

Hamilton High State Preschool

Parent Handbook



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Preschool Administration and Teachers

Jeremy Powell: Executive Director / Hamilton Superintendent

Professional Experience:

- Superintendent; 2019
- 4 years Superintendent/ Principal Sequoia Union, Tulare County
- 5 years Middle School Principal
- 8 years High School English and History teacher

Education

- Joint Doctoral Program from UC Davis/ CSU Fresno
- Masters and Educational Leadership from Fresno State
- Bachelors and Teaching Credential from Chico State

Mariesa Fitzgerald-Adams: Director/ CTE Highschool Teacher

Professional Experience:

- Hamilton High State Preschool; since 11/2021
- Summer Camp Cabin Counselor, Oakland Feather River Camp; 9 yrs.
- Preschool Teacher, Bidwell Academy, Chico: 1yr.
- Boys and Girls Club Youth Development Professional; 2 yrs.
- Paraprofessional/Literacy Assistant, Hamilton Elementary 6 yrs.

Education:

- AA Child Development from Chico State University
- CPR-First Aid Certified
- AS Degree Early Childhood Education and AA Degree Behavioral Science
AA Child Development
- Certificate in Early Childhood Nutrition
- Child Development Site Supervisor Permit

Carmen Ortiz: Preschool Teacher

Professional Experience:

- 20+ years of experience working with children and families
- Family Advocate
- Education Supervisor
- Center Lead Teacher and Director

Education:

- AA Early Childhood Development
- Child Development Director & Teacher Permit
- CPR-First Aid Certified

Maribel Brand: Teacher Assistant

Professional Experience:

- Paraprofessional at Hamilton Elementary

Education:

- CPR / First Aid Certified
- Butte College Units in Child Development

Teacher Assistant- Karalee Nichols

Professional Experience:

- 20+ years of experience working with children and families

Education:

- CPR-First Aid Certified
- Butte College Units in Child Development (in progress)

Program Overview

Hamilton High State Preschool is a free, state-funded half-day California State Preschool Program (CSPP) serving eligible three- and four-year-old children. Our program operates under the guidelines of the California Department of Education and Community Care Licensing. While our classroom is uniquely located on the Hamilton High School campus, the preschool operates as a distinct program governed by its own specialized early childhood regulations, health and safety standards, and state compliance mandates under the oversight of our District Superintendent/Executive Director and our Program Director. Our program is dedicated to providing high-quality early childhood education that promotes school readiness, language development, and social-emotional growth for preschool-aged children in our community.

In addition to our core preschool program, our classroom uniquely serves as a Career and Technical Education (CTE) lab for Hamilton High School students enrolled in Child Development courses. This partnership provides high school students with valuable, supervised hands-on experience under the guidance of preschool director Ms. Mariesa who is also a credentialed teacher, offering them the opportunity to develop real-life job skills and career readiness while providing our preschool children with additional small-group support and individualized attention.

The Role of Our High School Career Pathway Students

Because our preschool program uniquely serves as a Career and Technical Education (CTE) lab for Hamilton High School, your child benefits from **an enriched classroom environment with additional student helpers to assist during group activities**. High school students enrolled in Child Development courses actively participate in our classroom to observe, design activities, and learn best practices in early childhood education.

To ensure a safe and professional environment for everyone, we enforce the following guidelines:

- **Constant Supervision:** High school students are learners and are **never** left unsupervised with preschool children. A credentialed staff member is always present.
- **Strict Confidentiality:** High school students are trained in professional ethics. They are strictly prohibited from sharing information, names, or photos of preschool children outside of their official, de-identified coursework assignment parameters, including on personal social media.
- **Positive Role Models:** High school students are expected to maintain professional conduct, follow our positive behavior guidance policies, and act as positive role models for our young learners.

Program Philosophy

At our program, we believe that every child belongs. We are committed to providing a welcoming, high-quality learning environment that celebrates the unique strengths, abilities, and backgrounds of all children. Through universal design and meaningful adaptations, we ensure that every child can fully participate in our daily experiences. We partner closely with families and specialists to create a supportive community where all children can learn, play, and grow side-by-side.

Our overall program is designed to prepare children for a successful transition to kindergarten through a balanced combination of teacher-guided and child-directed activities. We provide meaningful learning experiences that support children's development in the following areas:

- Intellectual development
- Social development
- Emotional development
- Physical development

We believe that strong, positive partnerships between families and the school are essential to each child's success. By working together, we can create a supportive environment that fosters learning, growth, and confidence.

Program Goals

Our goal is to provide a stimulating, nurturing, and engaging learning environment where children learn through play, discovery, exploration, and active participation. We encourage a positive attitude toward learning while supporting growth in four key developmental areas:

- **Language Development:** Children develop language skills through rich interactions with peers and teachers, environmental print, classroom labels, charts, and hands-on learning experiences. Our classroom provides dual-language instruction in both English and Spanish to support home language preservation while building English proficiency. We use intentional strategies such as bilingual classroom labeling, culturally diverse literature, visual schedules, and gestures, allowing children to express themselves comfortably while scaffolding their school-readiness skills.
- **Cognitive Development:** Fostered through discussions, problem-solving activities, and exploration of topics such as seasons, the environment, transportation, and community careers.
- **Physical Development:** Strengthened through activities that promote both fine and gross motor skills, including cutting, tracing, eye-hand coordination exercises, and movement-based activities.
- **Social Development:** Encouraged as children learn to share, take turns, cooperate with others, follow classroom routines, and demonstrate respect for their peers and environment.

Above all, we believe that every child should experience success, build confidence in their abilities, and receive the encouragement needed to become lifelong learners.

Daily Schedule

Time	Activity
8:00–9:15 AM	Arrival, Name Sign-In, Handwashing, Breakfast, and Free Play
9:15–9:30 AM	Morning Meeting
9:30–9:35 AM	Transition to Outdoor Play
9:35–10:35 AM	Outdoor Play
10:35–10:40 AM	Clean-Up and Transition Indoors
10:40–10:55 AM	Small Group Activity

10:55–11:10 AM Music and Movement

11:10–11:25 AM Story Time

11:25–11:30 AM Handwashing

11:30 AM–12:00 PM Lunch and Dismissal

Schedule Notes

Our daily schedule is designed to provide a careful balance of indoor and outdoor active play, structured learning experiences, social interaction, and opportunities for independent exploration. While routines are maintained to promote consistency and security, activities may be adjusted as needed to meet the developmental needs and interests of the children.

Preschool Activities

Our program offers a variety of engaging, developmentally appropriate learning experiences designed to support children's growth across all developmental domains. Learning centers may include:

- Art
- Music
- Dramatic Play
- Literacy and Language Development
- Mathematics
- Science and Discovery
- Alphabet and Early Literacy Activities
- Sensory Exploration
- Block Play and Construction
- Outdoor Learning and Play
- Manipulative and Fine Motor Activities

These activities encourage children to learn through play, exploration, creativity, and hands-on experiences while building the skills necessary for future academic success.

Nutrition and Mealtimes

Nutrition Program Overview

Children enrolled in the program receive nutritious, well-balanced breakfast and lunch meals each day. To support a consistent and healthy nutrition program, food brought from home is generally discouraged unless approved for medical or dietary reasons. Monthly breakfast and lunch menus are prominently posted on our classroom bulletin board and are shared digitally with families through our parent communication applications (Aeries and ParentSquare).

All children participate in the National School Lunch Program and complete the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application. Meals are provided at no cost to families.

Our balanced meals are overseen and created by the District Nutrition Director. The food is freshly prepared and cooked daily by the high school cafeteria staff. Once prepared, the meals are delivered directly to our classroom in a secure food transport cart by either the cafeteria staff, high school students, or other available district personnel.

We recognize that children have unique dietary and nutritional needs. Parents are asked to notify program staff of any food allergies, medical conditions, or dietary restrictions. Reasonable accommodations will be made for children with documented special dietary needs. Staff maintain awareness of food allergies and follow established procedures to help ensure children's safety.

Our staff members serve as positive role models by demonstrating healthy eating habits and encouraging a positive attitude toward nutrition and mealtime experiences.

Mealtime Procedures

Mealtimes are an important part of our daily routine and provide wonderful opportunities for children to develop independence, social skills, and healthy habits.

- **Sanitation and Set-Up:** Before every meal, our preschool teacher assistants thoroughly clean and sanitize all student tables according to state health standards. Preschool students are actively encouraged to participate in the classroom community by helping to set the tables with utensils and milk, fostering early independence and helper skills.
- **Morning Arrival & Breakfast:** Breakfast begins right at arrival. As children enter the classroom, they complete the question of the day, wash their hands, and sit down to eat. Our teacher assistants portion and serve the food safely to the children.
- **Transition to Sign-In:** Children have 30 minutes to enjoy breakfast. When finished, they are encouraged to clean their spot and transition to morning sign-in to practice writing their names.
- **Lunch Routine:** Lunch begins immediately after our music and movement block. Children are dismissed individually to wash their hands and sit down together to eat as teacher assistants serve the meal.
- **Building Independence:** Children are actively involved in cleaning up their own spaces after meals. They are always encouraged but never forced to try new foods, and food is never used as a reward or punishment.

Birthday Celebrations

We enjoy celebrating each child's special day in a meaningful and age-appropriate manner. On their birthday, children are invited to decorate a birthday crown, choose whether they would like the class to sing to them, and receive a special treat during lunch.

To support healthy habits and promote children's physical, dental, and emotional well-being, our program maintains a strict no-sugar snack policy. We encourage families to focus on celebrating the child rather than the food by recognizing their unique qualities, accomplishments, and growth throughout the year. When providing a birthday snack, we encourage healthy options and creative presentations.

Approved Healthy Birthday Snacks

- Fresh fruit slices or fruit cups
- Cheese and crackers
- Graham crackers
- Popcorn or pretzels
- Low-sugar cereal or trail mix
- 100% juice boxes
- Fruit snacks

Please do not bring cupcakes, cookies, donuts, or other high-sugar treats.

Non-Food Birthday Celebration Ideas

Families are welcome to provide non-food items for birthday celebrations instead of snacks. Some ideas include:

- Pencils, stickers, or small notepads
- Beach balls or small toy cars
- Balloons or bubbles
- Plastic rings or small novelty items

Another meaningful option is to donate a favorite children's book in honor of your child's birthday. The book will be read aloud to the class and become a permanent part of our classroom library. Families may also create a special birthday banner using photographs, drawings, or stickers. Birthday banners will be proudly displayed in the classroom to help celebrate your child's special day.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned throughout the school year to enrich classroom learning and provide children with meaningful, real-world experiences that support current themes and topics of study.

Parents are encouraged to participate in field trips and share these special learning opportunities with their child. Field trips provide valuable opportunities for families to engage in conversations about their surroundings, observe community resources, identify signs and symbols, and reinforce important safety skills.

To ensure the safety and supervision of all children:

- Parents must remain with their child at all times, including during transportation.
- Parents may not leave the group without prior approval from program staff.
- Food should not be brought on field trips unless specifically requested by staff.
- Families must arrange alternative care for younger or older siblings who are not enrolled in the program.

Additional information and permission forms will be provided before each field trip.

Parent Involvement and Partnership

Hamilton High State Preschool values family engagement and recognizes the important role parents and guardians play in their children's education. We maintain an open-door policy and encourage families to participate in their child's preschool experience.

Open-Door Policy

In accordance with California Community Care Licensing, our program maintains a strict open-door policy. Parents and guardians have the right to enter and inspect the preschool facility during normal operating hours without advance notice. This open access ensures complete transparency and fosters a strong, trusting partnership between families and our program staff.

Classroom Visits & Health Requirements

Parents and guardians are welcome to visit the classroom to observe activities and support learning. To protect the privacy of all students, photographs may only be taken of your own child and may not include other children.

Parents who remain in the classroom beyond 8:30 a.m. are required by California state law to provide documentation of a **negative tuberculosis (TB) test** (valid within the last 4 years) and **proof of immunization** against influenza, pertussis (DTaP), and measles. Families must also arrange alternative care for younger or older siblings who are not enrolled in the program during these visits.

Parent Conferences

Parents are expected to participate in **two parent-teacher conferences** each school year. These conferences provide an opportunity to discuss each child's progress, strengths, interests, developmental growth, and any areas of concern. Working together helps ensure the best possible educational experience for every child.

Parent Advisory Committee

Our Parent Advisory Committee is facilitated by the Preschool Director and serves as a valuable forum for family involvement and collaboration. Parents are invited to participate in committee meetings and contribute ideas that support the continued growth and success of the program.

Meeting dates, times, and topics are determined through parent surveys to encourage meaningful participation. Families are encouraged to attend at least three meetings throughout the school year.

During these meetings, parents receive information and engage in discussions related to:

- Upcoming school events
- Program goals and initiatives
- Child development and parenting topics
- Family engagement opportunities
- Parent interests and concerns

The committee also provides parents with an opportunity to offer feedback and recommendations to program staff. Guest speakers may be invited to present on topics of interest to families. Meeting minutes will be distributed following each meeting to keep all families informed.

Assessment, Development, and Non-Discrimination

Assessment and Child Development (DRDP)

Hamilton High State Preschool utilizes the **Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)**, an assessment tool developed by the California Department of Education to support high-quality early childhood education programs. The DRDP measures each child's individual growth and development across multiple learning domains.

Our curriculum, activities, and lesson plans are intentionally designed to support each child in reaching their fullest potential. Assessment results help guide instructional planning and ensure that learning experiences meet

the developmental needs of every child. Children's progress is documented throughout the school year and shared with families during scheduled parent-teacher conferences held twice annually.

Annual Program Self-Evaluation

To maintain our high standards of care and meet California State Preschool Program regulations, our program conducts a comprehensive Program Self-Evaluation every spring. This evaluation reviews our curriculum, classroom environment, and overall operational effectiveness.

An essential part of this process relies on family feedback. Every spring, parents and guardians will be asked to complete a confidential **Parent Survey**. Your honest feedback helps us identify our strengths, pinpoint areas for growth, and guide our goals for the upcoming school year to ensure we are continually providing the highest quality education for our community.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The program does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, religion, color, or mental or physical disability, or any other basis protected by federal or state law, in determining enrollment, eligibility, or participation.

We enthusiastically welcome the enrollment of children with differing abilities and are committed to providing reasonable accommodations, modified environmental setups, and adaptive learning strategies to support their successful participation and full inclusion in our program.

Religious Instruction and Worship Prohibition Notice

In accordance with California State Preschool Program guidelines, Hamilton High State Preschool operates as a secular (non-religious) program. This means our daily routine focuses entirely on early learning, and we do not provide religious instruction, lead prayers, or use classroom materials, books, or music that promote a specific religion or church. However, we warmly welcome the exploration of cultural traditions! From an educational standpoint, our classrooms may explore *how* different families in our community celebrate various holidays throughout the year as part of our focus on diversity, family customs, and social studies.

Dual Language Learner (DLL) Identification & Family Survey

In accordance with California State Preschool Program (CSPP) requirements, all enrolling families are asked to complete a **Family Language Instrument (Language Interest Survey)** upon entering the program. This required state tool helps us identify our Dual Language Learners so that we can better tailor our bilingual English and Spanish instructional strategies to support your child's unique linguistic growth.

Family Communication and Resource Sharing

We believe that clear, consistent communication is vital for student success. To ensure all families are fully informed, **the program shares essential school resources, information, flyers, and meeting notices through the Aeries parent portal, ParentSquare communications, or through traditional paper handouts.** The program makes every effort to provide these vital updates in the family's home language.

Confidentiality and Family Privacy Policy

Hamilton High State Preschool is deeply committed to protecting the privacy of all enrolled children and their families. All student records, enrollment files, financial documentation, and developmental assessments are kept strictly confidential.

Information regarding your child or family will only be shared with authorized Hamilton Unified School District personnel and official representatives from the California Department of Education (CDE) for compliance auditing purposes. Records will not be released to any outside agency or individual without the express written consent of a parent or guardian, unless required by a court order or legal mandate.

Daily Student Needs and Policies

Toileting and Potty Training Policy

In accordance with current California State Preschool Program (CSPP) guidelines, children are not required to be toilet trained in order to enroll or attend preschool. The preschool recognizes that toileting is a developmental milestone that children reach at different ages and stages.

Our program is committed to providing a supportive, respectful, and inclusive environment while children develop toileting independence.

Preschool Policy

- Children will not be denied enrollment, excluded from participation, or removed from the program due to toileting needs.
- Children may attend preschool while wearing diapers, pull-ups, or while actively toilet training.
- Toileting routines and accidents will be handled in a respectful and developmentally appropriate manner.
- Children will never be forced or punished during the toileting process.
- Children will not be sent home solely due to toileting accidents or because they are in the process of learning toileting skills.

Family Responsibilities

- Families are responsible for providing diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and multiple changes of clothing labeled with the child's name.
- Communicate with staff regarding their child's toileting routine or any concerns.
- Dress children in clothing that supports independence, such as elastic waistbands and easy-to-remove clothing.
- Work collaboratively with staff to support consistency between home and school routines.

Staff Toileting Responsibilities & Health Standards:

- **Health Protocols:** Follow all **California Community Care Licensing** and CSPP health regulations, including proper gloving, visual supervision, assigning of changing tables, and meticulous handwashing procedures.

- **Care for Soiled Clothing:** Place soiled clothing directly into a securely sealed plastic bag to be sent home for laundering at the end of the day. To prevent cross-contamination in the classroom, staff will not rinse or wash soiled clothing at school.

Preschool staff will:

- Assist children with toileting and diapering needs in a safe and sanitary manner.
- Maintain children's privacy and dignity during toileting routines.
- Follow all Community Care Licensing health and safety procedures, including proper handwashing, sanitizing, and glove use.
- Encourage independence and self-help skills when developmentally appropriate.
- Communicate with families regarding toileting progress or concerns as needed.
- Maintain visual supervision of children at all times during toileting and diapering routines.

Health and Safety

The preschool maintains designated diapering and toileting areas that meet all applicable California Community Care Licensing and California State Preschool Program (CSPP) health and safety requirements. Written procedures for diapering, toileting, and handwashing are posted and followed consistently by staff.

Children will be assisted promptly with toileting and diapering needs to ensure their comfort, health, and full participation in classroom activities. Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed bag and sent home for laundering.

The preschool maintains a limited supply of emergency diapering and toileting materials to address unexpected needs.

Our program is committed to supporting each child's individual developmental needs while maintaining a safe, healthy, and inclusive learning environment for all children.

Footwear and Jewelry Restrictions

Due to the active nature of our daily schedule—including running, climbing on outdoor structures, and riding tricycles—**proper footwear is a critical safety requirement.**

- **Allowed:** Children must wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes with rubber soles (such as sneakers or tennis shoes) that secure firmly to the foot.
- **Not Allowed:** For safety reasons, children may **not** wear flip-flops, open-toed sandals, slide-on shoes, wedges, heels, or boots with slick soles. Children wearing unsafe footwear may be restricted from certain outdoor play activities to prevent injury.

Additionally, please refrain from sending your child to school wearing dangling earrings, long necklaces, or loose jewelry, as these can easily snag, present a choking hazard during active play, or become lost.

Clothing and Toy Policy

Children should have a complete set of extra clothing, clearly labeled with their name, stored at preschool at all times. Because accidents and spills are a normal part of early childhood learning, families are asked to provide weather-appropriate clothing that can be changed as needed.

Many preschool activities involve active play, outdoor exploration, art, sensory experiences, and hands-on learning. For this reason, children should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable, and suitable for messy activities. To prevent loss, damage, or conflicts among children, **toys from home must remain at home.**

Sunscreen and Topical Medication Policy

Outdoor play is a vital part of our daily learning experience. While we utilize shaded areas, children are exposed to sunlight during the morning hours.

- **Parent Responsibility:** Parents are highly encouraged to apply a broad-spectrum, long-lasting sunscreen to their child *before* arriving at school in the morning.

School Application: If a child requires sunscreen reapplication during school hours, California Community Care Licensing requires a signed **Topical Medication Authorization Form** to be on file in the preschool office. All sunscreen provided by families must be in its original container, clearly labeled with the child's first and last name, and handed directly to a staff member. It may never be left in a child's backpack or cubby. This same policy applies to other over-the-counter topical items, such as lip balm or lotion for severe dry skin.

Behavior Guidance and Safety

Guidance and Discipline Philosophy

Our program uses a positive approach to behavior guidance that focuses on teaching appropriate social skills, fostering self-regulation, and helping children develop problem-solving abilities. We recognize that young children are still learning how to express emotions, communicate needs, and interact successfully with others.

Teachers support children by encouraging respectful communication, modeling positive behavior, and helping children solve conflicts using words rather than physical actions.

Behavior guidance strategies may include:

- Positive reinforcement and encouragement
- Verbal reminders regarding safety expectations and respect for others
- Redirection to appropriate activities or behaviors
- Opportunities for children to calm their bodies and emotions in a designated calming area
- Individualized support plans developed collaboratively when needed

When persistent behavioral concerns arise, staff may work with families, the Child Study Team, and other support professionals to develop strategies that promote the child's success in the program.

Significant behavioral incidents and interventions will be documented and communicated with families as appropriate.

Suspension and Termination of Services

The preschool is committed to working collaboratively with families to support children's successful participation in the program. When concerns arise, staff will make reasonable efforts to provide support, intervention, and communication with families before considering changes to enrollment status.

The program reserves the right to suspend or terminate services when a child's behavior or a family member's conduct poses a serious threat to the health, safety, or well-being of children, staff, or others on school grounds, or when required by applicable laws, regulations, or district policies.

Any decision regarding suspension or termination of services will be made in accordance with California State Preschool Program requirements and district procedures.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

The California State Preschool Program is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, nurturing, and supportive learning environment for all children. Our program follows California Education Code Sections 8489 and 8489.1 regarding suspension and expulsion practices in the California State Preschool Program (CSPP).

The program recognizes that young children are still developing social-emotional, behavioral, and communication skills. Challenging behaviors will be addressed through positive guidance, supportive interventions, collaboration with families, and individualized supports whenever possible.

Program Commitment

The program will not:

- Expel or unenroll a child because of a child's behavior
- Encourage or pressure parents/guardians to withdraw a child due to behavior
- Suspend a child due to behavior except in rare situations involving serious safety concerns
- Require parents/guardians to pick up a child early because of behavior unless there is an immediate safety concern

The program is committed to working collaboratively with families to support each child's successful participation in the program.

Parents/guardians will receive written notification of the program's suspension and expulsion policies upon enrollment.

Definitions

Suspension

Suspension means removing a child from all or part of the program day or preventing a child from attending the program for one or more days because of behavior.

Briefly helping a child calm down away from the group is not considered suspension when:

- The child remains supervised at all times
- The removal is temporary and does not exceed 30 minutes
- The child returns to the group as soon as they are ready

Expulsion

Expulsion means the permanent removal or disenrollment of a child from the program because of behavior.

Persistent and Serious Behaviors

Persistent and serious behaviors may include repeated behaviors that significantly interfere with the safety or learning of the child or others and are not responsive to developmentally appropriate guidance and support strategies. Examples may include:

- Physical aggression to self, peers, or staff
- Serious safety concerns
- Self-injurious behaviors
- Destruction of property

Positive Behavior Support and Intervention

When behavioral concerns arise, the program will make every reasonable effort to support the child's continued participation in the program through positive guidance, developmentally appropriate practices, and collaboration with families.

Supportive actions may include:

- Observing and documenting behaviors and possible triggers
- Using positive guidance and redirection strategies
- Adjusting classroom environments and routines
- Teaching social-emotional skills
- Meeting with parents/guardians to discuss concerns and collaborate on solutions
- Consulting with an early childhood mental health consultant when appropriate
- Recommending developmental screenings when appropriate

The program values family partnership and will involve parents/guardians throughout the process.

Steps Taken Before Suspension or Expulsion

Before considering suspension or expulsion, the program will make every reasonable effort to support the child's successful participation in the program. These efforts may include:

- Building positive relationships with the child and family

- Observing and documenting behaviors, triggers, and patterns
- Using developmentally appropriate guidance and positive behavior support strategies
- Adjusting classroom routines, environments, and teaching strategies
- Providing social-emotional support and skill-building opportunities
- Meeting with parents/guardians to discuss concerns and collaborate on solutions
- Creating individualized behavior support plans when appropriate
- Referring families to community resources, mental health consultants, or other support services when available
- Collaborating with specialists and service providers for children with IFSPs or IEPs
- Providing staff support, coaching, and intervention strategies to ensure the safety and success of all children

The program will work collaboratively with families throughout the process and will document the interventions and supports used to help maintain the child's enrollment and participation in the program.

Suspension Procedures

Suspension may only be considered as a last resort when there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated through reasonable modifications, supports, or interventions.

If suspension becomes necessary:

- Parents/guardians will be informed immediately
- The program will provide written documentation of the concern and actions taken
- A plan will be developed to support the child's return to full participation as quickly as possible
- The suspension will be limited in duration
- The program will continue working with the family to identify appropriate supports and resources

Expulsion Procedures

The program will not expel or unenroll a child because of behavior unless:

- The child's continued enrollment presents a serious ongoing safety threat to the child or others, and
- The program has documented reasonable efforts and interventions to support the child's safe participation

If expulsion becomes necessary, the program will:

- Provide parents/guardians with a written Notice of Action (NOA)
- Inform families of their appeal rights

- Provide information regarding community resources and alternative placement options when available
- Support transition planning to the greatest extent possible

Parent Rights and Appeals

Parents/guardians have the right to receive written notice of any suspension or expulsion action. Parents/guardians also have the right to appeal a suspension or expulsion decision. Information regarding the appeal process, including the right to appeal to the California Department of Education (CDE), will be provided at the time of the Notice of Action.

Non-Discrimination

The program will not discriminate against any child based on disability, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, home language, family structure, or other protected status. Behavioral concerns will be addressed in a developmentally appropriate and equitable manner.

The program is committed to creating an environment where all children and families feel welcomed, respected, supported, and safe.

Daily Attendance and Sign-In

School begins promptly at **8:00 a.m.**

Upon arrival, each child will be greeted by staff and participate in the morning arrival routine. This may include a health screening, answering the question of the day, washing hands, wearing a name tag, and signing in or practicing writing their name.

For the safety of all children and to comply with program requirements, children must be signed in and out each day by a parent, guardian, or authorized adult who is at least 18 years of age.

The sign-in/out record must include:

- The exact time of arrival and departure
- The full printed first and last name of the adult signing the child in or out
- The adult's signature

Accurate attendance records are required and must be completed daily.

If your child is absent, families must notify the preschool as soon as possible. Documentation of the reason for the absence may be requested upon the child's return.

Daily Sign-Out and Pick-Up Policy

The preschool day ends at **11:45 a.m.**

Families are expected to pick up their children promptly at dismissal time. Consistent on-time pick-up helps ensure a smooth and safe transition for all children.

Children will only be released to individuals who are:

- Listed on the child's emergency contact and authorized pick-up form
- At least 18 years of age
- Able to provide identification if requested

Parents and guardians may update authorized pick-up information at any time. Emergency contact information will also be reviewed and updated during parent conferences.

Because the preschool does not provide care before or after program hours, families must make arrangements for timely drop-off and pick-up.

Late Pick-Up

Repeated late pick-ups may result in a conference with program administration to develop a plan for timely dismissal. In situations involving ongoing concerns about a child's supervision or safety, the preschool may be required to follow district procedures and contact appropriate agencies.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is essential to a child's success and helps maximize the benefits of the preschool experience. Consistent attendance supports children's social, emotional, and academic development while helping them establish routines and build relationships with peers and teachers.

If a child will be absent, parents or guardians must notify the preschool as soon as possible.

Excused Absences

Excused absences may include, but are not limited to:

Child Illness

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| • Fever | • Persistent cough | • Medical appointments |
| • Vomiting or diarrhea | • Head lice | • Medication |
| • Severe cold symptoms | • Impetigo | administration or |
| • Ear infections | • Pink eye (conjunctivitis) | recovery from illness |

Parent or Guardian Illness

- Hospitalization
- Quarantine or other significant health-related circumstances

Court-Ordered Visitations

Absences related to court-ordered visitation schedules.

Family Emergencies

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Death or funeral of a family member | • Birth or adoption of a sibling |
| • Serious illness of a family member | • Automobile accidents |

- Natural disasters
- Unforeseen situations involving the health, safety, or welfare of the family

Best Interest Days

Families are allotted up to **10 Best Interest Days** per school year. These days may be used when an absence is in the best interest of the child and family.

Examples include:

- Family vacations
- Day trips
- Special family activities
- Quality time at home
- Play dates or enrichment experiences
- Celebrations related to the birth or adoption of a sibling
- Family photo sessions

Abandonment of Care

If a child is absent for seven consecutive calendar days without communication from the family, preschool staff will attempt to contact the parent or guardian by phone, email, or written correspondence.

If no communication is received for 30 consecutive calendar days, the child's enrollment may be terminated in accordance with California State Preschool Program requirements and district policies.

Illness Policy

The health, safety, and well-being of all children enrolled in our program are our highest priorities. In accordance with licensing requirements, each child will be observed daily for signs of illness before being admitted to the classroom.

Children will not be admitted to school if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Muscle or body aches
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Persistent cough
- Headache
- Runny nose or congestion
- Loss of taste or smell
- Excessive sneezing

If a child exhibits any of the above symptoms more than three times during the school day, a parent or guardian will be contacted.

We ask that families do not bring children to school when they are ill or showing signs of illness. Keeping an ill child at home helps prevent the spread of infection and protects the health of all children and staff.

Children must be well enough to participate in all classroom activities, including outdoor play.

If a child becomes ill while at school, including but not limited to repeated coughing, sneezing, or nose blowing, the child will be separated from the group and a parent or guardian will be contacted for immediate pick-up.

If a child is absent due to illness for more than five consecutive days, a physician's note may be required before the child is readmitted. Families without access to healthcare services should speak with a teacher or administrator regarding readmission requirements.

Children prescribed antibiotics may return to school after they have been taking the medication for at least 24 hours, provided symptoms have improved and they meet all other return-to-school requirements.

Return-to-School Guidelines

Illness	Return to School When
Fever	Fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
Vomiting	Symptom-free for at least 24 hours without medication
Diarrhea	Symptom-free for at least 24 hours without medication
Chickenpox	All lesions have scabbed over and no new blisters have appeared
Head Lice	After initial treatment and confirmation that the child is free of live lice and nits
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	Under prescribed treatment and free from eye discharge
Ringworm	After 24 hours of treatment; affected areas must remain covered while at school
Impetigo	After 24 hours of treatment; affected areas must remain covered while at school
Scabies	After 24 hours of treatment and clearance from a healthcare provider
Strep Throat	After 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and when fever-free
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease	Fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication and free of open blisters

Immunization Requirements

California law requires children attending school, childcare, or preschool programs to be immunized against the following diseases unless a valid exemption applies:

- Polio
- Diphtheria

- Tetanus
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (Chickenpox)
- Other immunizations required by state regulations

Families must provide all required enrollment health documentation, including immunization records, physical examination forms, and tuberculosis (TB) screening documentation, within ten (10) calendar days of enrollment. Failure to provide required documentation may result in termination of enrollment.

Medical Services

The health and safety of all children is a priority at Hamilton High State Preschool. Staff members receive appropriate training to support children with identified medical needs, including the administration of prescribed emergency medications such as epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens), seizure medications, and inhalers, as authorized by both a physician and the child's parent or guardian.

Prior to administering medication or providing medical support, the following documentation must be maintained on file:

- Written authorization from the parent or guardian
- Physician's instructions and medication orders
- Required healthcare plans, when applicable
- Documentation of staff training

All medications will be stored securely and administered in accordance with licensing regulations and health and safety requirements. Emergency medications will remain readily accessible to authorized staff as required.

Records of all medication administration and medical services provided during school hours will be maintained and made available to parents or guardians upon request.

Emergency Procedures

To help ensure the safety of all children and staff, Hamilton High State Preschool maintains a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan. Emergency procedures are reviewed regularly, and emergency drills are conducted monthly to familiarize children and staff with appropriate safety practices.

Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, including but not limited to fire, earthquake, or flooding, children and staff will relocate to the designated evacuation site at the high school gymnasium or another district-designated safe location.

Families will be notified as soon as possible following an emergency and provided with information regarding student reunification procedures.

Lockdown Procedures

In the event of a lockdown, established school safety protocols will be implemented, including:

- Securing and locking all classroom and exterior doors
- Closing and covering windows, when appropriate
- Moving children and staff away from doors and windows
- Maintaining a quiet and secure environment
- Restricting entry to and exit from the facility until authorized by law enforcement or school administration

During a lockdown, telephone lines may be reserved for emergency communications to ensure availability for first responders and emergency personnel.

The lockdown will remain in effect until law enforcement or designated school officials determine that it is safe to resume normal operations.

Additional emergency response procedures are available upon request and are reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with district safety protocols and current emergency management practices.

Attendance Tracking System (Procare Software)

Our program uses Procare Software to manage attendance, parent communication, incident reporting, and program records. This system supports licensing compliance, child safety, and accurate documentation.

Onboarding and Account Setup

When a child is enrolled, families will receive an email invitation to activate their Procare account. This account is used for attendance tracking and program communication.

During onboarding, families are responsible for:

- Activating their Procare account using the email invitation provided
- Completing required child information (including emergency contacts, allergies, and phone numbers)
- Adding and verifying all authorized pick-up persons
- Ensuring all information is complete and accurate before the child's first day
- Providing authorized pick-up persons (including emergency contacts, approved babysitters, and any other approved individuals) with their Procare access instructions or sign-in information as needed so they are able to properly sign the child in and out when authorized to do so

Each authorized parent/guardian and pick-up person will have their own individual access and must use their own login or assigned code.

Sign-In/Sign-Out Requirements

All children must be signed in at arrival and signed out at departure using the Procure system (tablet, QR code, or mobile app).

Children may only be signed in or out by a parent/guardian or an authorized individual listed on the child's file.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring:

- Children are escorted directly to and from staff
- Staff is aware of the child's arrival and departure
- Sign-in and sign-out are completed before leaving the site
- Children are not dropped off or picked up without proper check-in/out

Required Signature Format

To ensure attendance records are clear, accurate, and compliant with licensing and program documentation requirements, all attendance entries must be completed using the Procure system and must include the individual's **printed first and last name**.

- Cursive, initials, symbols, or marks are not accepted for attendance entries
- Entries must be clearly readable and accurately identify the individual completing the sign-in or sign-out
- Attendance records are official program documents and must be completed correctly
- If an entry is unclear or incomplete, staff may request clarification or require correction

Access Codes and User Responsibility

Each authorized individual will be assigned a personal Procure login or access code.

- Access is personal and may not be shared
- Each person must use only their own login or code
- Unauthorized use of another person's access is not allowed
- Lost or compromised access must be reported to the director immediately

QR Code Sign-In/Out

Authorized individuals may use the Procure QR code system to sign children in and out. Each user must use their own assigned account.

Curbside Contactless (GPS) Sign-In/Out

The program may use GPS-based sign-in/out through the Procure mobile app for approved users.

Requirements include:

- Location services enabled
- Being within the approved program area
- Active Procure account access

Procure Parent App

Parents/guardians will use the Procure Child Care App for:

- Sign-in and sign-out
- QR and GPS attendance options
- Program messages and notifications
- Child updates, when applicable

Families are responsible for keeping login information secure and up to date.

Communication

The Procure system is used for:

- Program announcements and reminders
- Attendance notifications
- Messaging between families and staff (when applicable)
- Digital incident or injury reports requiring electronic signatures

Families are expected to check the app regularly.

Authorized Pick-Up Persons

Only individuals listed on the child's authorized pick-up list may sign children in or out or use attendance features.

All changes must be submitted in writing before updates are made.

Families are responsible for keeping all emergency and authorization information current.

Compliance

Attendance records are required for licensing compliance, safety, and staffing requirements. All sign-in and sign-out procedures must be completed correctly each day.

Failure to follow procedures may require follow-up to ensure compliance with program policies and licensing requirements.

System Support and Backup Procedures

Staff will assist with system use as needed. If technical issues occur, a paper attendance log will be used temporarily to ensure continuous tracking.

Child Abuse Reporting Requirements

The safety and well-being of children are of the highest importance at Hamilton High State Preschool. Under California law, preschool staff members are mandated reporters and are legally required to report known or reasonably suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

The California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) requires teachers, childcare providers, and other designated professionals to report suspected child abuse or neglect when, in their professional capacity or within the scope of their employment, they know of or reasonably suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.

"Reasonable suspicion" means that it is objectively reasonable, based on training, experience, and the available facts, to suspect that a child may be the victim of abuse or neglect.

Reports of suspected abuse or neglect are investigated by the appropriate authorities, which may include:

- Child Protective Services (CPS)
- Local law enforcement agencies
- Other agencies authorized under California law

Mandated reporters are required to report directly to the appropriate agency and are not required to notify parents or guardians when a report has been made.

Information regarding any investigation will be provided by the investigating agency, not by preschool staff.

Child Protective Custody

In certain circumstances, law enforcement or child welfare agencies may determine that a child must be taken into protective custody. In accordance with California law, school personnel will provide the child's parent or guardian contact information to the appropriate authorities.

The responsibility for notifying parents or guardians that a child has been taken into protective custody rests solely with the law enforcement or child welfare agency involved.

Hamilton High State Preschool is committed to complying with all mandated reporting requirements and working cooperatively with appropriate agencies to help ensure the safety and protection of children.

Notice of Action

Parents or guardians will receive a Notice of Action whenever one of the following actions occurs:

- A child is enrolled in the preschool program
- Services are denied
- Services are reduced, increased, suspended, or otherwise modified

If services are denied or changed, the Notice of Action will include the reason(s) for the decision and the effective date of the action.

Parents or guardians have the right to appeal any action affecting services. An appeal must be submitted within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the Notice of Action to the designated appeal officer at Hamilton State Preschool. Detailed instructions regarding the appeal process are provided on the second page of the Notice of Action.

If a parent or guardian disagrees with the outcome of the local appeal, they may submit a further appeal to the California Department of Education, Early Education Division, within ten (10) calendar days of the local decision. Information regarding this process is also included on the second page of the Notice of Action.

All decisions issued by the California Department of Education are final.

Uniform Complaint Procedures

The Governing Board of Hamilton Union High School designates the following compliance officer to receive and investigate complaints and ensures district law compliance with:

**Mr. Jeremy Powell, Superintendent, P.O. Box 488/620 Canal Street
Hamilton City, CA 95951, 826-3261**

Notification: Parents must receive the notice of complaint procedures annually in writing. The board encourages the early, informal resolution of complaints with the preschool program director whenever possible. However, if a complaint cannot be resolved with the preschool director, the following procedure must be followed for all complaints:

Step 1: Filing a Complaint

Any individual, public agency or organization may file a written complaint with the superintendent/Principal.

If the person who is filling the complaint is unable to file the complaint in writing due to conditions such as illiteracy or other disabilities, district staff shall help him/her to file the complaint.

Step 2: Mediation

Within three days of receiving the complaint, the Superintendent/Principal shall hold an investigation meeting within five days of receiving the complaint. All parties involved may question each other and witnesses during the meeting.

Step 3: Investigation of Complaint

The compliance officer shall hold an investigation with five days of receiving the complaint or an unsuccessful attempt to mediate the complaint. All parties involved may question each other and witnesses during the meeting.

Step 4: Response

Within 30 days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer shall prepare and send to the parents a written report of the district's investigation and decision. If the parent is dissatisfied with the compliance officer's decision, he/she may, within five days, file his /her complaint in writing with the Board.

The board may consider the matter at its next regular Board meeting or at a special Board meeting convened in order to meet the 60 day time limit within which the complaint, in which case the compliance officer's decision is final.

Step 5 Final Written Decision

The report of the district's decision shall be written in English and in the language of the parents whenever feasible or required by law.

If dissatisfied with the district's decision, the parents may appeal in writing the California Department of Education within 15 days of receiving the district's written decision. When appealing to the California Department of Education, the parent(s) must specify the reason(s) for appealing the district's decision and must include a copy of the locally filed complaint and the district's decision.

Parent(s) are welcome to seek legal counsel at the following locations:

- California Legal Information Center, Chico, CA; North Valley Paralegal Service, Chico, CA
- Glenn County Office of Education, Willows, CA

Families who file a complaint against the program, staff or instructional materials will in no way receive punitive actions due to their filing a complaint.