



Iowa City Community School District

Educational Services Center

Stephen F. Murley Superintendent of Schools

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ICCSD Preschool Program

Parent Handbook

2016-2017



It is the policy of the Iowa City Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact Kingsley Botchway II, Director of Equity, 1725 N. Dodge St., Iowa City, IA 52245, 319-688-1000, Botchway.kingsley@iowacityschools.org.

Welcome

Welcome to the Iowa City Community School District Preschool Program. We appreciate your interest in our program. We hope this handbook will help you to know a little more about our District's Preschool Program.

The heart of the Iowa City Community School District Preschool Program is its strong developmentally appropriate curriculum delivered by talented teachers specifically trained to teach young children. Children are able to participate in these programs at several ICCSD elementary schools, as well as in a variety of community partner preschool programs across the District.

All programs use the state and district approved, research-based curriculum and are accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children and/or the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. This experiential instruction prepares children for the opportunities and challenges of kindergarten and beyond.

Philosophy and Organization

We recognize that children come to preschool with different strengths, abilities, backgrounds and interests. We know that children develop at different rates and are ready to engage in learning experiences at various times and levels. Our preschool program provides a climate that allows children to develop and learn at their own pace and in their own way, yet is both supporting and individually challenging. Our program is designed to provide an environment in which children experience success and become well-rounded, self-confident individuals.

In our early childhood setting, we strive to provide activities that are both age appropriate and individually appropriate. We understand and keep in mind the typical sequence of development of children within an age span as we plan our environment and activities for our children. We also understand and keep in mind the individual uniqueness of each child as we plan experiences that match each child's developing abilities. The environment is designed to allow for participation by each child at his/her own individual developmental level. Staff members act as facilitators in fostering each child's learning.

Our Goals for Developmentally Appropriate Programming

Our goals include the following:

- To incorporate curriculum areas which address: language and literacy, cognitive development, self-care, gross and fine motor development, socialization strategies, and emotions and feelings
- To select materials which are concrete and relevant to the child's interests and needs
- To provide language opportunities through meaningful experiences
- To use a variety of learning strategies to accommodate each learner
- To nurture each child's individual abilities at their age appropriate level
- To encourage children to problem-solve, test ideas, and try unfamiliar or new activities with supportive guidance.

Financial Policies and Procedures

- The half day preschool programs are provided at no cost to families enrolled.

Hours and Days of Operation Yearly

Calendar:

- The Preschool program follows the Iowa City Community School District calendar. The Preschool start date is dependent on the school district's calendar and may differ for morning and afternoon sessions. **Start Date for the 2016-17 school year will be Monday, August 29th.**

Days Open:

- ICCSD AM Preschools are open Monday - Friday, on district school days. ICCSD PM Programs are open M, T, W, and F. There is no PM session on Thursday due to the district's early release. The Preschool program follows the ICCSD calendar. Late starts and early releases due to weather will not be rescheduled.
- **Unscheduled No-School Days** - the preschool program will not be open when school is cancelled due to inclement weather, blizzards, electrical problems, heating failure, water main breaks, etc.
- **Unscheduled School Delays** – the AM preschool program will not be open if school is delayed due to inclement weather, blizzards, electrical problems, heating failure, water main breaks, etc.
- **Unscheduled Early Dismissal Days** – the PM preschool program will not be open when school is dismissed early due to inclement weather, blizzards, electrical problems, heating failure, water main breaks, etc.

Hours Open:

- The half day preschools are open daily, 7:55 am – 10:45 am, M-F or 12:00 pm – 2:55 pm, M,T,W,F (not open on Thursdays)
- **Arrival and Departure Procedures:** At arrival, children must be personally brought to the preschool staff members by the child's parent or designated adult, either outdoors or indoors, as arranged by each school. Parents or designated adults must stay with their child until they are met by their teacher or designated school staff member. Children may not arrive early to play on the playground with older children. At departure, children must be met by their parent or designated adult, either outdoors or indoors as arranged by each school, at the designated preschool time. For children who are eligible to ride the school bus, a district staff member will meet them at the bus and escort them to the bus at the end of the school day.

Preschool Closing Time

- The Preschool program reserves the right to suspend the child from the program if three late pick-ups occur.

- If the parent is running late and will not be on time for pick up, parents are asked to notify the elementary school office.

Absences

- Parents are to notify the school office in advance, if their child will not be attending the preschool program because of scheduled appointments, vacations, or other planned absences.
- Parents are to call their child's school by 7:45am for the morning or 11:45am for the afternoon session, if their child is ill and not coming that day.
- Parents are to call the school office by 7:45am or 11:45am, if their child will be coming late on a particular day, to let the school know their child's plans.

Release of Children

- Children will leave the preschool program according to the instructions provided by the parent in PowerSchool.
- Children will be allowed to leave with persons other than the parent only if permission has been given to the school in writing or by direct phone call by the parent to the school office.

District Preschool Health Information - Parent Procedures

- If a child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.) parents are to be sure the preschool knows what to do if a problem should occur during program hours. Parents need to be sure that medication is available and that the appropriate forms for its use have been completed. If medication is to be kept at the preschool for treatment of a chronic condition, no more than one month's supply should remain at the preschool at any time.
- No over-the-counter medication may be administered, unless a written authorization form from the child's physician is on file at the preschool.
- If a child has any one of the following conditions, the child's parents will be notified to pick up their child immediately: contagious disease, fever over 100 F, vomiting or diarrhea, accident requiring medical attention. Children **must be free of symptoms, without medication, for 24 hours prior** to returning to the preschool program.
- Parents are to let the school know if and when their child is exposed to any communicable disease. The school will, likewise, will notify parents if their child is exposed to any communicable disease while at school.
- Incidents resulting in injury to a child will be reported immediately to parents on the day of the incident and shall be provided in writing to parents or to the person authorized to pick up their child from the center. The written report will be prepared by the teacher and a copy shall be retained in the program.
- In serious cases of accident or illness, parents will be called immediately. Parents are responsible for all expenses incurred related to the incident.
- The preschool program will provide a quiet area under supervision for a child who appears to be ill or injured. The parents or a designated person shall be immediately notified of the child's health status.
- Staff will follow the Universal Precautions Policies when dealing with routine care and emergencies.
- Staff will follow hand washing policies when entering the program, when helping in the bathroom, before and after handling food, after holding animals, and when they leave the program.
- Outdoor play does not occur when the temperatures (including wind chill) fall below 15 degrees Fahrenheit. This temperature degree differs from the district temperature guideline, as it applies to the younger preschool age group, under childcare health guidelines.

- The preschool program will ensure that all staff members demonstrate clean personal hygiene sufficient to prevent or minimize the transmission of illness or disease to other children or staff in the program. Paper towels and soap will be available for use. Children's hands will be washed at the following times:
 - immediately before eating or participating in any food service activity
 - after using the restroom
 - after handling animals

Parent Involvement/Visitors and Observations

- Parents are welcome to observe and participate with us at preschool. Please call us to schedule the visit with us. In this way, you can let us know if there is a special day or time you would like to join us, and we can then assure that you will see activities you are particularly interested in. As is policy in the school, we ask that you not schedule a visit during the first two weeks of the year or the last two weeks of the year.
- For liability and insurance reasons, it is not possible for children who are visitors to the program to take part in activities, unless accompanied by their parent or guardian throughout their visit.
- Community members, e.g. University of Iowa students, who are screened by the teacher and through the ICCSD Volunteer process are welcome to observe in the preschool program.

ICCSD Early Childhood Contact Information

- Jay Beaver, Early Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator
319-688-1000
beaver.jay@iowacityschools.org
- Randi Kimm, Special Services Secretary
319-688-1007
kimm.randi@iowacityschools.org
- ICCSD Webpage – www.iowacityschools.org