Kennedy School

3945 N. Wehrman Avenue
Schiller Park



SCHILLER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT 81

CONNECT * EMPOWER * INSPIRE

Building relationships with tomorrow's leaders

We are SD81

Preschool Handbook 2026-2027

Room E101 - Mrs. Worwa
Room E102 - Mrs. Klein
Room E103 - Ms. Cacioppo
Room E104 - Ms. Macias
Room E105 - Ms. Scott

SCHILLER PARK
SCHOOL DISTRICT 81

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JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL
3945 N. Wehrman Avenue
Schiller Park, IL 60176-1895
Ms. Sara Grulke, Principal
Ms. Kimberly Sendelbach, Assistant Principal
Ms. Stacey Fischels, Assistant Principal
(847) 671-0250
FAX (847) 671-0256

Dear Pre School Families,

Welcome to the Schiller Park School District 81 Pre School. We want to assure you that your child will be well cared for and provided with the finest of educational programs. Our program is funded by the State of Illinois through the Preschool for All Grant. We use the Creative Curriculum and align our instruction to the Illinois Early Learning Standards.

Families are an integral part of our program, and we seek to foster a partnership with you to enhance the learning and healthy development of your child. You are welcome to observe your child in the classroom, to help within the classroom, and to speak with staff and administration. Our aim is to make our program one that fosters a partnership and creates a supportive network.

We want to help with your child's transition into our Pre School program. We recognize that each child's adjustment period will vary depending upon his/her individuality, age, and prior school experiences. Below are some suggestions to facilitate your child's transition into the program.

*Bring a photograph of your family for your child to look at and keep in his/her cubby during the day.
*Say good-bye to your child. In this way, your child will recognize that although you are leaving, you will be back. Remind your child you will see them after school.

As we continue to offer the Pre School program to District 81 families, please feel free to share any new ideas or concerns you may have. The Pre School Team values close communication between families and staff. We look forward to getting to know you and your child and to offering a safe, nurturing, developmentally-appropriate and discovery-filled environment for your child.

Working together, we ensure an exciting and successful school year for your child.

Sincerely,

Sara Grulke

Ms. Sara Grulke
Principal

KENNEDY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Welcome to Preschool at Kennedy School!

Kennedy Elementary School
3945 N. Wehrman Ave.
Schiller Park, IL 60176

Sara Grulke, Principal
Kimberly Sendelbach, Assistant Principal
Stacey Fischels, Assistant Principal

This handbook sets standards for parents, students and teachers to achieve success in a positive environment throughout the school year. In addition to enforcing rules, we feel it is important to develop the life skills necessary for good decision-making. We must all work together toward these goals.

At Kennedy School, we believe that a positive learning environment depends on good-decision making. In order for students to learn, the environment must be safe. Therefore, Kennedy School strives to be a "Bully Free Zone."

Please read and discuss this handbook with your child. Parents and students must also adhere to the rules/policies outlined in the District 81 handbook.

The Discipline Handbook contains rules in addition to those in the District Handbook, specifically Board Policy 7:190. All rules and expectations contained in 7:190 are in effect.

Kennedy School Pledge



Today I promise to do my best.
I will be responsible with my actions.
I will be respectful to myself and others
And I'm ready to learn!

Kennedy School is committed to a partnership with parents to develop students who are respectful, responsible and ready to learn. Based on this commitment, we believe the following:

We will be responsible:

Students will...	***Parents will...***	***Teachers will...***
• Be accountable for their actions. • Be at school on time. • Complete assignments with their best effort. • Be prepared for school with appropriate materials. • Demonstrate a positive attitude.	• Assure that students arrive by 8:25 am or 12:10 pm. • Provide an area and materials so children can complete assignments at home. • Provide time and assistance for their child. • Model a positive attitude. • Assure their child brings requested materials to school. • Discuss concerns about their child with their child's teacher. • Pick up their child on time • Accept responsibility for actions and behaviors.	• Create a positive learning environment for all students. • Model responsible behavior. • Provide feedback to parents on student performance.

We will be respectful:

Students will...	***Parents will...***	***Teachers will...***
• Treat others as you want to be treated. • Practice good manners by saying, "Excuse me, Please, Thank You, I'm Sorry, etc." • Respect school property and the property of others.	• Model respectfulness and politeness toward others and their children. • Model truthfulness and honesty. • Accept responsibility for actions and behavior.	• Model respectfulness and politeness toward others • Be fair and consistent. • Listen to students and parents. • Model expected behaviors. • Model truthfulness and honesty. • Offer support and encouragement to others.

We will be ready to learn:

Students will...	***Parents will...***	***Teachers will...***
• Be prepared for school. • Be a good student. • Demonstrate a positive attitude. • Work to make our school and community a better place.	• Assure that my child will arrive by 8:25 am or 12:10 pm. • Work to make our school and community a better place.	• Create a positive learning environment. • Be prepared to provide the best instruction for each individual student. • Work to make our school and community a better place.

Second Step

Helping our littlest learners harness their energy and potential by teaching them to:

- Listen
- Pay attention
- Control their behavior
- Get along with others

When students enter kindergarten with the self-regulation and social-emotional skills taught in the evidence-based Second Step program, they're set up for success.

Unit 1: Skills for Learning - welcoming, listening, focusing attention, self-talk, following directions, asking for what you need or want

Unit 2: Empathy - identifying feelings, accidents, caring and helping

Unit 3: Emotion Management - we feel feelings in our bodies, strong feelings, naming feelings, managing disappointment, managing anger, managing waiting

Unit 4: Friendship skills and problem solving - fair ways to play, having fun with friends, inviting friends to play, joining in with play, saying the problem, thinking of solutions, speaking up assertively

Unit 5: Transitioning to Kindergarten - learning in kindergarten, riding the bus in kindergarten, making new friends in kindergarten

BULLY-FREE ZONE

Kennedy School strives to be a safe place for students and a Bully Free Zone. Bullying will not be tolerated. Bullying behavior is defined as harassment, intimidation, or physical and/or verbal aggression that places another student in reasonable fear of harm. Bullying prevention will be addressed at the school, classroom, and individual level.

If a child participates in any of the behaviors listed below, a parent- principal-teacher conference will be scheduled to determine the consequence and if counseling services are needed. The following behaviors may result in a suspension from school and the police may be called.

- Verbal or physical threats toward a staff member
- Repeated verbal or physical threats towards other students
- Physical aggression towards other students or staff
- Vandalizing school property
- Having a weapon in school will result in a suspension or expulsion from school as per board policy. Police will be notified if a weapon is found at school



Expulsion and Suspension

The Kennedy Elementary PreSchool program believes in the importance of developing and supporting children's social-emotional development. The program utilizes materials such as Second Step, Creative Curriculum, Conscious Discipline, and Zones of Regulation to support students. These programs, in combination with our highly trained staff, offer a wide range of support to develop students' skills for learning, emotional management, friendship skills, and problem-solving. In accordance with the State of Illinois Public Act 100-015, the Schiller Park School District 81 prohibits the practice of expulsion and suspension for early childhood-age students (3-5 years of age). As a district, we are committed to working collaboratively with families to ensure success for all students.

Important Preschool Information

Preschool Session Times
The AM session runs Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM.
The PM session runs Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 12:15-2:45 PM and

Wednesdays from 12:15 – 2:05 PM (Early Dismissal).

On ½ days, the AM session runs from 8:30- 10:30 AM and **PM session will not meet.**



Absences
Any absence *must* be called into the office at your earliest convenience (847) 671-0250. It is also helpful if you let the classroom teacher know as well.

Sick Child Guidelines
Our common goal is to have your children in school feeling healthy, happy, and able to learn as much as possible. To keep our preschool children (as well as our staff) as healthy as possible, we ask that you do the following:

KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME IF HE/SHE HAS:
*a fever of 100 degrees or higher
*vomiting
*diarrhea
*white patches on tonsils
*difficulty swallowing or talking
*rash
*red, irritated eyes, which may possibly be pink eye
*persistent cough/extreme congestion



Attendance
It is very important that all children attend school on a regular basis.
If a child reaches a total of **10 absences**, your child's enrollment will be reviewed. Your child must have regular attendance and must be dropped off and picked up on time. If attendance becomes a problem, the teacher and parent will have a meeting to discuss the problem and the consequences. Due to the high number of qualifying students, Kennedy School reserves the right to remove a student from the program due to poor attendance. We look forward to working with families who wish to take full advantage of the program's benefits.



Timeliness

It is extremely important that you drop off and pick up your child **on time**. If you are late dropping off your child, he or she will miss out on many key routines and experiences of the day. If you are late picking up your child, teachers miss out on important meetings and planning time.



Backpacks and Folders

Each child will have a Take Home Folder. Please check the folder every day for important handouts and remove them. Please return the folder to school every day in your child's backpack.

Extra Clothes

Each child needs to have an extra set of clothes at school. Please include a shirt, pants, socks, underwear, and shoes to stay in your child's locker. Don't forget to switch them out with the changing seasons.



Classroom Lending Library

A lending library is available in each classroom. We have many English and Spanish books available for your child to borrow. We have limited Polish and Bulgarian books, but always welcome any book donations. When the book your child chooses is returned to school he/she may pick a new one to take home.



Homework Backpacks

Your child's teacher will be sending home homework backpacks throughout the school year. These include activities that are meant to be done together *with* your child. Please be respectful of these borrowed materials and be sure to return all materials back to school on time so that another child has the opportunity to complete the activity.

Personal Property

- Students should keep personal property (ie. electronic devices, video games, toys, keychains etc…) at home. Students should not bring toys, keychains games, or sports equipment to school, unless instructed to do so (ie. class reward). If students bring these items to school please note that the school is not responsible for damaged, lost and/or stolen items brought to school.

- If you choose to bring personal property to school that becomes a distraction, any staff member has the right to take that item and return it at a time of his/her discretion (ECD's will have to be picked up by parent or guardian). The school is not responsible for damaged, lost, and/or stolen items brought to school.

Adult Visitors at School



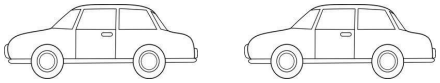
Safety is a top priority for our students and staff. Any adults visiting the school must enter through Door #22. ***Visitors must provide a government-issued photo ID***, which will be entered into a Raptor system, and cleared for entry into the building. Please remember to bring your ID any time you intend on entering the building.

PRESCHOOL DROP OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURES

Morning: Drop Off begins at 8:25am
Pick Up begins at 10:55am (10:25 am on ½ days)

Afternoon: Drop Off begins at 12:10pm
Pick Up begins at 2:40pm (2:00 pm on Wednesdays)

If your child is a walker, pick up is located along Kennedy Drive on the North side of the building using Classroom Exit Door #20. If your child is a car rider, pick up will be using Door #22. BOTH walkers and car riders will enter the building via Door #22.



Drop Off/Pick Up Procedure - Drive Up

During Drop Off:
- Please arrive at school no earlier than 5 minutes before drop off.
- Enter into the Drop-Off lane off of Wehrman Avenue. *Do not exit the vehicle to walk your child to the staff,* ***remain inside your vehicle.***
- *MAKE SURE YOUR CAR TAG IS VISIBLE AND HANGING FROM YOUR REAR VIEW MIRROR.*
-A staff member will come to your car and remove your child from the vehicle and direct them to walk inside Door #22. ***Please do not release your child from the car until a staff member arrives.***

-After your child is removed from your vehicle, please wait until the car in front of you moves before exiting the Drop-off lane.
-Please do not pass the cars in front of you, as this is a major safety concern.

<u>During Pick Up</u>:



- AGAIN, *MAKE SURE YOUR CAR TAG IS VISIBLE AND HANGING FROM YOUR REARVIEW MIRROR.*
- Line up in a single file line in the drive-through lane
- Stay inside your car, and a staff member will help place your child in the vehicle.
- After your child is placed into the car, your child must seatbelt themselves (our staff members cannot buckle them into the seat).
-If your child cannot buckle themselves and require your assistance, we ask that you pull your vehicle forward (and over to the side) to allow the dismissal traffic to continue flowing.

-Please wait until the car in front of you moves before exiting the parking lot. Please do not pass cars in front of you, as this is a major safety concern.

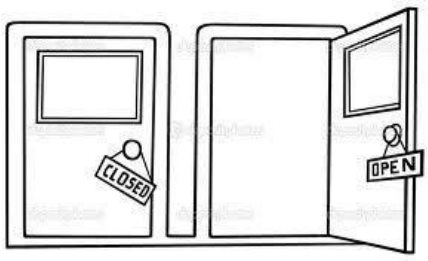
Thank you in advance for adhering to our procedures. Safety is a top priority for us and we appreciate your support in making our pick up and drop-off periods safe and efficient for all Kennedy Kubbies.

<u>Drop Off/Pick Up Procedure - Parking</u>

-If you would like to walk your child into Door #22 , park on Scott Street and walk your child to the designated area. Please do not double park or leave your car running in the parking lot. **Please note that parking is extremely limited and we encourage you to use the drop-off lane.**

<u>Drop Off/Pick Up Procedure - Walking</u>

- If you would like to walk your child to school, please arrive no earlier than ten minutes before drop-off. Bring your child to door #22. **Please do not enter the building.**
- You will pick up your child at Door #20.



<u>Late Arrival</u>

Any student who arrives late must be brought to the Main School Office (Door #1 at the front of the school) to check-in.

*<u>**Please go to the front office (Door #1) if you need additional or replacement car tags. A car tag is required for every car that will be picking up your child.</u>*

Parent/Teacher Communication

Communicating with you about your child's progress is very important to us. Please feel free to reach out to us at any time.



- Email
- Call
- Parent Square
- Write us a note and send it in your child's folder
- Schedule an appointment to come in and meet with us

Room E101	**Room E102**	**Room E103**	**Room E104**	**Room E105**
rworwa@sd81.org	kklein@sd81.org	gcacioppo@sd81.org	emacias@sd81.org	sscott@sd81.org
(847)671-0250 ext. 3401	(847)671-0250 ext. 3402	(847)671-0250 ext. 3403	(847)671-0250 ext. 3404	(847)671-0250 ext. 3405

Parent Involvement

Our Preschool program welcomes and encourages parent involvement throughout the year. This is an important part of your child's learning experience at Kennedy School. We provide many chances for you to become involved in the classroom.

Our program offers a variety of involvement opportunities:

- Coming into the classroom to help students with the daily routine
- Make arrangements with your child's teacher to read a story or help with a lesson
- Attend/chaperone field trips with your child
- Participating and helping with seasonal parties
- Attending school events

We truly appreciate all of your support during the year!

Kennedy Preschool Mission Statement

Our mission as the Early Childhood team at Kennedy School is to create and maintain a healthy, safe, and nurturing environment. Through the Illinois Early Learning Standards, as well as the Creative Curriculum for Preschool, we will recognize and challenge each child's uniqueness and ensure their academic success. We are dedicated to increasing our parent involvement, as well as to an intervention system that will provide the necessary support for all of our students.

Preschool Norms

In the five preschool classrooms, we share common expectations for all of our students. They are simple, in positive language, and we even have a song with movements to help our young friends remember them!

They are as follows:

1. We keep our hands and our feet to ourselves.
2. We respect ourselves and our friends.
3. We take care of everything in the classroom.

Creative Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is an award-winning and research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, developing confidence, and critical thinking skills. *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* is based on 38 objectives for development and learning. These objectives are fully aligned with the Illinois Early Learning Standards. Educators can be confident that they are meeting important early learning standards everyday, even while bringing their own creativity and expertise into daily planning. The curriculum also offers daily opportunities to individualize instruction by helping teachers meet the needs of each learner.

We look forward to sharing more about our program with you during Curriculum Night in September!

Just Play

When I'm building in the block room, please don't say I'm "Just Playing."
For you see, I'm learning as I play about balances and shapes.
Who knows, I may be an architect some day.
When I'm getting all dressed up; setting the table, caring for the babies,
Don't get the idea I'm "Just Playing." For, you see, I'm learning as I play; I may be a mother or father some day.
When you see me sitting in a chair, reading to an imaginary audience.
Please don't laugh and think I'm "Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play;
I may be a teacher someday.
When you see me combing the bushes for bugs,
Or packing my pockets with things I find; don't pass it off as "Just Play." For, you see, I'm learning as I play:
I may be a scientist someday.
When you see me engrossed in a puzzle or some "plaything" at my school,
Please don't feel the time is wasted.
For, you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate.
I may be in business some day.
When you see me cooking or tasting foods,
Please don't think that because I enjoy it, it is "Just Play."
I'm learning to follow directions and see differences.
I may be a cook someday.
When you see me learning to skip, hop, run and move my body;
Please don't say I'm "Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play; I'm learning how my body works.
I may be a doctor, nurse or athlete someday.
When you asked me, what I've done at school today,
And I say "I just played"; please don't misunderstand me.
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work;
I'm preparing for tomorrow.

Today, I am a child and my work is play.

