's teacher.

3. One note to the office and teacher is allowable for parent pick-up, **IF** it is for a specified period of time.

a. A note is required if there are changes.

4. Any student who is not picked up will be taken to the office to call their parents.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND SWPBS

A Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Plan, often called a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Plan, is a proactive, team-based approach to creating and sustaining a safe and effective school environment. Its goal is to promote positive behavior and prevent problem behavior across all school settings.

Key Components of a Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Plan:

1. Clearly Defined Expectations
   Schools establish 3–5 positively stated behavioral expectations (e.g., *Take care of yourself, Take care of others, Take care of our school*), which are consistently taught and reinforced.

2. Consistent Teaching of Behaviors
   Just like academic subjects, positive behaviors are explicitly taught. Staff model and practice expected behaviors with students across different settings (classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, etc.).

3. Systematic Reinforcement
   Students are acknowledged and rewarded for demonstrating positive behaviors, at times through a token or recognition system (e.g., proud paws, praise, school-wide incentives).

4. Data-Driven Decision Making
   Schools collect data on behavioral incidents to identify patterns, address concerns early, and make informed decisions for interventions.

5. Tiered Support
   PBIS uses a multi-tiered system of support:

   - Tier 1: Universal supports for all students.
   - Tier 2: Targeted supports for students at risk.
   - Tier 3: Intensive, individualized supports for students with high needs.

6. Team-Based Implementation
   A PBIS team, typically comprising teachers, administrators, and support staff, meets regularly to guide implementation, review data, and refine strategies.

Purpose and Benefits:

- Promotes a positive school climate
- Reduces disciplinary referrals
- Increases instructional time
- Builds consistency among staff responses to behavior
- Improves student social and emotional development

In short, a Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Plan is about prevention, consistency, and support, helping all students thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

Student Code of Conduct

KCSD has adopted a Code of Conduct for all of our schools. The Code of Conduct is also included in the District handbook and can be found here: https://www.kcsd.org/our-district/handbooks

Student Behavior Procedures

1. Individual teachers provide primary intervention with regard to classroom management and maintenance of discipline.

2. Teachers are responsible for maintaining an atmosphere for learning in the classroom, in the halls, and on the playground.

3. All others (School Counselor, IST, Parents, Instructional Assistants, Principal, and other staff) provide secondary assistance when enlisted to support the teacher in their responsibilities.

When a discipline problem arises, the teacher:

1. Tries to resolve it with the individual involved
2. Involves other people in the following steps:
    a. Parent
    b. School Counselor
    c. Administration

For any serious rule violation, parents will be called immediately and the student may be suspended. A parent conference **MUST** be held prior to the student's return to school following an out-of-school suspension (OSS). **The school administration reserves the right to act with discretion on a case-by-case basis when making disciplinary decisions.**

BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

1. The health and safety of all students is one of our top priorities. We want to promote and encourage health and wellness through our activities and celebrations.

2. Due to allergies, food sensitivities, and dietary restrictions, it is essential for us to be cautious and proactive in our approach to the health and well-being of our students and staff. **Food will not be served at classroom celebrations**. We encourage students to celebrate their birthdays by giving away pencils, stickers, or donating a book to the classroom.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

The District provides a breakfast and lunch program for all students. Breakfast is provided free of charge for all students who wish to eat It in school. A well-balanced lunch is served daily in each school. The menu can be accessed on our website.

- o If your child does not care to purchase the lunch provided at school he/she may bring a lunch from home.
- o Students who bring lunch may purchase milk.
- o A free and/or reduced lunch program is available for families who qualify.
- o All families are able to apply for free or reduced pricing by completing the application on our website at schoolcafe.com.
- o If a student needs to charge a lunch, he/she may do so for the cost of the platter offered that day. Students may charge up to $20.00.
- o Parents wishing to deposit money into a debit account may do so through schoolcafe.com.

CLASS INTERRUPTIONS

1. Class interruptions should be kept to a minimum.

2. An effort should be made by everyone to respect the integrity of the learning environment and the instructional time needed by the teachers to get the job done.

3. In addition, children should be pulled out of class only when necessary, and care should be taken to minimize the effect of interrupting instructional time.

4. All visitors must make an appointment with the office prior to being permitted to enter the school for a visit or to be a volunteer and all clearance paperwork should be completed and approved prior.

5. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, please make an appointment.

6. Many events and activities take place throughout the school year.

a. We do not permit siblings to attend each other's events.

b. Please do not plan to have your child attend his/her sibling's activities, as this is disruptive to the classroom and not fair to the rest of the students.

Items Dropped Off at the Office

O Students will not be called out of class to retrieve items.

O Parents will leave the items in the secured vestibule with the **student's name and teacher**.

O A message will be given to the teacher that there is an item in the office to be picked up.

O Teachers will pick up items at a convenient time or send a student messenger to the office.

Communication

Change of Phone Number/Address

1. If your address or phone number changes during the school year, please notify the office immediately or update it through the KCSD parent portal.

2. It is essential that we maintain accurate contact information to communicate effectively with all families.

3. Teachers will use Talking Points, email, phone calls, and conferences to ensure that communication is a priority.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

Certain weather conditions may necessitate closing the school or having a delayed opening of one or two hours. The decision to close the schools is made with the safety of the students in mind.

KCSD employs a communications system for the purposes of community outreach and emergency notification. In the event of a snow day or late opening, parents are notified via this system. A prerecorded message is telephoned to each family. In order for the system to work properly, it is imperative that accurate contact information be provided. If phone numbers change during the school year, the office must be notified.

In addition, school closing and late opening information can also be obtained from local TV and radio stations.

Parents are strongly urged to discuss with their children their plan for early/emergency dismissals, so that children are not wondering where they should go on these occasions.

HEALTH SERVICES

It is the responsibility of our school nurse to help ensure that all children attending are in fact well enough to be in school. Any child who suffers an injury or does not feel well is welcome in the nurse's office for evaluation and treatment. After a reasonable period (generally 20 to 30 minutes) if the child does not feel well enough to return to the classroom, a parent will be contacted to take the child home for the remainder of the day. This protocol is in place to help protect the child's best interest as well as other children, with whom he/she may come in contact. In the event of a serious injury or illness, the parent will be contacted immediately and if necessary, an ambulance will be called as well.

Screenings

- State law requires that all students will have screening for height, weight and BMI (body-mass index) for age.
- Students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 will have their hearing tested each year.
- All students will have their eyes tested each year. Parents are notified of any suspected problems.
- If a parent has a concern about a student's vision or hearing, they may request an examination anytime during the school year.
- State Law requires that children who have chicken pox, pink eye, or impetigo be excluded from school until they are no longer contagious.

Medication

- If a student has to take medication during the school day, or for a prolonged period of time, parents must bring the **medications and Doctor's orders** to the nurse's office first thing in the morning.
- All medications should be clearly labeled with the student's name, dosage time of day to be taken, and the name of the medicine in the **original** container from the doctor.
- **Students are not permitted to carry any kind of medication.**

Illness or Injury in School

In case of illness or injury, the school nurse or a member of the school staff will care for a student temporarily.

- School personnel will render first aid treatment only.
- If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted.
- If parents are not available the student will be taken to the emergency room of the hospital.
- Remember, **an emergency telephone number where parents or their designee can be reached** and the name and telephone number of the student's family doctor must be on file at the school.

HOMEWORK

At Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center, we believe that young children learn best through hands-on experiences, exploration, and meaningful interactions. For this reason, we do not assign formal homework for our kindergarten students. Instead, we will provide regular communication with suggestions on how you can support your child's development at home. These suggested activities include:

- Read to your child daily.
- Practice and reinforce the correct formation of their name and letters learned in school.
- Review letters, words, and sentences sent home to build fluency.
- Practice counting and number recognition up to 10 using real-life objects.
- Teach your child how to open and close items in their lunchbox independently.
- Help your child learn how to put on and take off their coat, using zippers or buttons.
- Begin teaching your child how to tie their shoes.

PARKING

Use the neighborhood parking lot at all times. Signage for "Student Drop Off Only" should be followed. Please do **not** park in the front of the building or at the student drop-off lane on Mulberry Street.

PEC

The PEC (Parent Events Committee) is an organization to support the school by providing fun and educational opportunities as well as teacher/staff appreciation events. Fundraising and event planning are important elements and the PEC welcomes all families to volunteer to get involved.

RECESS

All students will have two daily recess opportunities each day. The recess periods are provided to allow students time in their day for creative, choice-based activities. Students are encouraged to get to know all of the students in their grade and learn & grow together.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

- Report cards are distributed to parents three (3) times a year.
- In the fall and spring, conferences are held with parents so that they might have a chance to speak to the teacher in greater depth about the progress of their child.
- Parent conferences are held on two days in the fall and two days in the spring.. Interpreters are available for our non-English speaking parents.
- School will be closed for students on Parent Teacher Conference days.
- Parents are urged to attend the two-parent conferences and to review and respond to all of your child's report cards.

TECHNOLOGY

All students will receive a school issued Chromebook that will meet all of the educational needs. There are times that the chromebooks will go home each night with the students, especially during winter months when the weather can be dangerous.

Students in Elementary school are **not allowed** to have smartphones or smartwatches unless they are medically necessary and there is documentation from a medical provider.

In the event that a child has a cell phone or smart watch, it will be taken to the office and the parent will be notified to come and pick it up.

TITLE I

All Kennett Elementary Schools are Title I schools. Our Title 1 Schools provide schoolwide programs targeting reading and language arts. A mandatory component is parent and family engagement, which includes creating a partnership between schools and families, written

school and district-level policies, school compact development, and annual review and updates with stakeholder input.

Title I is a federal program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that provides financial assistance to schools with high numbers or percentages of children from low-income families. Its main goal is to help ensure that all students meet challenging academic standards, regardless of their economic background.

Key Points:

- Funding is based on poverty levels, but services support all students who need extra academic help.
- Title I funds are often used for additional teachers, intervention programs, instructional materials, family engagement, and professional development.
- Schools can operate as Targeted Assistance (supporting selected students) or Schoolwide Programs (supporting all students, especially in high-poverty schools).

Title I aims to close achievement gaps and provide equitable opportunities for success by supporting schools and students who need it most.

TRANSPORTATION

School buses are available to transport each student to and from school.

- **Students are not permitted to change buses for social reasons.**
- It is very important that the drivers are familiar with the students on their particular bus and with the routine stops the children use. For this reason, students may not ride a bus other than the one assigned, unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Permission, for any changes, can only be arranged via a **note** to the principal & Director of Transportation.

Riding the school bus is a **privilege**. A student who does not respect the rights of others and endangers his life and the lives of others will be disciplined and may be suspended from riding for major or frequent discipline infractions.

VACATIONS

Vacations during the school year are discouraged as they interrupt the educational process for your children. However, we realize that occasionally an opportunity will arise and your child will need to miss school for a family vacation. **Please notify the building principal, by using the vacation request form, at least two weeks in advance of your planned vacation**. You

will also need to contact the child's teacher to arrange for work to be prepared for your child. Please note that extended vacations will not be approved during the weeks of State PSSA testing. A maximum number of days absent must not exceed 10 school days, including any days your child has missed due to illness or other reasons.

VISITORS

In an effort to continuously improve the safe and secure environment for our students and staff, the District, in collaboration with local law enforcement, has identified priorities related to building security, which include the revised visitor procedures listed below. These procedures have been implemented at all buildings.

Building Entrance Procedures

- All visitors must have a **scheduled appointment.**
    - Please call the main office to schedule an appointment prior to arriving at the building.
- All visitors will be welcomed with a standardized script and will be required **to provide their name and the purpose of their visit.**
- **All visitors shall enter through the main entrance of the school and report immediately to the main office.**

Visitor Identification Procedures

- All visitors must present photo identification. The photo ID will be secured in the main office and will be returned upon sign-out.
- Authorized visitors will be given a red KCSD Visitor lanyard and badge, which must be worn at all times while in the building.

A visitor is considered any person not employed by the KCSD.

All persons entering the school **MUST** report to the main office before proceeding anywhere else in the building. Visitors must sign in and wear a badge while visiting our schools..

VOLUNTEER CLEARANCES

Volunteerism is encouraged and needed at all Elementary Schools. There are three clearances that are required to volunteer (see online links below):

Act 34 PA State Criminal Record Check https://epatch.state.pa.us/

Act 114 Federal Criminal Background Check https://uenroll.identogo.com/ **(USE SERVICE CODE 1KG6Y3) (Fee $21.35)**

Act 151 Child Abuse History https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home (Must create new account to complete online)

If a volunteer has continuously resided in Pennsylvania for 10 years AND swears in writing that he or she has never been convicted of a disqualifying crime in Pennsylvania or the corresponding offenses under the laws of any other jurisdiction, they only need to secure the Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse Clearance (Act 151) and the Pennsylvania Criminal History Check (Act 34); the Federal Clearance (Act 114) is not needed. The fingerprint waiver and the volunteer acknowledgement form is available in the main office.