



ENLARGED CITY SCHOOL
DISTRICT OF MIDDLETOWN

Placement
for your
child's photo

**UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN
FAMILY HANDBOOK**
2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR



ENLARGED CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MIDDLETOWN

DISTRICT'S MISSION STATEMENT

We strive to provide fiscally sound educational opportunities in a safe environment that continuously supports our diverse student population. We will enable all students to graduate, to reach their full potential, to become life-long learners, and to be competitive, productive members of society.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Edwin Estrada, President
Denise Romero, Vice President
Dr. Patricia DeJesus
Andrew Moore
John Perrino
Curtis Rhett
Rose Tobiassen
Freddie Williams
John Williams

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Amy Creeden, Superintendent of Schools
Camille Adoma, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Michael Tuttle, Assistant Superintendent for Business
David Coates, Director of Athletics, Health and Physical Education
Jillian Crawford, Director of Personnel and Inclusion
Julie Dominguez Post, Director of Bilingual, ENL, and World Languages
Nicole Tangney, Director of Special Education

Please be aware that staffing may shift after the preparation of this handbook.



Welcome to the Universal Prekindergarten Program! We are delighted to have your family join us as we embark on this important educational journey together. This handbook is designed to help you navigate and understand the key aspects of our program, ensuring that your child's experience is both enriching and enjoyable.

Our Universal Prekindergarten Program is dedicated to preparing children for the academic and social demands of kindergarten and beyond. Research has shown that children who attend prekindergarten programs are better prepared for kindergarten, perform better academically, and are more likely to graduate from high school. By participating in our program, your child will gain the foundational skills necessary for future success, setting them on a path toward lifelong learning and achievement.



We look forward to partnering with you to support your child's growth and development during this exciting time.



MIDDLETOWN CSD

UPK STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Camille Adoma

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
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Jill Kelly

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Tina Cassidy

Social Worker
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(845) 326-1312

Lisa Hidalgo Capriola, RN

Nurse
lisa.hidalgocapriola@ecsdms.org
(845) 326-1245

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UPK PROVIDER CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABCD Florida

Phone: (845) 651 - 2270

Hours: 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM | **Before care:** 7:15 AM - 9:00 AM | **After care:** 11:30 AM - 3:45 PM

Address: 14 Edward J. Lempka Drive, Florida, NY 10921

Director/Principal: Nicole Lopez

Email: Nicole.Lopez@abcdmail.org

Teacher: Erica Hernandez

Email: erica.floridaabcd@gmail.com

First Steps Early Learning Daycare Academy

Phone: (845) 344 - 1154

Hours: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM | **Before care:** 6:00 AM - 9:00 AM | **After care:** 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Address: 125 Dolson Avenue, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Dureka Forbes

Email: Durekaforbes@gmail.com

Teacher: Jamie Garrigan

Email: jlgarrigan@optonline.net

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School

Phone: (845) 343 - 8836

Hours: 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM | **Before care:** 7:00 AM - 7:45 AM | **After care:** 3:00 to 4:45 PM (12-4:45 First Fridays)

Address: 205 Wawayanda Avenue, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Jennifer Langford

Email: jennifer.langford@archny.org

Teacher: Nicole Stellato

Email: nstellato@mtcarmelschoolmiddletown.org

Teacher: Brittany Smith

Email: Bsmith@mtcarmelschoolmiddletown.org

UPK PROVIDER CONTACT INFORMATION

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RECAP (Regional Economic Community Action Program, Inc) / Head Start

Phone: (845) 343- 4191

Hours: 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM | **Before care:** N/A | **After care:** N/A

Address: 157 Linden Avenue, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Heather Decker

Email: hdecker@recap.org

Teacher: Sylvia Nunez

Email: snunez@recap.org

Teacher: Shaleia Wilson

Email: swilson@recap.org

Maple Hill Annex @ Truman Moon

Phone: (845) 326 - 1780

Hours: 8:45 AM - 3:15 PM | **Before care:** N/A | **After care:** N/A

Address: 53 Bedford Avenue, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Tracey Sorrentino

Email: tracey.sorrentino@ecsdsm.org

Teacher: Paul Rubeis

Email: paul.rubeis@ecsdsm.org

Middletown Day Nursery School

Phone: (845) 343 - 1444

Hours: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM | **Before care:** 6:30 AM - 9:00 AM | **After care:** 2:00 PM - 6:15 PM

Address: 66 East Main Street, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Tekki Reszenski

Email: tekki48@hotmail.com

Teacher: Genesis Cartagena-Torres

Email: Genesismdn@outlook.com

The Learning Experience

Phone: (845) 394- 0056

Hours: 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM | **Before care:** 6:30 AM - 8:00 AM | **After care:** 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Address: 453 NY-Route 211, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Silvia Sarhadian

Email: sarhadian.s@gmail.com

Teacher: Shakila Jackson

Email: kila400@yahoo.com

UPK PROVIDER CONTACT INFORMATION

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YMCA of Middletown

Phone: (845) 344 - 9622

Hours: 9:00 AM - 2:45 PM | **Before care:** 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM | **After care:** 2:45 PM - 6:00 PM

Address: 6 Liberty Street, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Susan Cummings

Email: SCummings@libertystymca.org

Teacher: Kelsey Bjornsen

Email: kbjornsen@middletownymca.org

Teacher: Lyndsey Whittemore

Email: LWhittemore@libertystymca.org

Teacher: Rachel Savold

Email: rsavold@libertystymca.org

Morrison Lab School

Phone: (845) 341 - 4165

Hours: 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM | **Before care:** 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM | **After care:** 2:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Address: 115 South Street, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Gina McCann

Email: ginamccann@sunyorange.edu

Teacher: Stephanie Lugo

Email: slugo423@yahoo.com

Teacher: Kaitlin Kelly

Email: kjoyk2000@gmail.com

New Beginnings Learning Academy

Phone: (845) 342 - 0051

Hours: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM | **Before care:** 6:50 AM - 9:00 AM | **After care:** 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Address: 33 Albert Street, Middletown, NY 10940

Director/Principal: Amanda Gloster

Email: office@newbeginningsschool.com

Teacher: April Fitzgerald

Email: room4@newbeginningsschool.com

Teacher: Arianna Acosta Crespo

Email: room3@newbeginningsschool.com

Teacher: Angela Pistoia

Email: room7@newbeginningsschool.com



SCHOOL DAY AND YEAR

SCHOOL DAY

The district provides tuition for 2.5 hours each day for half day programs and 5 hours each day for full day programs. Families are responsible for any fees incurred for before and after school care.

SCHOOL YEAR

The school year for UPK is 180 days. Schools participating in the UPK program are not required to follow the district's calendar. Families are responsible for any fees incurred for attendance outside of these 180 days such as the summer. Families should check with their child's school for specific information about the school calendar.

TRANSPORTATION

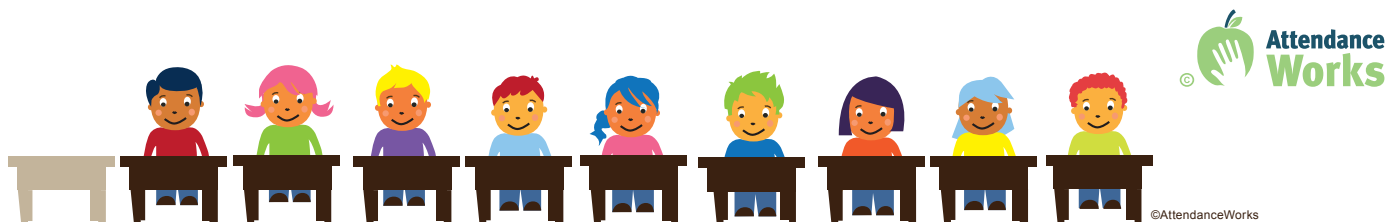
Bus transportation is not provided for the UPK program. Families are responsible for providing transportation to and from school.

ATTENDANCE

In order to remain in the UPK program, children must demonstrate good attendance. It is the family's responsibility to ensure that their child attends every day the program is in session, unless personal circumstances or illness prevents them from attending.

- **Excused Absence:** An absence, tardiness, or early departure may be excused if due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads due to inclement weather, religious observance, quarantine, school approved activity such as a field trip or sports event or family emergency.
- **Unexcused Absence:** An absence, tardiness, or early departure is considered unexcused if the reasons for the lack of attendance do not fall into the above categories. Examples include: family vacations and inclement weather with passable roads.

When a child is absent, families must complete and submit an absent note to their child's school.



Help Your Child Succeed in Preschool and Kindergarten Build the Habit of Good Attendance

DID YOU KNOW...

Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward.

Missing 10% of school (1 or 2 days every few weeks) can make it harder to:

- Gain early reading and math skills.
- Build relationships.
- Develop good attendance habits.

High quality preschool and kindergarten has many benefits!

- The routines your child develops will continue throughout school.
- Make the most of early grades by encouraging your child to attend every day.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Work with your child and his/her teacher to develop your child's strong attendance.

Talk about it – sing about it – make it an adventure!

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Share ideas with other parents for getting to school on time.

Before the school year starts

- Find out what day school starts and begin a countdown!
- Make sure your child has the required shots.
- Attend orientation with your child to meet teachers and classmates and find out about health and safety procedures.

Ready, Set, GO!

- If you are concerned your child may have a contagious illness, call your school or health care provider for advice. Ask for resources to continue learning at home if needed.
- Ask family members or neighbors for assistance if you need help.
- Try to schedule non-urgent medical appointments and extended trips when school is not in session.
- If your child seems anxious about going to preschool, talk to the program director, teacher, your doctor or other parents for advice. Make sure the program is a good fit for your child.



Revised April 2024

Visit Attendance Works at www.attendanceworks.org for free downloadable resources and tools!

MIDDLETOWN CITY SCHOOLS

UPK/TPK Student Absence Note

Student Name: _____

Date(s) of Absence: _____

My child was absent from school for the following reason(s):

Please check off

- ☐ Personal illness
- ☐ Illness or death in the family
- ☐ Religious observance
- ☐ Family emergency
- ☐ Medical appointment
- ☐ Other (please explain) _____



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POSITIVE BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

We believe in fostering a positive and supportive environment where every student feels safe and ready to learn. These guidelines help us create a community of kindness and respect.

- **Keep Hands, Feet, and Body Safe:** We keep our hands, feet, and all parts of our body to ourselves to ensure everyone feels safe.
- **Be Ready to Learn:** We come to school prepared and excited to learn every day.
- **Listen and Follow Directions:** We follow directions the first time they are given, showing respect and cooperation.
- **Use Kind Words:** We speak kindly to everyone, using our words to encourage each other.

These are some of the interventions that are used to help students learn and grow while maintaining a positive classroom environment:

- Teachers will offer gentle reminders to help students remember the guidelines.
- Students may take a short break to think about their actions and how to improve.
- A quick chat with the teacher may help in understanding the importance of the guidelines.
- Teachers may reach out to families to work together on reinforcing positive behaviors at home.

Inappropriate behavior that is directly related to the safety and well being of other children and adults in the program may result in removal from the UPK program.

MEALS

We are pleased to offer your child the opportunity to receive school lunches and snacks at no cost as part of our Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) program. All participating schools will follow the same menu, and while we will provide nutritious meals, please note that families will not have a choice regarding specific meals. If you would like for your child to participate, please speak to your child's teacher to receive an opt in form. Once you receive the form, you will need to complete it and turn it into your school.

SUPPLIES AND FIELD TRIPS

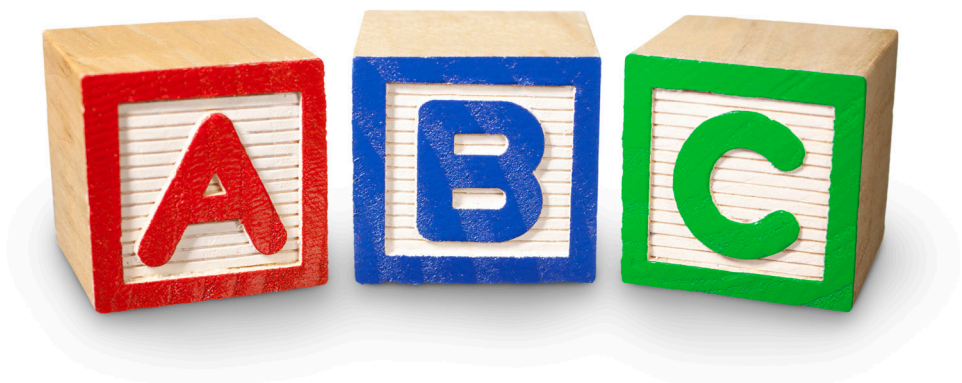
Each school is responsible for providing supplies. Families should not be asked to provide supplies or purchase supplies. Additionally, families should not be required or requested to pay for field trips.

If you are asked to provide or purchase supplies or pay for field trips, please notify the District's UPK staff

STAFFING

Staff to child ratio is determined by the New York State Department of Education.

- For classrooms with less than 19 students, there must be a teacher and a teaching assistant or aide.
- For classrooms with more than 19 students, there must be a teacher and 2 teaching assistants and/or aides.



CURRICULUM

Although our UPK program spans multiple schools within the district, we are committed to providing all children with consistent, high-quality instruction. Teachers utilize a district-provided curriculum along with the necessary materials and resources to deliver this instruction effectively. They receive training and are evaluated by the district's administration, and also attend monthly faculty meetings with district staff to ensure ongoing professional development and alignment

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

Social-emotional learning (SEL) focuses on helping students develop essential skills such as self-awareness, empathy, and effective communication. By integrating SEL into our daily routines, we support students in building healthy relationships and managing their emotions, which contributes to their overall success and well-being.

Tina Cassidy (also known as "Mrs. Tina") is the district's UPK social worker. She will visit sites on a regular basis and provide social emotional learning to the UPK classes. During the year, she will be covering the following topics:

- Skills for Learning
- Empathy
Emotion Management
- Friendship Skills and Problem Solving

Mrs. Cassidy will be sending home activities that you can use to reinforce what they are learning in school.

ASSESSMENTS

To support your child's development, the state requires us to conduct assessments for all UPK students. We use the Brigance Early Childhood Screens III and the Inventory of Early Development III to evaluate areas such as language, literacy, motor skills, math, and cognitive abilities. These assessments help us identify any special needs, talents, or language skills. We also monitor progress a few times a year. Your child's teacher will share the results with you, highlighting their strengths and areas where they can grow.

REPORT CARDS

The purpose of report cards is to provide families with a clear overview of their child's progress in key areas of development. Your child will be evaluated on a scale of 1 (Minimally Meet Standards) – 4 (Exceeds Standards) in state standards in each of the areas:

- Reading Development
- Writing Development
- Listening and Speaking
- Math Development

Report cards will be sent home **three (3)** times throughout the school year around the following dates:

December 12, 2025

March 27, 2026

June 26, 2026

Families should review the report cards carefully, celebrate their child's achievements, and discuss any areas for growth to support continued learning at home.

HEALTH SERVICES & IMMUNIZATIONS

We highly value your child's health and well-being. Our dedicated nurse, Nurse Jackie, is here to support the program by reviewing medical documentation and conducting physicals. As the UPK nurse, she rotates among the schools to ensure consistent care for all students.

All children participating in the UPK program are required to provide the following: a copy of a physical exam conducted within the last 12 months, up-to-date immunization records to include all required immunizations as mandated by New York State Law Section 2164. Please note that children not in compliance with these requirements will be removed from the program.

Please inform your school's staff if your child has any chronic conditions, such as allergies, asthma, or epilepsy.

If your child becomes ill or is injured at school, only first aid will be administered. If further care is needed, the school's staff will contact you. Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

REQUESTING A SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATION

If you believe your child may need Special Education services, you can request an initial evaluation to determine eligibility under the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE). To make this request, please email Special Service at specialservices@ecsdms.org.

Once your request is received, our team will contact you to schedule the necessary testing. Following the evaluations, a CPSE initial eligibility determination meeting will be arranged to discuss your reasons for the request and review all evaluations conducted.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to the Special Education Department at (845) 326-1240 or specialservices@ecsdms.org.

FAMILY WORKSHOPS

The Middletown UPK Program will host a series of workshops on timely topics relating to early childhood education development, parenting and health and nutrition. All families are invited to participate.

Workshops will be held from 5 PM - 7 PM on the following dates:

October 8, 2025 Middletown High School Media Center

February 20, 2025 (Presidential Park Elementary School)

March 11, 2026 (Location TBD)





TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

REGISTERING FOR KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten registration will begin May 26, 2026 for all families wishing to enroll their child into Middletown CSD. During registration, your child will participate in the following:

- **Development Screening:** This screening is designed to understand your child's strengths in areas such as early math, reading, motor skills, and social-emotional development. It helps us support their learning and growth in the best way possible.
- **Health Screening:** During the screening, the nurse will check your child's vision, hearing, height and weight.
- **New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL):** If your child speaks one or more languages other than English, they will be given the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL).

More information regarding Kindergarten screening will be provided at the Ready, Set, Kindergarten! workshops on April 15, 2026.

KINDERGARTEN JUMPSTART PROGRAM

All children that have registered to attend kindergarten in the district will be invited to participate in the Kindergarten Jumpstart Program held in August 2026. The Kindergarten Jumpstart Program aims to provide our pre-kindergarten students with a head start in their academic and social development, setting them up for success as they enter kindergarten. Participants can strengthen essential literacy, numeracy, and socialization skills through engaging activities, interactive learning experiences, and targeted instruction.

More information regarding the Kindergarten Jumpstart Program will be provided in the spring.



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ENLARGED CITY SCHOOL
DISTRICT OF MIDDLETOWN



UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Tina Cassidy

Social Worker
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Lisa Hidalgo Capriola, RN

Nurse
lisa.hidalgocapriola@ecsdsm.org | (845) 326-1245