MCPHERSON & MARION COUNTY HEADSTART NEWSLETTER

September 2026

Policy Council

Council that included a timeline and an opportunity to complete an interest form. Originally elections were to be completed by September 7th with the first meeting being on September 15th. Due to various circumstances we have had to adjust that timeline. Ballots for each site for parents to vote on who will represent their site are due by Friday, September 18th. Elected members will be contacted the week of September 21st. More than one representative per site can be elected for Policy Council The first Policy Council meeting will take place in October.

Head Start standards and program policies require us to do elections for the Policy Council. Please click on the site your child attends to vote on who will represent your site on the Policy Council.

- LES Ballot
- HES Ballot
- MES Ballot
- RES Ballot
- WES Ballot

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)

What is the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)
On August 7, 2026 the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) pertaining to the Head Start Program Performance Standards: Reducing Federal Burden for Head Start Programs. The proposed rule would make changes to current Head Start standards that programs have to follow. To view the full proposed rule please click on the following link:

- Proposed Rule

What is proposed?
In the NPRM, HHS proposes rescinding 90% of the existing standards and replacing them with a significantly reduced set of new Performance Standards, relying on the Head Start Act for defining requirements and expectations of Head Start grantees.

What Happens Next?
The NPRM has a 60-day public comment period. The comment period closes October 6th. During this time, anyone can submit formal comments. This is the start of a long process and timing on issuing a final rule has no set deadline, so it may take a long time for any change to take effect, and until then, current Standards remain in place.

We will continue to provide updates, resources, and information. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us (620-241-9590) or email the director (david.brock@mcpherson.com) if you have questions, need clarification, and/or just want to talk through the NPRM and how it could impact our program.

HOME & HEART

with Darci

Family Services

Getting into the routine of school can be a tough process. This is especially true if this is your child's first experience going to school. There are also many other adjustments that come along with starting school.

1. Allow choices: allow your child to make small choices. Let them pick out clothes, hair styles, and bedtime books. Small choices will help to foster ownership.

2. Open Communication: talk with your child's teachers, get to know the office staff, ask questions, and volunteer. Keeping open communication with your child's teachers and school will help to catch any early academic or social hurdles.

3. Check in: check in with your child about their friends, check in about how they are feeling, and check in about them adjusting to their new classroom.

Spark Your Learning

With Ashlynn

1. Read books about starting school

~Reading stories about school promotes your child to ask questions about school. After reading these stories you can ask:

- What was your favorite part of the story?
- How do you think the child/character felt?
- What are you excited to do/learn at preschool?

2. Talk about preschool in a positive way

~Explain that your child will:

- Make new friends
- Play with fun toys
- Learn exciting things

3. Set routines

~Familiar routines helps children and parents feel less overwhelmed

- Pick out clothes before going to bed
- Go to bed at the same time each night
- Wake up at the same time

4. Encourage Independence

~Encourage your child to:

- Get dressed on their own
- Put on their shoes
- Put toys away

MUST TRY RECIPE

Easy Spinach, Sausage, Pasta Dinner...UNDER $10

This meal is a quick and easy meal that doesn't break the bank. All ingredients are EBT eligible and come in costing just under $10.

Ingredients with Walmart prices (of course these may fluctuate):

- Tomato paste - 6 ounces
- Frozen Chopped Spinach - 12 ounces
- Half and half - small container
- Italian mild ground sausage - 16 ounces
- Box of Bowtie pasta

Preparation:

In a skillet on the stove top brown your italian sausage. While that is browning, set out your spinach so it begins to thaw. Once the sausage is cooked and drained and add the spinach. While mixing in the spinach add your small can of tomato paste to the mixture. Gradually add in the half and half until the mixture is a creamy consistency. Finally, add in the desired amount of bowtie pasta that will feed your hungry family.

Optional ingredients: Salt, Pepper, Garlic Powder (all to taste and preference)

+ Add

$1.26 10.5 ¢/oz

Great Value Chopped Spinach, 12 oz (Frozen)

12153

SNAP EBT eligible

+ Add

$3.92 $3.92/lb

Marketside Mild Ground Italian Sausage, Pork, 1 lb (Fresh)

15823

SNAP EBT eligible

Single | 6 Pack | 24 Pack

1

$0.86 14.3 ¢/oz

Great Value Tomato Paste, 6 oz

10285

SNAP EBT eligible

Single | 6 Pack

+ Add

$1.24 10.3 ¢/oz

Options from $1.24 – $7.44

Great Value Bowties, 12 oz

7991

SNAP EBT eligible

+ Add

$1.78 11.1 ¢/fl oz

Great Value Half & Half, 16 fl oz

8320

SNAP EBT eligible

Conscious Discipline
WITH RACHEL

The Drop-Off Routine: Building Connection for a Brave Start

The Daily Ritual: The "Pocket Kissing Hand"

Do this connection ritual every single day in the car right before you walk to the classroom door. Connection builds the brain chemistry your child needs to handle separation.

- **Step 1: Open the Palm** – Take your child's hand and gently press their fingers open wide. Look directly into their eyes.
- **Step 2: Place the Kiss** – Lean down and kiss the exact center of their palm.
- **Step 3: Lock it In** – Gently fold their fingers closed over the spot you kissed. Have them squeeze their fist tight. Say: "Now my love is locked inside."
- **Step 4: Pocket the Love** – Have them place their closed fist directly into their pocket or backpack. Say: "Whenever you miss me today, just press your pocket. You will feel my love keeping you safe."

You can also come up with a connection routine that works for you like a special handshake, wink, fist bump, hug etc. You can also have the child come up with what they would like to do for a leaving connection. Just make sure you do it at every drop off.

Around McPherson

Blessing Boxes

There are several blessing boxes located throughout McPherson that are typically stocked with much needed food items for families.

Locations Include:

600 E Marlin - First Baptist Church
119 N Chestnut St
1455 N Main St - MPNaz Church
119 N Elm St - Trinity Lutheran Church
1161 E Ave A - First Mennonite Church (Pantry & Fridge)

McPherson Community Fridge Project

Needing help with food...Come by the MPNAZ Church located at 1455 N Main St, McPherson. The food and items inside are completely free and anyone can use them! They hope that this will help when your family is in a time of need and might need a blessing!

McPherson First United Methodist Church

Sometimes all you need is just a little help until the next paycheck. We get it. Hopefully our food box will help carry you over until the food bank is available. Hours are: Monday-Thursday 8am - 4:30-pm. We are located at 1200 East Kansas Ave, McPherson.

Helping Hands: Clothing & Food Pantry

Pur **Clothing and Food Pantry** is here to support any families in need. Feel free to stop by **Monday through Friday, from 8 AM to 2 PM**. To ensure someone is available to assist, we encourage you to call (620-241-9590) ahead before visiting.