Benton Community Schools
Preschool Programs
Parent Handbook



Program Policies and Procedures Family Handbook
Serving 3 and 4 Year Old Preschoolers
within the Benton Community School District

2026-2027

2025-2026 Preschool Policies and Procedures
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Mission Statement

Quality Education for a Lifetime of Learning



Welcome to the Benton Community School Preschool Programs. The purpose of this booklet is to welcome you and to explain some of our policies and procedures. **Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference.** We shall do everything we can to help you and your child have a rewarding year. We are looking forward to you being a part of the Preschool Program. Benton Community Preschools follow the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. These guidelines assist the preschool staff in providing appropriate preschool curriculum and environments for your child.

Our goal is to provide the best possible early learning experience for your child. Active participation, observation and exploration activities are integral to our program. We intend to match curriculum to the developmental needs, interests and learning styles of each child. We also place special emphasis on nurturing the development of a healthy self-concept in each child. Benton Community Preschools are designed to promote kindergarten readiness skills. A variety of activities to nurture the following will be explored daily. These include:

- Positive self-esteem
- Social awareness
- Cognitive, language, physical and emotional growth
- Independent thought and behavior
- Character education traits
- Multicultural environment

In addition, the curriculum will foster the education of:

- Language and literacy skills
- Pre-reading concepts
- Early mathematical concepts
- Active receptive and expressive language skills
- Critical thinking
- Decision making
- Large and small motor ability

School Contacts

Atkins Elementary – 319-446-7525

- Jason West – Principal
- Keri Graveman – 4 Year Old Preschool Teacher
- Christine Neff - 4 Year Old Preschool Teacher
- Julie Kaestner - 3 Year Old Preschool Teacher
- Kaitlyn Burns - Preschool Associate
- Stefanie Franzenburg - Preschool Associate
- Victoria Claus - Preschool Associate
- Kim Kankelfitz – Secretary
- Jamie Townsley RN, BSN - School Nurse

Keystone Elementary – 319-442-3221

- Katie Bauder - Principal
- Cynda Mehlert – 4 Year Old Preschool Teacher
- Miranda Bistline - 3 Year Old Preschool Teacher
- Alison Mundt - Preschool Associate
- Taylor Nickel- Preschool Associate
- Lyndy Roost – Secretary
- Katie Kaiser RN, BSN - School Nurse

Central Lutheran - 319-223-5271

- Frank Parris - Principal
- Connie Volesky- 4 year old Preschool Teacher

Benton Community School District – Central Office - 319-228-8701 (ext. 1503)

- Dr. James Bieschke, Superintendent
- Anna Selk, Associate Superintendent, Director of Curriculum

Enrollment: Equal Educational Opportunity

Benton Community Preschool Staff will not discriminate in offering education programs or educational activities on the basis of sexual orientation, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability. Our program will foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, as well as men and women, to society. Students who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to report it to the school district Superintendent, at (319) 828-4510. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the director of the region VII Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education, 310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Ste. 800, Milwaukee, WI, 53203-2292, (414) 291-1111, or the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, (515) 281-5294. Procedures and levels are outlined in district policy for resolving complaints and are available online or through the district office.

Eligibility

Children must meet the following criteria to be able to enroll in preschool:

- 4 Year Old Program: Must be four (4) years old on or by September 15th
- 3 Year Old Program: Must be three (3) years old on or by September 15th

Children who are three (3) years old are eligible to enroll in preschool if there is a 3-year old program at the Benton Community Center, or there is room available in the 4 year-old program by Principal decision.

Pre-registration for both 3 and 4 year old preschool programs will be held yearly in March. Registration information will be posted on the school's website or by calling any one of the elementary schools.

School Hours

The school district will send information in regards to beginning dates of preschool prior to each school year.

- Morning Session: 8:10 to 11:10 a.m.
- Afternoon Session: 12:15- to 3:15 p.m.
- Sessions will be Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday for the four year old program.
- Sessions will be Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday for the three year old preschool program. Please refer to the letter sent to parents regarding school sessions and lunch.
- **DO NOT** bring your child to school prior to 8:05 (a.m.) class or 12:10 (p.m.) class – staff is at lunch and preparing for class – **children will not be supervised.**
- Children not riding a bus home must be picked up promptly at dismissal.

Punctuality in dropping off or picking up your child is very important! Children are expected to be in the classroom at 8:10 am for the morning session and 12:15 pm in the afternoon session.

No School, Early Out, and Late Starts

1. **Our scheduled NO school days** are October 2nd, the Friday of Homecoming, November 24th, December 18th, January 15th, February 16th, March 16th and March 26th.
2. On days when school is delayed two hours we would like to split the schedule so that the AM group will meet from 10:10-12:10 and the PM group from 1:15-3:15.

Fees

Benton Community participates in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) for 4-year old children. The state of Iowa funds schools for providing Preschool for 4-year old children, hence, there are no parent fees for the four year old program.

Benton Community is proud to be able to offer three year old preschool programming as well.

The state does not provide funding for 3-year old Preschool. Schools charge tuition fees for 3-year old Preschool, operates much like private 3-year old Preschools and child care centers. Fees for the three year old program are as follows:

- **$145.00** monthly fee due on the 1st day of each month for three year old programs

- $5.00 late fee charged to payments not paid by the 10th of the month
- Refusal to make payment by the 20th of the month is grounds for dismissal from the program
- Payment will not be altered due to illness, snow days, early outs, late starts or vacation

Preschool tuition scholarships are available through the Benton County Empowerment Group. Those interested must meet income eligibility requirements. For information, please contact the secretary or principal at your child's school.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Staff should confirm (required prior to registration) that within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service have been submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. **IQPPS 5.1, 10.5**

Staff and Student Ratio

The maximum class size in each session will be based on square footage of the current location as well as age of the students. A teaching staff-child ratio will be maintained at all times to encourage adult-child interactions and promote activity among children. The elementary principal will maintain a current list of available substitutes for both the teacher and teacher associates. Should one of the teaching staff need to temporarily leave the room, the teacher will call the elementary office and the principal will arrange for coverage of the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio. **IQPPS 10.4**

Ratio Matrix:

Classroom 1-Atkins/Keystone	Classroom 2-Atkins	Classroom 3-Atkins/Keystone	Classroom 4-Atkins
Ratio is 1-10	Ratio is 1-10	Ratio is 1-8	Ratio is 1-8
Max Students - 20	Max Students - 20	Max Students - 18	Max Students - 18

Inclusion

The preschool program serves all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include all children. Staff is aware of the identified needs of individual children and is trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families. The preschool facilities

meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements. **IQPPS 9.10**

Toilet Training

At Benton Community, children enrolled in our program must be fully potty trained by the age of 3. While we understand that toilet training is a significant milestone, our facilities and program structure are designed for children who have already achieved this developmental step.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please reach out to the school administration for further clarification.

A CHILD'S DAY

Benton Community Preschool Purpose Statement
The purpose of the BCSD preschool program is to provide young children with a positive, safe, hands-on learning environment where students can explore and grow into life-long learners through the nurturing and guidance of our professional staff.

Important Parts of Our Day/Curriculum

Teachers use *Creative Curriculum* to develop lesson plans that create an environment where all children's development is supported through daily planning and learning experiences. The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical-thinking skills. **IQPPS 2.1 - 2.4,**

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. The Benton Community Preschool day includes:

- **Arrival:** Students will be responsible for working on self-help skills which may include: getting their folder out of their backpack, hanging up their backpack and coat, turning in necessary materials, and participating in other arrival activities.
- **Center Time**: This time is filled by the child's choice(s) of various manipulatives, dramatic play, puzzles, science exploration, blocks, books, art, and writing activities, and sensory table activities. Cooperation, decision making, sharing, and turn taking with classmates are emphasized.
- **Circle Times**: Story time (Read it Again Curriculum), letter learning, math concepts, Creative Curriculum Study Topics, Incredible Flexible You, songs, finger plays, and phonemic awareness activities. Children learn how to become engaged in learning activities while functioning in a large group situation. Body basics (learning to keep one's own body under control), raising hands to be called on, speaking in front of a group are emphasized.
- **Snack**: The snack helper will assist the teacher in serving the drinks and snack to each student. Drink options include water, juice, and milk. Milk costs .40 cents per day and will be charged to the student's lunch/milk account. If your child's milk account is

significantly negative, they will be served juice or water until the balance is paid. If your child has special feeding needs, staff will provide you with a daily record of the type and quantity consumed by your child.

- **Small Group:** Students will be engaged in pre-reading, writing, math, and social emotional lessons in small groups tailored to student needs.
- **Recess**: Weather permitting, recess will be held outside daily. During winter months, children are required to have coats, boots, a hat or secure hood, and mittens. During warmer periods, children should wear appropriate lightweight jackets, and shoes with backs on them. **NO flip-flops are allowed**. Coats/jackets will be worn if the temperature is below 60°F. Students will go outside for recess in winter weather unless the temperature/wind chill is below 10 degrees.
- **End of Session**: Students will be responsible for working on self-help skills which may include: having the children empty their cubbies and fill their backpacks. Children are encouraged to **dress themselves** in their outerwear.

It is the policy of the Benton Community School District that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, and physical disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society. **IQPPS 1.7**

Who Works In The Preschool Program

- **Program Administrator:** The elementary principal is designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool program. **IQPPS 10.2** The principal meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. **IQPPS 10.3**
- **Teacher:** A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an early childhood endorsement is assigned to the preschool classroom. **IQPPS 6.2**
- **Teacher Associate:** A full time teacher associate in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher associate will have specialized training in early childhood education. **IQPPS 6.3**
- **School Nurse:** The preschool will have the assistance of the district school nurse. The current nurse is a certified RN, and is recertified every three years. They maintain student health records by updating them quarterly, and attend to the health needs of the students while they are at school. They are available for parent consultation when necessary. **IQPPS 10.8**
- **Support Staff:** GrantWood AEA support staff provides resources and assistance to the teacher and classroom upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist or others. **IQPPS**

8.2

Child Assessment

It is the school district's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. A variety of assessment methods will be used throughout the year, including assessments linked to Creative Curriculum. They provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences for children and guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. Teaching teams will meet at least weekly to interpret and use assessment results to align curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of children.

Program Assessment

Benton Community Preschool implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Administrators, families, staff, and other routinely participating adults will be involved annually in a program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. The annual evaluation process includes gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.Your child will be assessed using a variety of tools during the course of the school year with the purpose of:

- Guiding teachers in providing the activities and an environment that will assist each child to progress in their development in all areas – social, cognitive, language, and motor skills
- Guide staff in developing program improvements, professional learning and classroom supports to support classroom teaching staff and student learning.
- Giving teachers and parents information about each child's progress throughout the year.
- Identify social/emotional skills that children possess and can be strengthened at home and at school.

The following assessments will be used throughout the year:

- Our district utilizes Teaching Strategies GOLD as its main source of assessment information. Data is collected and analyzed for each student, three times per year based on research based developmentally appropriate expectations in all developmental areas (social, intellectual, motor and language) for the students that we serve. Data is collected in the classroom setting using observations, embedded instructional practices and common formative assessments through our PLC systems. Finalized data is submitted by our program three times per year during the Fall, Winter and Spring reporting periods. Due to the nature of the data collection being housed on a secure database, only teachers, administrators and required individuals have access to this information via secure login. You will receive a written report of how your child is

progressing at least twice a year (fall and spring). Written reports will be placed in your child's cumulative file and follow the district's cumulative file policy [link policy] to ensure your child's records are kept safe and confidential.

- **District data teams also use SMART goals and goal assessments to determine progress and instructional changes.**
- Preschool staff members receive ongoing training using various assessment tools, best practices gathering data, and are given instruction on how to use the results to guide their programming. This leads to activities planned for each child at his/her own level and pace. Each tool uses specific methods to assess your child, and the teachers know the purpose of each tool and how best to administer it. Assessment tools include but are not limited to observations, anecdotal records, checklists, photos, videos, and work samples such as drawing or writing.

Ongoing communication will enable family and staff to continually assess students' progress. Families will have ongoing opportunities to share the results of observations from home to contribute to the assessment process. The preschool teacher will assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated. If a child is determined to need special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom. **IQPPS 2.5, 2.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.10, 4.14, 7.3,**

Supervision Policy

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teacher will complete the following daily safety checklist indoor and outdoor: **IQPPS 9.2, 9.7**

- All safety plugs and electric outlets covered, heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. in working order.
- All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children's reach and stored properly.
- Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
- Supplies checked - first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
- Daily monitoring of the environment - spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to the head custodian and/or principal.
- Upon arrival, each child is observed by the teacher for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate in the daily activities.
- No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check every two to three minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently, who are in the library area, etc.) **IQPPS 3.7, 3.9, 10.6**

Challenging Behavior

The teaching staff in the preschool program are highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors teachers promote prosocial behavior by: Interacting in a respectful manner with all children. Modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors. Helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials. Engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group. Encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed. Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success. **(IQPPS 1.2, 1.8, 1.9)**

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior. Each building includes a Crisis Response Team that is trained through CPI (Nonviolent Crisis Prevention Intervention).

Snacks/Foods and Nutrition

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate that their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form. **IQPPS 5.9- 5.19**

A written snack menu is posted in the classroom and available to families. All menus are kept on file for review by a program consultant. The preschool serves a wide variety of nutritional snacks, and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered.

All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. Children with

food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. Information about a child's allergies is kept in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses for all adults who interact with the child during the day.

High risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. For children younger than four years, these include hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

The Benton CSD does not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Outside Play and Learning

We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. Sometimes we spend longer getting bundled up than we spend outside. We will not go outside if the temperature is above 95 degrees or below 20, factoring wind speed and humidity. **IQPPS 9.5-9.8**

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment. For example, tumbling mats may be offered for upper body activities or rolling across the mat.

In order to make sure that your child can play comfortably outside it is important to dress him/her according to the weather. When it is cold outside your child needs a warm coat, mittens, and a hat (labeled with your child's name). For the warmer days dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days dressing your child in layers is a practical idea.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun. Program staff will complete the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance Checklist on a yearly basis. **IQPPS 9.8**

Clothing

Preschool students are asked to wear appropriate clothing that will not interfere with the educational process, or become a distraction. Clothing promoting alcohol, substance abuse, or obscene language is prohibited. Students are required to wear shoes while on school property.

For their safety, students are expected to wear proper attire (winter coat, boots, **mittens**, snow pants, and hats) during the winter months. If proper attire is not worn, students will not be able to participate in outdoor activities. Please contact the teacher or principal if you are unable to purchase any of these for your child.

If snow/mud is on the playground, boots are required to be worn during recess, but students will be required to also bring indoor shoes to wear in the classroom. Throughout the nicer times of the school year, **flip flops or shoes without backs** are not allowed due to their difficulty to run and play in them.

All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. **Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.**

Objects From Home

Benton Community Preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child. We ask that you not allow your child to bring toys from home or keep them in their backpack throughout the school day. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy weapons to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys (this includes electronics) brought from home.

Weapon Policy

No student shall carry, have in his or her possession, store, keep, leave, place or put into the possession of another student any real weapon or look-alike weapon on any school premises, in any school vehicle or any vehicle used by the school or for school purposes, in any school building or other buildings or premises used for school functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions. "Look-alike weapon" means any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. *A zero tolerance policy on dangerous weapons (real or toy) is in effect; i.e., gun, squirt guns, water rifles or pistols, slingshots, toy guns, toy grenades and other similar items knives, etc. Violation may result in a student's suspension/expulsion.* **(IQPPS 10.5)**

Classroom Animals and Pets

No live animals are to be inside the Benton Community Preschool School buildings or classrooms at any time unless prior consent and animal meets all safety requirements. If you, as a parent or legal guardian, want to bring your family pet to share with your child's classroom you are welcome. However, all animals must remain outside the school buildings during the visit. The preschool teacher ensures that the animal does not create an unsafe or unsanitary condition. The animal would appear to be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animal is fully immunized (if the animal

should be so protected) and suitable for contact with children. The teacher would ensure staff and children practice good hygiene and hand washing when coming into contact with the animal and after coming into contact with the animal. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals.

Any children allergic to the pet will not be exposed to the animal. Reptiles are not allowed because of the risk for salmonella. The classroom teacher is responsible for checking requirements have been met.

Birthdays

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, students who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers with food nutrition labels attached. The teacher will provide families a list of foods meeting the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. Those who have summer birthdays are welcome to bring a snack to share on a day decided by the teacher and parents, usually around their half birthday. Invitations to parties outside of school that do not include the entire class will not be distributed at school. **(IQPPS 5.13)**

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

The Benton Community Preschool Program will promote communication between families and staff by using SeeSaw, informal conversations, and/or email. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information to staff as needed. Teaching staff will update SeeSaw regularly with upcoming information and student celebrations. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs via email, in person, notes, or phone calls. **(IQPPS 1.1, 7.4)**

Open Door Policy

Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom after communicating with your child's teacher. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the elementary school office. Visitors are asked to please use discretion with regard to bringing babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt class sessions. A visitor badge will be required for any visitors to the classroom. **(IQPPS 1.1)**

Arrival and Departure of Children

All motor vehicle transportation provided by parents, legal guardians or others designated

by parents or legal guardians will include the use of age-appropriate and size-appropriate seat restraints by law.

Preschool families are required to follow all pick up and drop off procedures. These procedures will look different based upon the building your child attends.

Other than parents or legal guardians, only persons with prior written authorization (Parent Consent Form) will be allowed to pick up a child from the school. Anyone who is unfamiliar with teaching staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them.

In the interest of students' safety, parents/guardians/authorized individuals are requested to report directly to the office when picking up their child rather than going to the child's classroom. Likewise, when a student returns to the building following an absence during the school day, the adult should stop in the office and sign the child in.

When all children have arrived, the teaching staff will walk the children to the classroom where the preschool teacher will record attendance for the day. Throughout the day each time children transition from one location to another, i.e. classroom to outdoor, the teacher will be responsible for counting the number of children whenever leaving one area and when arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times. **(IQPPS 10.9)**

Transportation

Students WILL be given the opportunity to be bussed to and from designated neighborhood stops, homes and to the best of our ability, to currently licensed daycares which reside in our district. Benton Community schools are not permitted per state requirements to bus outside of our boundaries. **(IQPPS 10.9)**
Policy 711.10 - School Bus Passenger Restraints

FieldTrips

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. The Benton Community Preschool school buses are used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip through a newsletter and SeeSaw in advance. A parent or legal guardian must sign an informed consent form for trips for each child before each trip. Adult family members may volunteer to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios but will need to provide their own transportation.

During the field trip, all children will wear identifying information that, for children, gives the

program name and phone number. A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization information for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children will be counted every 15 minutes while on a field trip. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult. **(IQPPS 2.30)**

Attendance

Students who are enrolled for classes in the Benton Community Preschool Schools are expected to be in school for the full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. Please call the elementary office with the reason for an absence no later than 8:15 A.M. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school secretary/teaching staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

Ethics and Confidentiality

Staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way we demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child negatively or positively. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

All teaching staff will receive training on ethics and confidentiality on the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Code of Ethical Conduct as part of their orientation. Each staff person will sign a Statement of Commitment to document their willingness to hold close the values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood education.

Children's Records

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest, are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights

regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the board secretary in the high school administration office.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

Grievance Policy

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we want to encourage you to address your concern to your child's teacher. If you have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, please contact the Elementary Principal who is the program administrator for the preschool. **(IQPPS 7.3)**

As part of our program assessment, in the spring of each year, we also provide you with a family questionnaire to evaluate our program. This information helps us to assess how the program is meeting the needs of families and children, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Benton Community Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Benton Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or physical disability in its education programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI or
VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of families with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent possible, in a language families understand.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Home Visits

Home visits are made prior to the start of school. This is an opportunity for the preschool teacher to get to know you, your child, and your family and for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet your child's needs. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the teacher understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you'd like addressed. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator. Home visit-a home visit will be conducted prior to school beginning. During the home visit you will have the opportunity to learn about the program, share insight about your child's strengths, interests and preferences as well as discuss what you would like your child to achieve this year at preschool. **(IQPPS 7.1, 7.2)**

Family Teacher Conferences

The preschool program will have formal family teacher conferences at the same time as the elementary school - 3 times a year .Each family is invited to schedule one conference per student with their teacher. To ensure all families have an opportunity to meet, additional conference slots with the same teacher cannot be accommodated. During the conference the teacher will share the results of classroom assessments and samples of your child's work. Together you can make a plan to continue to encourage your child's growth and development. Conferences will be held in the fall and spring. At conferences you will have the opportunity to learn about your child's progress, set goals for your child as well as share insight into your child's development.**(IQPPS 7.3)**

Family Night

Family night is an annual opportunity for you and your family to come to school to participate in fun as well as educational activities. We will conduct an annual survey to collect feedback regarding our preschool programming. Participation in family night is encouraged! **(IQPPS 7.1, 7.2)**

Resources to Families

The school district believes that families should be supported in making decisions about the

services that their children may need. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections as needed. Each program has, upon request, a comprehensive list of services families can access. These services include, but are not limited to: Additional food, clothes and other basic needs, free and Reduced information. Mental health support. GWAEA supports. Behavior and academic support. **(IQPPS 7.4, 7.5, 7.8, 7.9)**

Transitions

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible. **(IQPPS 7.9, 7.10)**

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Benton Community Preschool is committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow the guidelines required by the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

Health and Immunization Certificates

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

Policies and procedures exist regarding infectious disease control and use of universal precautions for handling of bodily fluids and discharges (including blood). Each staff member must complete Blood Borne pathogens training every 5 years. **(IQPPS 5.1)**

For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the program makes sure that:

a. For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit.

b. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.

Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces

c. at least every two hours when children are awake and

d. when children awaken.

e. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.

f. Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.

g. Each changing area is separated by a partial wall or at least three feet from other areas that children use and is used exclusively for one designated group of children. For kindergartners, the program may use an underclothing changing area designated for and used only by this age group.

h. At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child when being changed on an elevated surface.

In the changing area, staff

i. post changing procedures and

j. follow changing procedures

k. These procedures are used to evaluate teaching staff who change diapers.

l. Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.

m. Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can).

n. Containers are kept closed and

o. are not accessible to children.

Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. Files are kept current by updating as needed. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records; the child's parent or legal guardian; and regulatory authorities, upon request. **(IQPPS 10.10)**

Child Health and Safety Records will include: **(IQPPS 5.1)**
Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency; Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results; Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up to date by a specified method during the year; Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child; Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes); Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support; and **IQPPS 10.14**
Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implements a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

General Health and Safety Guidelines

All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions. Under the supervision of the preschool teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition. All staff are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections**. (IQPPS 5.8, 5.22, 5.23, 9.11)**

Certifications and Training

Each staff member must complete trainings and certifications in these areas:

*Blood Borne Pathogens
*Universal Precautions
*Lockout/Tag Out
*First Aid and CPR

*Hazardous Chemicals

ILLNESS POLICY

Health

Parents are asked to call the school prior to 8:00 if their child will not attend school due to illness or other situations. A school nurse is available for assistance if necessary. Families will also be notified if a communicable disease is discovered while school is in session.

- All medications brought to the school have to be in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacist or physician.
- The school will provide secure storage for any medications in the nurse's office.
- Teachers must be made aware if the child is on any medication in case of allergic reactions. (i.e.: cold medications)
- Any medication will be given by the school nurse or trained professional.
- **Parents are asked to keep their child home if there has been: vomiting, fever of 100° or higher, pink eyes with drainage, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours.**
- The following forms must be completed and submitted prior to entering the Benton Community Preschool Programs.
    - Registration Form
    - Physical Examination Form
    - Transportation Form
    - Copy of Birth Certificate and/or Social Security Card
    - Immunization Card (must be up-to-date and signed by a physician)

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be evaluated by a nurse or administrator when a child is not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other person authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. **For this reason, please be sure that we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child's pediatrician.** In the meantime, we will provide the child a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives under the supervision of someone familiar with the child. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then until she or he can be picked up, the child is located where new individuals will not be exposed.

Reporting Communicable Diseases

Staff and teachers provide information to families in writing about any unusual level or type of

communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

Medication Policies and Procedures*:*

The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in the school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction. **(IQPPS 5.10)**

Procedure: The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at the school.

For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be

provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log.

Cleaning and Sanitization

The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately. Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Nontoxic substances will be used whenever possible. **(IQPPS 9.11, 10.6)**

Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used. **IQPPS 5.24**

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents. **IQPPS 5.23**

Hand Washing Practices

Children and adults wash their hands: upon arrival for the day; after diapering or using the toilet (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants); after handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or

wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit); before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry); after playing in water that that is shared by two or more people; after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals; and adults also wash their hands before and after feeding a child; before and after administering medication; after assisting a child with toileting; and after handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include using liquid soap and running water; rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water).

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any situation listed above. Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur. Staff does not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal material. In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is located in the preschool classroom. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from Healthy Child Care Iowa. Following each use of the First Aid kit, the contents will be inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. The First Aid kit will be inspected monthly. The first aid kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

Fire Safety

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents

The Benton Community School District has in place a “Safety Procedures Booklet” that all emergency procedures. For access to this procedures booklet, please contact your building

principal. In the event that your child receives a minor, non-life threatening injury during their time at preschool, our teacher will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. Any incident or injuries will be documented on an "Injury and Illness" form and a copy will be given to the parent within 24 hours of the incident. **(IQPPS 10.13)**

All staff will have immediate access to a device that allows them to summon help in a medical or dental emergency. The telephone numbers of the Fire Department, Police Department, Hospital, and Poison Control will be posted by each phone with an outside line. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member will be kept readily available. The list of emergency telephone numbers and copies of emergency contact information and authorization for emergency transport will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff. **IQPPS 10.14**

Protection From Hazards and Environmental Health

Program staff protects children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, or scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping. **(IQPPS 9.16, 9.12, 9.17, 10.7)**

The preschool classroom building has been tested for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, and other hazards that could impact children's health with documentation on file. Custodial staff maintains the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children. **IQPPS 9.18**

The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children. The program uses the techniques known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

Smoke Free Facility In compliance with the Iowa Smokefree Air Act of 2008, Benton Community Preschool buildings and grounds are smoke free. A "No Smoking" sign meeting the law's requirements is posted at the entrance to the preschool classroom building to inform people that they are entering a non-smoking place. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children. **(IQPPS 9.19, 10.6)**

Child Protection Policies The health and well being of every child in our care is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is our responsibility. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with the preschool program involves direct interaction

with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children must execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.**(IQPPS 10.8, 10.16, 10.19)**

The program has written school board policy for reporting child abuse and neglect as well as procedures in place that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws. The policy includes requirements for staff to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers, or others to the appropriate local agencies. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious. All teaching staff complete "Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult Abuse" at least every five years and within six months of employment.

The school district does not tolerate employees physically, or sexually abusing or harassing students. Students who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, legal guardians, teacher, principal, or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees. That procedure requires the school district to designate an independent investigator to look into the allegations. The school district has designated Mr. Jason West at 319-446-7525. The alternate investigator is Mrs. Kelly Buscher and may be reached at 319-227-7142. **IQPPS 10.9**

Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of the Benton Community Preschool Community School. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs. **(IQPPS 10.6)**

Volunteers

Parents, friends, grandparents, and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Please contact the teacher, the elementary principal, or our office secretary if you would like to be a school volunteer. We have a volunteer job description that defines the role and responsibilities of a volunteer. For safety's sake, if a volunteer will be working with children, he/she will be expected to execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children. If a volunteer works more than 40 hours per month with children, he/she will also need to provide a current health assessment, not more than one year old. **(IQPPS 10.15, 10.17)**

General Information

The Benton Community School District has written personnel policies that define the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and specialized training required of staff and volunteer positions. The policies outline nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and policies for staff evaluation. Policies detail job descriptions for each position, including reporting relationships; salary scales with increments based on professional qualification, length of employment, and performance evaluation; benefits; and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures. Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. The policies are provided to each employee upon hiring.

Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks: criminal-record check, free from history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check, education credentials, verification of age, completion of high school or GED, personal references and a current health assessment.

Health Assessment

The preschool program maintains current health information from documented health assessments for all paid preschool staff and for all volunteers who work more than 40 hours per month and have contact with children. A current health assessment (not more than one-year-old) is received by the program before an employee starts work or before a volunteer has contact with children. The health assessment is updated every two years. Documented health assessments include: Capacities and limitations that may affect job performance Documentation by a licensed health professional of TB skin testing using the Mantoux method and showing the employee to be free from active TB disease. For those who have a positive TB skin test and who develop a persistent cough or unexpected fever, immediate assessment by a licensed physician is required. For those who have increased risk of TB according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), documentation is required annually by a licensed health professional showing that the employee is free from active TB disease. **(IQPPS 10.13)**

Confidential personnel files, including applications with record of experience, transcripts of education, health-assessment records, documentation of ongoing professional development, and results of performance evaluation, are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Superintendent's office.

Orientation

Employees must know their role and duties. New preschool teaching staff will be required to participate in an initial orientation program that introduces them to fundamental aspects of the program operation including: Program philosophy, mission, and goals; Expectations for

ethical conduct; Individual needs of children they will be teaching or caring for; Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques; Daily activities and routines of the program; Program curriculum; Child abuse and reporting procedures; Program policies and procedures; Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria; Regulatory requirements. Follow-up training expands on the initial orientations. See Staff Orientation Checklist. (**IQPPS 6.2)**

The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. The superintendent will explain payroll procedures, employee benefit programs and accompanying forms to the employee. Regular employees ineligible for the school district's group health plan will be given information regarding where they can obtain health care or health care insurance.

Staffing Patterns and Schedule

The preschool program is in compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our program follows requirements for staffing for Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards of maintaining an adult/child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. The program administrator will maintain lists of current substitutes for both the preschool teacher and the preschool teaching assistant in case of absence. If one of the teaching staff needs to temporarily leave the classroom, the person will call the elementary office to arrange for coverage in order to maintain the adult/child ratio. **IQPPS 10.4**

Staff Development Activities

Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. All teaching staff continuously strengthens their leadership skills and relationships with others and works to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community, and beyond. Teaching staff are encouraged to participate in informal and formal ways in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities. They may join an early childhood group or organization, attend meetings, or share information with others both in and outside the program. **(IQPPS 6.6, 8.5, 10.15)**

Teaching staff will be informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local Empowerment areas, and the area education agency. Staff are expected to attend all staff trainings and meetings throughout the year. Training will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community.

Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan

All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor or, in the case of the program administrator, by the superintendent. Staff also evaluate and improve their own

performance based on ongoing reflection and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. From this, they develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development. (**IQPPS 6.5, 6.6)**

Transitions

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible. **(IQPPS 7.9, 7.10)**

Resources

IQPPS - Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards - https://educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/IQPPSandCriteria2017withformnumbering.pdf

Assessment - https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/statewide-voluntary-preschool-program-four-year-old-children