

USD # 418

Early Childhood Program

Parent Handbook



2020-2021

USD 418 Early Childhood Programs
McPherson/Marion County Head Start
915 E First Street, McPherson, KS 67460
(620) 241-9590 Fax: (620) 241-9565

Director: David Brock
Assistant Director of Family Services: Danielle Bolton
Coordinator of Health and Safety Services: Abby Church
Coordinator of Education and Mental Health Services: Jenny Smith

Marion Elementary
1400 E Lawrence
Marion, KS 66861
(620) 382-3771
AM or PM Classes

Hillsboro Elementary
812 East A
Hillsboro, KS 67063
(620) 947-3981
AM or PM Classes
1 4 year old Full day Class

Washington Elementary
128 N. Park
McPherson, Ks 67460
(620)-241-9560
4 and 3 year old classrooms

Eisenhower Elementary
301 E Wickersham Dr.
McPherson, KS 67460
(620) 241-9430
4 and 3 year old classroom

Lincoln Elementary
900 N. Ash
McPherson, Ks 67460
(620) 241-9540
4 and 3 year old classrooms

Roosevelt Elementary
800 S. Walnut
McPherson, Ks 67460
(620) 241-9550
4 and 3 year old classroom

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Our Mission

We at the McPherson/Marion County Preschool Program are committed to supporting children, families, and staff in a safe, nurturing, and educational environment through quality, comprehensive programming and community relationships.

The Mission of the Governing Board (USD 418)

The purpose of the McPherson Unified School District 418 is to assure that students will acquire basic academic and decision-making skills necessary to be productive, responsible citizens in a changing society. Students are challenged to achieve individual success, work to their fullest potential, and become lifelong learners. Our school will guide and assist students to identify and accomplish personal, academic and career goals.

Parents' Rights

Parents have the right to:

- Be supported as the primary educator and nurturer of their child
- Be listened to and treated with respect and dignity
- Ask questions and receive information on any aspect of the program, including daily operations, policy making and budgeting
- Express needs and interests and receive a timely response from the program regarding those needs
- Express concerns about the program without repercussions to themselves or their child(ren)
- Offer any opinion or suggestion regarding any part of the program regarding those expressed needs
- Receive feedback on any suggestions or opinions regarding the program
- Refuse specific aspects of the preschool program
- Participation is encouraged as much or as little as possible
- Be treated as an equal with the staff in supporting the educational goals of children
- Know that all information gathered will be kept confidential
- Be welcomed and encouraged to participate in their child's classroom and/or other center activities at any time

Expectations for Parents

Volunteering

- Parents are encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom, school, or within the program

Parent Meetings

- Parents are encouraged to participate in parent meetings and trainings.
- Policy Council is a group of elected parent representatives and community members working with staff to develop program policies.

Sign-In and Sign-Out

- Any non-parent picking up a child MUST be named on the pick up list and must be 18 years of age or older. Parents must ensure that their pick up person can show a picture ID to the staff upon request. When picking up a child, the pick up person must sign out, stating that they have accepted the child.
- All children must be signed in and out, whether in the classroom or on the bus
- Sign-In and Sign-Out is conducted on the ipad. In the event that the ipad is not working due to power outage or technical difficulties the classroom staff will utilize a paper sign-in/sign-out document.

Parent Concerns

As a parent, if you are ever faced with a concern that you feel is not being met, please make an appointment and speak with the appropriate staff person. Your Early Childhood Program believes in working directly with parents and staff to address any concerns a parent may have with the program. In communicating your concern, it will be most helpful if you would please do so in the following order so that concerns may be addressed as soon as possible:

- Step 1- If the issue you are concerned about is a classroom or educational issue, speak to the teacher about your concern when she/he is not busy supervising children. Issues are most often resolved quickly and easily at this first level.
- Step 2- If you are not satisfied, speak to the building principal who has the responsibility for oversight of the classroom. They are the first-line supervisors of the teaching staff and therefore may be able to advocate for you and your child with the teaching staff.
- Step 3- If you are not satisfied, speak with the Early Childhood Director.

If you have a family concern and would like assistance please contact your child's teacher or your Family Advocate.

Health Requirements

- Parents are expected to comply with all of the program's health requirements. These requirements include: up-to-date immunizations, current physical, current dental, hemoglobin and lead test results. If assistance is needed to meet these requirements, please contact your family advocate.

Home Visits/ Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Parents are expected to have at least two teacher home visits per year and two parent-teacher conferences per year. Your family advocate will schedule up to four home visits per year. We prefer to come to your home, but if necessary, other arrangements can be made.

Current Emergency Information

- It is the parent's responsibility to see that emergency information is kept current at all times.

Eligibility Information Requests

- It is the parent's responsibility to provide all information required for enrollment in the program. Failure to provide such information within the established deadlines may cause a child to be put on a waiting list until all requirements/requests are met and they are eligible to fill an opening.

Code of Conduct

All parents must abide by the following code of conduct as established by the McPherson/Marion Early Childhood Program in conjunction with USD#418 Board of Education.

As a legal guardian I will:

- Respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.
- All parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will not only abide by USD#418's Anti-Bullying Policy, but it is expected that all parent(s)/legal guardian(s) avoid any participation or involvement considered to be bullying or harassment in any form towards any student, staff member, and/or parent/legal guardian while on school property or in a school vehicle or at a school-sponsored activity or event. The Early Childhood Program and your school recognizes the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) role in their child(ren)'s education and is focused on providing the best learning environment for all students.
- When a parent/legal guardian violates the code of conduct the School Principal and Early Childhood Director will determine what consequence will be issued.

Tuition

Basic Rates & Payment Policies for McPherson :

The payment fee for ½ day slots for 3 & 4-year olds is \$200. The payment fee for full day 3 & 4-year old slots is \$300 per month. You will receive a contract and it will require your signature agreement to pay the monthly tuition. You need to return the signed contract to the Early Childhood Office. Payments are collected for the months September through April. There are no payments collected for August and May to make up the difference for any holiday breaks taken throughout the school year. Payment is due on the 1st day of each month for the upcoming month. Late payments will result in risk of losing the slot and openings will be filled with a child on the waiting list. If payment has not been received by the 1st of each month, your family advocate or the Assistant Director for Family and Community Services or the Director will contact you regarding your late payment and your child may be dropped from the program by the end of the business day the following Friday. The Early Childhood Program does not send out monthly statements.

Basic Rates and Payment Policies for Marion

The payment for ½ day slots for 3 and 4 year olds is \$170. You will receive a contract and it will require your signature agreement to pay the monthly tuition. You need to return the signed contract to the Early Childhood Office. Payments are collected for the months September through April. There are no payments collected for August and May to make up the difference for any holiday breaks taken throughout the school year. Payment is due on the 1st day of each month for the upcoming month. Late payments will result in risk of losing the slot and openings will be filled with a child on the waiting list. If payment has not been received by the 1st of each month, your family advocate or the Assistant Director for Family and Community Services or the Director will contact you regarding your late payment and your child may be dropped from the program by the end of the business day the following Friday. The Early Childhood Program does not send out monthly statements.

Basic Rates and Payment Policies for Hillsboro

The payment for ½ day slots for 3 and 4 year olds is \$150. The payment fee for full day slots is \$375 per month. Meal costs for ½ and full day students are not included as part of the tuition fee.

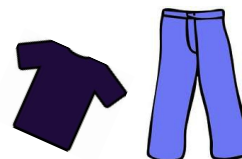
Preparing for School

Clothing

Your child will be most comfortable in their play clothes. Children have accidents and get messy, so please send an extra set of clothes for your child.

Please send the following to school:

- Extra Clothes: **shirt, pants, underwear, and socks**
- Cold Weather: coat, mittens or gloves, and a hat



Backpack



If your child has a bag or backpack, please send it everyday. If no backpack is available, please let us know and we will try to supply you with one. Teachers and Family Advocates will send notes home throughout the year. Please check your child's backpack daily for notes and other items.

DO NOT SEND:

- Toys
- Money
- Food
- Drinks

The program provides all toys and supplies your child will need. If a teacher has a special occasion to allow toys to be brought from home, they will let you know.

Diapers/Pull-ups

If your child is not completely toilet trained, please send enough supplies for each day in your child's backpack.

**Drop Off and Pick Up Times
4 and 3-Year-Old Program**

McPherson Program

- Drop-Off at 8:00
- ½ Day Pick-Up at 11:30
- Pick-Up at 3:00

Hillsboro Program

- AM Class Drop-off 7:50
- AM Class Pick-up 11:30
- PM Class Drop-off 12:10
- PM Class Pick-up 3:45
- All Day Class Drop-off 7:50
- All Day Class Pick-up 3:45

Marion Program

- AM Class Drop-off 8:10
- AM Class Pick-Up 11:35
- PM Class Drop-off 12:10
- PM Class Pick-up 3:35

Late Drop-off/Late Pick-up Policy

Teachers and classroom staff have meetings and other obligations before and after school. Please be considerate of them and drop off and pick up on time.

- If children arrive late, you must sign in at the elementary school office AND in the classroom.
- If you are late picking up, classroom staff will do the following:
 1. **Call the parents**
 2. **If unable to contact parents, emergency contacts will be called.**
 3. **After 15minutes, your child will be taken to the office.**
 4. **If your child is not picked up within 30 minutes of the end of their preschool session, at the discretion of the principal, police may be called to take the child into emergency care.**

Each elementary school has their own policy regarding dropping off children EARLY. You MUST speak to your classroom teacher and building principal for arrangements.

Please refer to individual school parking policies.

Transporting Your Child

Children MUST be in a car seat or booster seat. If you need help obtaining a car seat, please contact your family advocate.

If the classroom staff feels that you are intoxicated in any way, or feel that you are unable to safely transport your child, they will:

- Call one of your emergency contacts to pick up your child
- Call a cab to take you and your child home. You will have to pay for the cab.
- Ask you to come back with the proper car seat.

If you don't agree to do any of those things and take your child anyway, we will be required by law to report the unsafe situation to the police and/or child protective services.

Safety

Parents will be notified by telephone in the case of emergencies, other than health, as the situation allows. Local authorities, radio, and school district personnel at the Central Office will disseminate information as is appropriate to the public and parents.

Authorized Pick-Up:

When you enrolled your child, you filled out a form naming the people who are authorized to pick up your child, they must be 18 years of age or older. This form is called "Emergency Contacts and Authorization to Pick Up."

We cannot let your child go with anyone who is not listed on the Release Form.

- If we don't know the person, we will ask for identification, such as a driver's license.
- **If you want to add someone, or take someone off of the list, you must do so IN WRITING and give it to your child's teacher or family advocate in advance of the first time that individual will pick up your child.**
- ONLY the PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN can make changes to the pick-up form.

Custody

The law states that every parent has a right to his/her child.

If you have a legal document that says one parent is not allowed to pick up the child, we must have a copy of that document. It has to have been signed by a judge and be officially stamped.

Weather Cancellations

Pre-school will follow school district policies on school closings. Please refer to your schools handbook for more information.

Emergency Safety Drills

Tornado: When tornado sirens are sounded, staff will follow specific procedures to move children to a protected area. The children will assume the tornado protection position. Classroom staff will take first aid kits, children's emergency releases and if available, cellular phones with them to the shelter location.

Parents should not put themselves at risk by attempting to travel to the centers to pick their children up in severe weather. If parents do show up, they will be asked to stay and remain in the shelter until an all clear is given.

Children are safer at school than in a bus or car. If severe weather occurs during a release time, children will stay at the center until an all clear is given. Parents will be notified of delayed arrival times.

If children are on a bus when a tornado siren sounds, the driver will follow the route emergency plans and locate the nearest safe place. Centers will be contacted through bus radio and parents will be notified.

Fire: In case of fire evacuation, staff will follow specific procedures to move children to a safe location until an all-clear signal is given.

Notification of Parents in Emergencies: Local authorities, radio, and school district personnel at the Central Office will give out information as is appropriate to the public and parents. Parents may also be notified by telephone in case of emergencies.

Building Lock Down: In the event the building is placed in lockdown mode because of an outside threat, no one other than emergency personnel will be allowed in or out of the building until an all clear sign is given by the local police department.

Building Evacuation: In the event we would have to evacuate the building, staff will take children to a designated safe location off school grounds..

Attendance

It is important that your child comes to school every day. Important learning activities are taking place. We don't want your child to miss these.

Regulations state that your child must attend **85% of the time**, which is 19 days out of 22 each month.

If your child cannot come to school, you must call the school as soon as possible and state the reason for the absence. If you have not contacted your school at the beginning of the school day staff will be contacting you to inquire why your child is not at school and offer support as needed.

After missing 10% of school days, there will be a meeting with your family and staff to try and help you find ways to get your child to school. If your child still misses too often, we may be forced to drop your child from the program and give the slot to another child with more regular attendance.

Tardy

Students who arrive at school late are considered tardy and need to follow the school building's tardy policy and procedures.

Communication

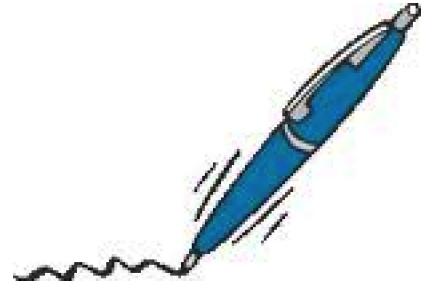
Your child's teacher will send home regular communications through newsletters, Closed Classroom Facebook Page, and personal notes. This newsletter will contain information

about the classroom, schedule changes, announcements, lesson plan information and other valuable information.

Regular communication will occur with the family advocate and other staff. Please be sure to check your child's backpack daily and make sure we have your current contact information in order to provide the best communication.

Please notify us of the following changes:

- Address changes
- Name and phone numbers of emergency contacts
- Phone number for the family
- Transportation changes
- Daycare providers
- Custody changes (with supporting documentation)
- Name changes due to marriage or divorce
- Changes in health status
- Allergies
- Medications



Required Medical and Dental Exams

Kansas law and the Preschool Program require each child to have a **physical examination** completed prior to school entry. A physician can complete the exam or a nurse certified to perform KanBe Healthy examinations. Head Start requires a **hemoglobin test**, which tests for low iron in the blood. Also, each child is required to have completed a **blood lead test**. Family advocates will complete a yearly verbal lead screening form with the families.

We also require a **dental exam** to have been completed by a dentist within the past year.

Immunizations Required for School Entry

Immunizations must be as current as possible to attend school. There is the possibility of a student being excluded from school if the child's immunizations are not current.

Head Lice Policy

State, federal and local procedures require that students who are found to have live head lice (pediculosis) will be sent home from school. The child will not be able to return to school until he or she has been treated with a head lice treatment and there are no longer any live lice on the child's head.

Treatment includes checking and treating as necessary all family members for lice as well as treating the home environment. This should be done at the same time the child is treated. A variety of topical treatments proven to be effective against head lice are available at area stores. Preschool staff will provide instructions and supplies to parents choosing to use the Olive Oil Method.

Upon identification of head lice in a particular classroom, notes are sent home to families that include information regarding head lice, how to identify head lice, and appropriate treatment methods. Education regarding head lice is also included in the parent orientation packet, and is ongoing throughout the year.

Illness Policy

The preschool classrooms do not have adequate space or staff to care for ill children. If your child has been ill with fever, diarrhea, or vomiting within the past 24 hours, please do not send your child to school. Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning.

If your child becomes ill at school, you will be contacted to pick up your child as soon as possible. If we cannot contact a parent, we will call one of the emergency contacts listed on your child's emergency contact list.

Please see the following exclusion guidelines to know when your child can return to school. You may contact the Early Childhood Office if you have any questions.

Exclusion Guidelines

When should I keep my child home? When your child has:	When can my child return to school? When your child is:
Fever of 100.0 °F or higher or Elevated temperature with other symptoms	Fever free for 24 hours (without using a fever-reducing medication)
Severe cough (child gets red or blue in the face or makes a high pitched croup-like or “whooping” sound)	Symptom free or doctor’s written release
Diarrhea	NO diarrhea for 24 hours
Vomiting	NO vomiting for 24 hours
Pink Eye (red, matted, swollen, or draining eyes)	24 hours treatment and bring a doctor’s note
Infected skin (rash, ringworm, impetigo, etc)	24 hours treatment and bring a doctor’s note
Fainting or seizures (other than a pre-existing condition) or general signs of listlessness, weakness, drowsiness, headache, or stiff neck	Symptom free or doctor’s written release
Severe itching of body or scalp (including head lice, body lice, or scabies)	No live lice. Nits allowed, only if child has been treated. Must be checked by staff. Scabies= treatment completed.
Staff sees symptoms of medical condition	Follow the health staff’s instructions before returning to school

Medications

We encourage parents to make arrangements to give any needed medications at home, before or after school.

Over the counter medications such as cough drops, Tylenol, ointments, etc should not be sent to school with children and will not be administered by the staff at school.

If prescribed medication must be given during school hours, staff will administer the meds after these requirements have been met.

- Kansas law requires written permission from the parent and a signed order from the physician.
- The first dose of medication must be administered at home before being given at school to avoid an unexpected reaction at school.
- Medication must be brought to school by a parent.

- The medication must be in the original container supplied by the pharmacy or physician, stating the name of the child, the medication, the dosage, the time to be given, and the way it is to be given.

Sunscreen and Bug Spray



Parents must complete a “**Request for Medication to be administered at School**” form with their child’s doctor in order for sunscreen and bug spray to be applied to your child. Staff **CANNOT** apply sunscreen or bug spray without the form being completed and turned in.

Emergency Medical Care

In case of accident or illness, our staff will contact you, the parent/guardian, or a designated person to take charge of your child.

At the initial home visit, you signed consent for emergency medical care for your child. Every attempt will be made to contact you before your child is treated. If we are unable to contact you, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital for treatment. It is important to let your family advocate know if any of the following changes occur:

- Your name, address, or telephone number
- Your place of employment and telephone number
- Name, address and telephone number of your child's doctor
- Name, address and telephone number of any emergency contacts
- Your health insurance information

Tooth Brushing



The preschool classrooms participate in a tooth brushing activity daily. A smear of fluoride toothpaste is offered to each child for the tooth brushing. Classroom staff will model tooth brushing to demonstrate proper brushing techniques for the children. The technique will allow children to practice brushing with the classroom staff as models. Daily tooth brushing prevents tooth decay and potential illnesses.

Health Checks

Throughout the school year, the health staff will complete vision, hearing, and height and weight checks.

Nutrition

Children in the preschool program receive nutritious meals and snacks at school. The program receives federal assistance to serve these healthy meals. Meals served must meet nutritional requirements set by National School Lunch and CACFP (USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program).

After hand washing, staff, parents, and children eat their food in the cafeteria with staff modeling eating. For snack children and staff will sit down in small groups for a "family style" snack. Children learn to serve themselves, pour milk and use utensils. After the meal, the children clear their dishes, clean their area, and wash hands.

We welcome parents/guardians in the classroom and at mealtimes to eat with your child. The front office will need to be notified by 8:30am or as per building policy that you will be eating lunch and will be charged for the meal. We will accommodate you whenever possible.

It is very important that you let us know if your child has special nutritional needs. If you have questions about your child's meals, please contact the Health and Nutrition Coordinator.

Menus will be posted on a monthly basis. Each month, you will have the opportunity to see what is being served to your child.

Do not send food from home with your child. Our regulations prohibit us from having non-approved food items on site. If you have concerns about the food your child is receiving or feel that your child is not having His/her needs met at mealtimes, please consult your Family Advocate or the Assistant Director for Health and Safety Services.



Family Services

We want to help and support your family. Family advocates will ask you about your needs and goals. Family advocates will then help you plan to meet your needs and goals. We can help with the following:

- Food
- Budgeting
- Family crisis
- Ideas for new jobs
- Ideas for new housing
- Ways to go back to school, get your GED
- Obtaining health insurance or medical coverage

- Child development classes
- Clothing/Household needs
- Community Activities

We can also help you find resources in the community. We have a resource book available. Please ask your family advocate if you would like a resource book.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

All staff is required **by law** to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Kansas Department of Child and Family Services. We are not trying to get anyone in trouble. Our main goal is to protect children.

Parent Involvement

Parent Participation is encouraged in five ways:

1. In the classroom or school as volunteers, observers, or paid employees.
2. In working with their children in their own home along with the family advocate or as an extension of the classroom teacher.
3. Attending parent and family activities/events.
4. Meeting with your family advocate developing a relationship that will result in identifying your family's strengths and needs.
5. In the process of decision making and operation of the program through electing and serving as officers of Policy Council, or from surveys/questionnaires from the classroom.

Children who are not enrolled may not stay in the classroom even if the parent is volunteering. This is a state licensing regulation.

Classroom Holiday Policy

Cultures and traditions are important to children and families when celebrating the holidays. When planning holiday celebrations, we want all children and families to feel welcome and supported, and free to share their ideas and know that their ideas are important.

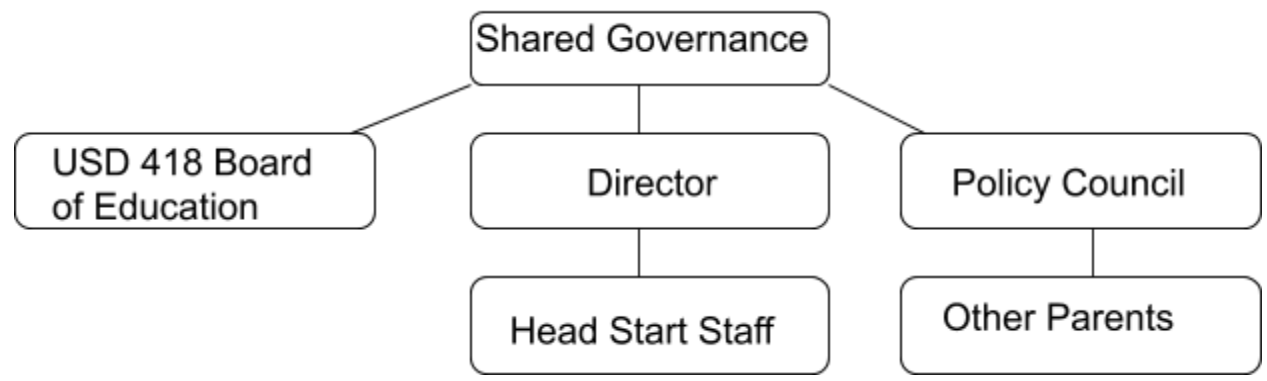
Procedure

1. The holiday policy is discussed with parents at parent orientation.
2. On the first home visit, the teaching staff will ask families to share their cultures and traditions. Staff will use this information to plan how holidays will be celebrated.
3. Some holidays will not be celebrated at school. This information will be shared through classroom newsletters.
4. During holidays, parents are encouraged to share their ideas, as there are many ways to celebrate during the year. However, no gift exchanges will take place in the classrooms.

5. Each child's birthday is very special. Teachers will be sure that each child feels important on their birthday. If you would like to send something to help celebrate a birthday, you may send trinkets such as stickers, pencils, small toys, etc. Any kind of food will not be allowable, including candy.
6. Celebrating with nutritious foods made at school is very appropriate. Children will participate in preparing nutritious healthy snacks at school at least once a month.

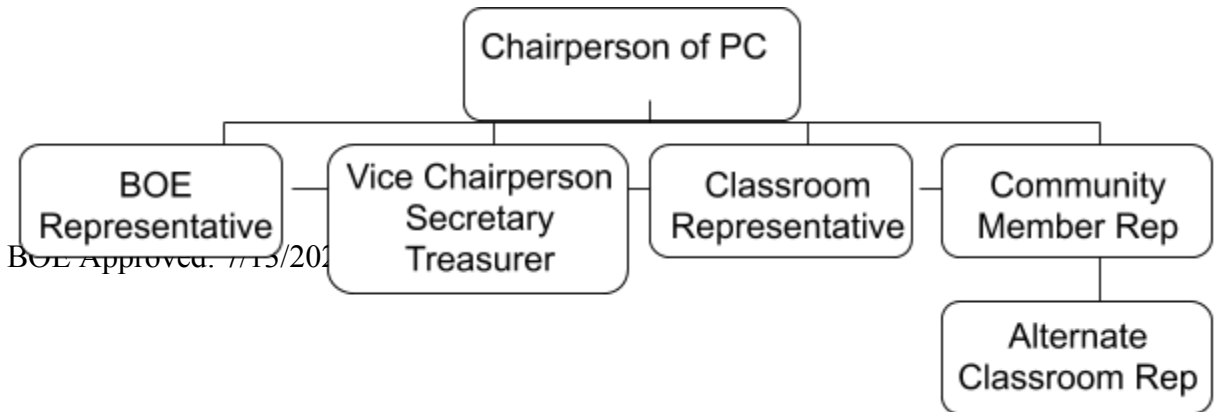
Policy Council

The Policy Council shares the role of decision making with the USD 418 Board of Education, creating a system of shared governance. These groups work to communicate with each other in order to make quality decisions affecting the children, families, and staff involved in the preschool program.



Governing Body: USD 418 Board of Education will serve as the acting governing body for the Head Start Program. BOE members will appoint one member to serve as a representative to the Head Start Policy Council. Information about the Policy Council will be relayed to the BOE through this individual. If the BOE representative is unavailable to attend, they will contact the selected alternate.

Policy Council: The Policy Council will be composed of parents and community members as stated in the by-laws. The group will actively participate in program policy development, program planning, personnel changes, and other responsibilities as stated in the Performance Standard 1301.3.



Each Policy Council Member will serve no more than 3 years and will be elected annually. Meetings are held once a month. Meeting locations rotate between McPherson, Hillsboro, and Marion sites.

Each term of office will run from the October meeting until the next October meeting.

Officers will be elected at the first council meeting.

Position descriptions are listed in the by-laws.

How to Join Policy Council:

Family advocates will contact you in the fall to see if you are interested in running as your child's classroom representative. You may be asked to submit a short autobiography about yourself and then the parents will vote for their representative.

Curriculum

We would like to welcome you, as parents and guardians, to be actively involved in your child's education. You are your child's first and most important teacher. Your participation in the classroom and interaction with your child at home are a crucial part of your child's success.

We value your input regarding the curriculum concerns you may have, and what you want most for your child to learn while in our program. The program has adopted the Creative Curriculum and TS Gold for assessment for the current school year. The curriculum is strengthened by parent and staff communication regarding children's strengths, interests, learning styles and needs. Sharing your observations from home will also help us gain valuable insight about your child's cultural background, interests, and temperament.

Child Guidance and Behavior Management

Young children can present challenging behaviors as they learn to behave appropriately in the educational setting. We are committed to using positive behavioral strategies when teaching young children how to manage their own behavior. Child guidance and classroom management decisions will promote positive social skills, foster mutual respect, strengthen self-esteem, and support a safe environment.

Positive behavioral strategies will typically include the following list. All staff will use strategies such as these in guiding and managing behavior of children in the classroom.

1. Using praise, encouragement and other means of recognizing appropriate behavior
2. Clearly stating expectations for appropriate behavior

3. Teaching children positive social skills through direct teaching, modeling and using practice with competent peers, including mental health and social skills curriculum in lesson plans
4. Providing children alternative choices and redirection away from inappropriate behavior and avoid power struggles with children whenever possible.
5. Developing classroom rules that are clear, reasonable and consistent, establishing the rules at the beginning of the program year (for full day/ year, introducing rules as new children begin) including children in the process
 - Rules will be posted in the classroom
 - Posted rules will include pictures as much as possible (photos of children and drawings are appropriate)
 - Establishing, modifying and teaching rules will be part of the regular lesson plans
 - Rules will be consistent with program policies and procedures, including health and safety policies
6. Rules will be as few in number as possible with a focus on being broad statements, using large and small group times to be specific about how they are implemented. Staff will plan a safe and developmentally appropriate environment that supports pro-social behavior.

As part of our curriculums, we use Conscious Discipline.

Conscious Discipline

Concepts for the Classroom, Home, and McPherson/Marion County Preschool Staff

Safe Place

It is helpful to have a designated place for children (and adults) to go when they feel the need to calm down. It is a place just for quiet, breathing, and calming. Items may be placed there that would help the calming process (blankets, stuffed animals, icons showing breathing techniques, etc). Adults can also model the safe place so children will better know how to use it.

Classroom: The "Safe Place" is a place to develop in the classroom as a way to support the skill of composure. The "Safe Place" provides the opportunity for children to remove themselves from the group in order to become calm, regain composure, and maintain control when upset, angry, or frustrated.

The physical structure can be a tent, or a corner with soft pillows. Each individual classroom has the ability to create their "Safe Place." The "Safe Place" in the classroom is not designed to be a "time out" space where a child is sent.

Home: The family can decide where the “Safe Place” should be located. It is up to the family to decide if all family members, adults and children, will share the same “Safe Place” or have separate locations. As with any skill, family members will need to be taught and practice when to use the safe place and how to use it. Again, it is not a “time out” location, it is a place to go when it has been recognized that calming should occur.

Staff: Items will be placed in a designated staff area for calming, items such as stress balls, breathing icons, lotion, motivational books, and CD players with headphones and soft soothing music.

Helpful/Hurtful

These words are key to terms in Conscious Discipline. This language might sound like, “You picked up blocks so your friends wouldn’t trip, and that was helpful.” The language of being hurtful might sound like, “You wanted the truck so you hit your friend. Hitting is hurtful. You may not hit. When you want a toy, ask your friend to share the toy when he is finished with it.”

Classroom: The teacher uses the language of “helpful or hurtful” and teaches children what it looks like, feels like, and sounds like to be helpful. Many forms of helpfulness can be drawn and displayed or written about in a class book. It is essential for teachers to help the children be specific in this process. The teacher must guide the children into specific scenes so they know the language and actions to use to share and take turns. The teacher must role-play with the children so they also understand what it means to be hurtful. Class-made books are also good ways to explain that things are hurtful.

Teachers should develop some type of structure that will support helpfulness with the children in the classroom. Some examples that support helpfulness are a paper tree or branch that children place hearts on or a jar of marbles that children add to when a helpful act is observed.

Home: Helpful and hurtful are understandable and explainable terms for use with children. Often children are told to be “nice.” “Nice” is a difficult word to define. It may not mean the same thing in various situations. Using the “helpful/hurtful” term helps children internally feel the result of their action. When the terms “good, nice, etc” are used, there is a sense of judgment being passed from the adult. Children can then internalize this judgment into feelings of either being all good or all bad.

Staff: Helpful is a word that can be used with coworkers also. Instead of saying “thank you” use the word “helpful.”

Noticing

Noticing a child’s behaviors/emotions and restating them to the child can help them learn to name the emotions, move them out of certain brain functions, and let them know they are “heard” and understood.

Classroom and Home: The act of noticing supports the functions of the brain. When a child is in their brain stem, the use of noticing skills move them from their brain stem to the limbic systems. For example, if a child is crying, staff should pay close attention to something they might be doing with their face. The adult's language might sound like, "Your face is scrunched like this," with the adult demonstrating what the child's face looks like. More than likely, the child will make eye contact with the adult. When that happens, the child moves up a level in their brain. Once the child has eye contact with the adult, they are ready to make choices.

The act of noticing is also important when teaching children about being helpful and hurtful. When you notice children being helpful, say to the child, "You swept the floor. That was helpful, can you put a heart on our kindness tree." The same is done when you notice hurtful acts. "You yelled at your friend. That was hurtful."

It's important for adults to spend time noticing acts and teaching children about what they are doing. Research shows that it takes telling a child the same thing up to 2000 times before it makes an imprint on their brain.

Staff: Implement a kindness tree similar to the one used in the classroom. Staff can write acts of kindness on a heart and place it on the kindness tree.

Wishing Well

Wishing well is a way of focusing our intention. It has been shown that intention is what turns possibilities into realities. Therefore, it is our intention by which we literally create our lives. Wishing well is having good intentions and knowing that our intentions change things even when we don't take physical action.

Classroom: Teachers can teach children to "think" of something really special, maybe getting a hug from mom, seeing grandpa, or playing with their pet. Teachers should talk about that special feeling inside and explain that is the feeling you think about when you "wish well." When children are gone from school their pictures are put on a special heart and the class sings a special song. This action lets children understand that others are cared about when they aren't at school. Children then learn when they are gone that they, too, are cared for and wished well.

Stages of Development

Three-Year Olds

Three-year olds are often described as being in transition. They more closely resemble 4 and 5 year old preschoolers than 2-year-old toddlers. They are beginning to express themselves in words and ideas.

Social and Emotional Development

Three year olds are learning to trust that their parents, teachers, and other important people in their lives will take good care of them. Social competence is beginning to emerge at this time, but is not fully developed. The social three-year old can become self-centered very quickly.

Physical Development

The play of the three-year old is usually longer and more focused than toddler's play. Gross motor activities such as running, swinging, throwing and catching a ball, and dancing to music are a great source of pleasure for this group. Quiet play, such as using puppets and painting a picture, is also enjoyable for them.

Cognitive Development

Three year olds are exploding with thoughts and ideas. They are using all of their senses. The ability of three's to classify and understand their world is only at a beginning level. They can sort objects but usually by only one characteristic at a time.

Language Development

Most three's have mastered all sounds, perhaps with the exception of "f," "l," "r," "s," "k," "sk," and "t." Most threes can use plural terms, talk in sentences, recite simple rhymes, and ask questions. They can tell you their first and last names. They love to share their thoughts.

Four-Year Olds

Fours are working on the same developmental tasks as threes, but at a higher level. They use the word "why" frequently, often your explanation of "why" is not nearly as important to a four-year old as the fact that you are giving him/her your full attention.

Social/Emotional Development

Fours are a mix of independence and sociability. They like doing things on their own. They take great pride in imitating adult behaviors, but also love playing with others, especially in groups of two and three. Fours tend to be very expressive, using actions and facial expressions as well as words to get their points across.

Physical Development

Fours are increasingly able to control their muscles. The leg muscles of fours allow them to maintain a rhythmic stride in running. Their fine motor coordination improves dramatically as well.

Cognitive Development

Four year olds are interested in cause and effect and always want to know why things happen. They approach the world with great curiosity and use their imaginations to

understand it. However, because separating reality from fantasy is hard for them, they can have irrational fears. Developmentally, they are struggling with the differences between truth and fiction. In attempt to discover the boundaries, the truth is often stretched.

Language Development

The language of 4 year olds progresses rapidly. They usually can understand and use the words such as "in," "with," "by," "to," "over," and "under." They love to talk to, be spoken to, and listen to books.

Five-Year Olds

By the time children turn five, they have gained security about who they are and their place in the world.

Social/Emotional Development

Fives are increasingly independent, self-sufficient individuals. They are dependable and responsible and enjoy having praise lavished on them for their reliability. Fives are exceedingly social. They seek out friends, typically having one or two special playmates.

Physical Development

Five year olds show more agility, balance, and coordination than fours in both gross and fine motor movements. They can jump rope, ride a bike with training wheels, control a paint brush, and write letters and numbers with increasing accuracy.

Cognitive Development

Fives solve problems and make predictions by observing the objects and the world around them and by making connections to what they already know. They can understand concepts of color, size, and shape. They can also categorize by two features, such as color and shape.

Language Development

Five year olds show significant growth in their communication skills. They produce sentences that have adult-like word order. They speak not just in sentences, but also in paragraphs. Five year olds also begin to extend their oral language skills to reading and writing.

Emergency Safety Intervention

Definitions (See K.A.R. 91-42-1)

"Emergency Safety Intervention" is the use of seclusion or physical restraint when a student presents an immediate danger to self or others. Violent action that is destructive of property may necessitate the use of an emergency safety intervention.

"Seclusion" requires all three of the following conditions to be met: (1) the student is placed in an enclosed area by school personnel; (2) the student is purposefully isolated from adults and peers; and (3) the student is prevented from leaving, or reasonably believes that the student will be prevented from leaving, the enclosed area.

“Chemical Restraint” means the use of medication to control a student’s violent physical behavior or restrict a student’s freedom of movement.

“Mechanical Restraint” means any device or object used to limit a student’s movement.

“Physical Restraint” means bodily force used to substantially limit a student’s movement.

“Physical Escort” means the temporary touching or holding the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back of a student who is acting out for the purpose of inducing the student to walk to a safe location.

“Time-out” means a behavioral intervention in which a student is temporarily removed from a learning activity without being confined.

Prohibited Types of Restraint

All staff members are prohibited from engaging in the following actions with all students:

- Using face down (prone) physical restraint;
- Using face-up (supine) physical restraint;
- Using physical restraint that obstructs the student’s airway;
- Using physical restraint that impacts a student’s primary mode of communication;
- Using physical chemical restraint, except as prescribed by a licensed healthcare professional for treatment of a medical or psychiatric condition; and
- Use of mechanical restraint, except: of Protective or stabilizing devices required by law or used in accordance with an order from a licensed healthcare professional; Any device used by law enforcement officers to carry out law enforcement duties, or Seat Belts and other safety equipment used to secure students during transportation.

Training

All staff members shall be trained regarding the use of positive behavioral intervention strategies, de-escalation techniques and prevention techniques. Such training shall be consistent with nationally recognized training programs on the use of emergency safety interventions. The intensity of the training provided will depend upon the employee’s position. Administrators, licensed staff members, and other staff deemed most likely to need to restrain a student will be provided more intense training than classified staff who do not work directly with students in the classroom. District and building administration shall make the determination of the intensity of training required by each position. Each school building shall maintain documentation regarding the training that was provided and a list of participants.

Documentation

The principal or designee shall provide written notification to the student’s parents any time that ESI is used with a student. Such notification must be provided within two (2) school days. In addition, each building shall maintain documentation any time ESI is used with a student. Such documentation must include all of the following:

- Date and time of the intervention,
- Type of intervention,
- Length of time the intervention was used, and
- School personnel who participated in or supervised the intervention.

All such documentation shall be provided to the building principal, who shall be responsible for providing copies of such documentation to the superintendent on at least a biannual basis. At least once per school year, each building principal or designee shall review the documentation of ESI incidents with appropriate staff members to consider the appropriateness of the use of ESI in those instances.

Reporting Data

District administration shall report ESI data to the state department of education as required.

Local Dispute Resolution Process

The board of education encourages parents to attempt to resolve issues relating to the use of ESI informally with the building principal and/or the superintendent before filing a formal complaint with the board. In the event that the complaint is resolved informally, the administrator must provide a written report of the informal resolution to the superintendent and the parents and retain a copy of the report at the school. The superintendent will share the informal resolution with the board of education and provide a copy to the state department of education.

If the issues are not resolved informally with the building principal and/or the superintendent, the parents may submit a formal written complaint to the board of education by providing a copy of the complaint to the clerk of the board and the superintendent. Upon receipt of a formal written complaint, the board president shall assign an investigator to review the complaint and report findings to the board as a whole. Such an investigator may be a board member, a school administrator selected by the board, or a board attorney. Such investigators shall be informed of the obligation to maintain confidentiality of student records and shall report the findings and recommended action to the board in executive session. The board clerk and superintendent must complete any such investigation within thirty (30) days of receipt of the formal written complaint. On or before the 30th day after receipt of the written complaint, the board shall adopt a report containing written findings of fact and, if necessary, appropriate corrective action. A copy of the report adopted by the board shall be provided to the parents, the school, and the state board of education.

Do not hesitate to contact us with your ideas, suggestions, questions, or concerns.

We look forward to a great year!

