Once A Cougar, Always A Cougar….It All Starts Here!

Crisp County Pre-K

2026-2027



Andrea Forrester
Principal

Crisp County Pre-K
802 East 24th Avenue
Cordele, GA 31015
229-276-3410

Dear Parents:

We are so excited to have your child join us at Crisp County Pre-K and we are looking forward to molding the mind of your child and preparing him/her for the rest of their educational journey. Our goal is to ensure that all children learn and have a successful year in school. We want them to feel good about themselves and their abilities. The children will adjust quickly to their new school setting and each day will be positive emotionally, socially, and academically.

It is very important that families become involved in the education of each child. Set aside the time each day to talk to your child about his/or her school day and what he/she has learned. We hope that you will also become involved in our school by volunteering and attending parent workshops.

We look forward to working with you this school year! We value your support. Working together, we can make a difference in your child's education!

Sincerely,

Andrea Forrester
Principal

Integration of Components

Crisp County Pre-K is a program which addresses the needs of each individual child. The children and their families are the heart of our program.

The major components of the Crisp County Pre-K Program are:

- Education
- Language Nutrition
- Health and Nutrition
- Social Emotional Well Being
- Parent Involvement

Crisp County Pre-K Program

--has state certified teachers

--provides developmentally appropriate instruction

--is family centered

--works with community partners

--offers regular parent/child activities and programs

History

In April of 1992, the Crisp County Board of Education became aware of grant funds available to support pilot programs for 4-year old children and their families. The funding would be made available through the Governor's Office in cooperation with the State Department of Education.

The grant application made it clear that the program would be based on developmentally appropriate practices for 4 year old children and coordination of services to the family, with the focus being on the child and the family.

Vision Statement

To foster a love for lifelong learning.

Mission Statement

We will provide a high quality learning environment where we provide intentional and individualized instruction.

Motto

Once A Cougar, Always A Cougar…..It All Starts Here!

Educational Philosophy

We believe children acquire knowledge of their world by actively exploring and manipulating components of their environment while discussing with other children and adults what they have seen and done. Children are provided a stimulating environment that encourages intellectual, social, and physical development. The environment is spacious and designed to be interesting and appealing to young children. A diverse selection of materials and equipment are available which permits the child to learn through active exploration, manipulation and discovery.

Parents are considered their children's first and primary teacher. Parents are needed to help make our program a strong one. We look forward to seeing you involved in activities with your child this school year!

We know that every child is a unique individual with needs that are different from another child's. We try to meet each child's needs through a variety of activities in the following areas:

1. Socialization
2. Language and Pre-Writing
3. Self-Help
4. Motor Skills
5. Reading Readiness
6. Math Readiness
7. Other Academic Areas – Social Studies and Science

The classrooms are designed and equipped for learning and social growth. Each child has an opportunity to learn, work and play in the following learning centers:

1. House
2. Block
3. Math
4. Art
5. Music
6. Reading/Language
7. Discovery/Science
8. Technology
9. Writing

Children also learn and participate through: outdoor activities, field trips, school visitors, puppet shows, cooking experiences, library visits, animal visits, and other resources provided by the community.

Parents are encouraged to discuss new ideas and resources with teachers and the Family Engagement Specialist.

Georgia Early Learning and Developmental Standards (GELDS)

The **G**eorgia **E**arly **L**earning and **D**evelopment **S**tandards (**GELDS**) are finalized and ready for implementation. The GELDS are the product of an alignment study and revision project that began in 2010. The project stemmed from the need for higher-quality standards for birth through age 5 and a better alignment with the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) for K-12. The GELDS will take the place of the Georgia Early Learning Standards for birth through three and the Pre-K Content Standards.

The purpose of the GELDS is to outline what children should know and be able to do before kindergarten entry. These research-based standards should be used to guide teachers, parents, and all practitioners in the intentional integration of developmental knowledge with the skills and concepts children need to make progress in all learning areas.

This website serves as a portal for information and resources related to the GELDS. www.gelds.decal.ga.gov.

Highly Qualified Teaching Staff

Any parent has the right to request and receive information regarding the qualifications and credentials of his/her child's teachers.

The Crisp County Pre-K staff is legally responsible for students' safety and instruction while they are attending the program. The obligations require that the volunteers work under the direction and supervision of the Pre-K staff.

Parents should accept the responsibility of assisting the teachers in the fulfillment of their obligations toward the students' safety and instruction. The teacher, in turn, has responsibilities to the volunteers which include:

1. Providing guidance and direction for the children in her class.
2. Attending meetings for teachers and parents.
3. Providing assistance for parents.

Family Engagement Specialist

The family engagement specialist is the person who manages or directs the parent and volunteer programs. This management and resource person acts as a connection between the preschool staff, the parents, and volunteers. The responsibilities of the family engagement specialist include the following:

1. Assist in the recruitment of volunteers
2. Assist in the development of in-service training for parents, teachers, and volunteers
3. Assist parent in at-home instruction for their children
4. Assist with referral of students/parents to helpful outside agencies.
5. Assist with referrals to Special Education services
6. Liaison between school and home

Volunteers will work closely with this person and should feel free to call on the family engagement specialist when they have questions about the program.

Working with the Crisp County Pre-K Program, the family engagement specialist assists in recognizing the needs of the families, maintaining confidential records of the family including enrollment forms, referrals, and follow up reports.

Services offered through our social services range from assistance with health care, legal assistance, clothing, and referrals to other agencies with follow-up services. These services are coordinated with existing resources in the community in an effort to help parents meet their needs. Home visits are made as needed to assist families in their needs.

Family Involvement

Parents and families are an integral part of the Pre-K instructional program. Parents build the foundation for helping children develop skills, habits, and attitudes for becoming lifelong learners; therefore, they are encouraged to strengthen their role as their child's first and most important teacher. Many opportunities will be available for parents to participate in Pre-K program activities because parents and teachers working together make a positive difference in a child's development. The family engagement specialist uses “The Strengthening Families Model” as relationships are developed with each unique family unit.

Major Characteristics of a Strengthening Families Model are:

- ☐ The family is the focus
- ☐ The goal is to identify family strengths, to build skills and competencies, and to promote family decision-making skills and problem solving.
- ☐ Services and support systems are developed through partnerships based on time and trust built between the family and the "professionals".
- ☐ "Professionals" perform a variety of roles, including clinician, advocate, broker, listener, partner, and friend…..
- ☐ Informal family networks, formal support, as well as community resources are utilized.
- ☐ Families are recognized as complex systems; services and supports are comprehensive to meet the family's diverse needs.
- ☐ Services and support systems are provided with the family's culture, religion, and background in mind.
- ☐ The family is seen in the context of the forces that are outside of its control, such as, lack of affordable housing, health care, and/or discrimination.

Parents become actively involved in the school program, assisting the classrooms, going on educational field trips, and attending monthly parent workshops.

School Hours

Crisp County Pre-K is a full day program that runs from 7:30 until 2:30. Breakfast is served in the classrooms beginning at 7:45. Instruction in the classrooms begins promptly at 8:00 and your child is considered tardy at 8:05. Our instructional day ends at 2:30.

Visitors

Visitors must sign in at the front office. Visitors must be issued a pass to go down the halls or to the class. **Parents are not allowed in the classrooms without an appointment during the instructional day. Appointments can be made through the Family Engagement Specialist and then approved by the principal.** Children at age four are easily distracted and it takes teachers time to get children back on track when instruction is interrupted. Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom and volunteer for activities throughout the school year upon invitation. We also want to ensure your child's safety, so our school and classrooms are locked down at 8:05.

Attendance

Students **<u>are required</u>** to attend school daily. Excused absences are sickness and death in the child's immediate family. **The school must have a written excuse from a parent or doctor if a child is absent. According to "Bright from the Start" policy, chronic absenteeism or chronic tardiness (being late) or leaving early may cause a child to be withdrawn from the Crisp County Pre-K program. If a child is late, he/she must come to the office and the parent must sign the child in. He/she will receive a tardy slip that will be given to the teacher. After 3 tardies and absences, the school will require parents to come for a face to face parent conference.**

<u>Excessive Tardies/Early Checkouts:</u>
A letter will be sent from a school administrator to the parent or guardian regarding excessive tardies and or early checkouts. A student having ten consecutive tardiness/early checkouts without a medical or reasonable explanation can be removed from the Pre-K program, according to the "Bright from the Start" policy in Georgia. Likewise, this includes being tardy or leaving early for that same duration AS WELL.

<u>Excessive Absences</u>: The following provisions apply to absences during a school year.

<u>After 3 Absences</u>:

a**. Excused Absences**: The teacher will contact the parent or guardian by telephone or parental conference regarding attendance when possible. If contact is unsuccessful, then a letter or postcard will be sent.

b. **Unexcused Absences**: After two reasonable attempts to notify the parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a child of **<u>three</u>** unexcused absences without response, the school shall send a notice to such parent, guardian, or other person by certified mail, return receipt requested.

<u>After 6 Absences</u>:

a. **Excused**: A letter will be sent from a school administrator to the parent or guardian regarding attendance. In addition, an administrator shall confer with the School Family Engagement Person to determine whether a referral is warranted, at this time.

b. **Unexcused:** A letter will be sent from a school administrator to the parent or guardian regarding attendance. A student having ten unexcused consecutive absences without a medical or reasonable explanation can be removed from the Pre-K program, according to "Bright from the Start" policy in Georgia. Likewise, this includes being tardy or leaving early for that same duration AS WELL.

After 10 Absences:

a. **Excused**: A school administrator shall confer with a School Family Engagement Person to determine whether a referral for removal is warranted, at this time

b. **Unexcused**: A referral for removal shall be made to the School Family Engagement Person.

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Morning Drop Off

Please **DO NOT** bring or send your child to school before 7:30 A.M. There is no one on duty to supervise students before this time. School begins promptly at 7:45 each morning. Students who arrive AFTER 8:05 a.m. are tardy and must check in at the office and receive a tardy pass. A staff member will escort children to classrooms after 8:05 so that instruction in our classrooms is not interrupted and our building remains secure and safe.

When dropping a student off in the morning, please drive slowly and carefully as students and staff members are entering and exiting the building during this time. We have one drop off lane so children remain safe and don't have to cross lanes of traffic. Please be patient and our staff will unload the students as quickly as possible. Remember our rules are for the safety of all students! If you should need to come into the building, please park your vehicle in the designated parking areas on campus. No parent vehicles are allowed in the bus parking area. Parents should also **NOT PARK** in front lanes of the school – this area is a fire exit lane and reserved. If you need to come in, please find a parking space for the safety of our children and building.

This procedure is being implemented to:

- Ensure the safety of all students at all times of the day.
- Maximize our instruction time.
- Ease the transition of all students.

Parent Pick-Up

Please adhere to our parent pick-up rules so we can load your children and move the line more quickly. Parent Pick-up begins at 2:45 and ends at 3:00. Please DO NOT get out of your car or leave your car parked in the line. This holds traffic up and causes the line of traffic to move more slowly. All children will be loaded at the curb. You will be asked to pull forward to allow us to load 2 vehicles at a time. For the safety of your child and our staff, all children will be loaded from the passenger side of the vehicle. If your child has a car seat or booster seat, please move it to the passenger side so we can quickly assist your child in buckling in. If

you stay in the car and allow our staff to buckle and load, our line will move quickly. **Parents will not be allowed to pick children up unless a school issued tag is visible in the car.** If you need additional tags for other family members picking up your child, please ask your child's teacher. **Parents will not be allowed to walk up and pick children up from the gate at parent pick-up.** Parents attempting to do so will be directed to the front office where a member from CCPK will retrieve your child and escort him/her safely to them. All people picking up your child will have to be listed on your registration forms and ID will have to be presented.

Early Pick-Up

Student safety is a priority for Crisp County Schools, therefore Crisp County School System has board approved a procedure that prohibits change in student transportation and student pick-up thirty (30) minutes before (or prior to) the end of the school day. For Crisp County Pre-K this means that students **MAY NOT** be picked up after 2:00 and the school **WILL NOT** accept changes in student transportation after 2:00.

Picking your child up from inside the building

Coming in to pick up your child from inside the building causes a lot of confusion and is not a safe practice. For the safety of your child, we would rather you pick your child up from the parent pick-up area. **No parents will be allowed to go directly to the child's room for parent pick-up.** Children will be brought to the parent pick-up area at 2:45 at the rear of the school. **No children can be checked out or picked up between 2:00 and 2:30 for the safety of our children and staff.**

Change In Normal Transportation

If there is a change in the normal procedure for your child to go home, **you must contact the office,** by note, or by phone call 276-3410 before 2:00 p.m. to ensure that it is clear how the child is to get home. This will allow the office personnel ample time to make the necessary adjustments before the buses arrive. Parents will be asked to provide information which will be recorded and given to the teacher before the end of the day. Only a legal parent/guardian can make changes to a child's transportation.

Transportation

The Crisp County Pre-K Program is open from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Each child is expected to be in the classroom by 7:45 a.m. and picked up by 3:00 p.m.

It is the parent's responsibility to get the child to the bus stop or to school on time. Buses stop at designated bus stops. An adult or person 13 years or older must escort the child to and from the bus. Parents must ensure that their children are at the bus stop on time in the mornings and the parents or a designated representative must be on time in the afternoon to receive their children.

Only the parent/guardian or designated representatives will be allowed to pick a child up from the bus stop or school. ***No exceptions to the rule will be permitted.*** We will ask for a picture ID if we do not recognize the person picking up a child.

Dress Code

Each child should have a ***change of clothing*** left at school to be used for emergencies. All clothing should be clearly marked with the child's full name. Children should wear ***washable clothing*** that they will be comfortable in at school. Children should wear suitable shoes for running, jumping, climbing, and other playground activities. ***BOYS MAY NOT WEAR EARRINGS. MOHAWKS AND HAIRCUTS WITH SYMBOLS, LETTERS, OR OTHER MARKS ARE NOT PERMITTED.***

Toys

Toys are provided at the center for the children**.** ***Do not*** send toys to school with your child. Teachers may, on rare occasions, allow an item to be brought to the class for educational purposes or for a special activity. Otherwise, ***please keep personal toys at home.***

Naptime

A vital part of the Pre-K instructional day is rest time. As part of our daily schedule, rest will be scheduled for an hour daily. If your child does not sleep, quiet activities will be provided for your child. Each child must bring a blanket, or large towel to cover with for a nap. Please no nap mats. A cot sheet will be provided for the bottom. Covers will be sent home weekly for washing. Children are allowed to bring one small item of comfort for naptime to ensure they feel safe and secure while at school.

Lost Articles

Please put your child's name on his/her coats, sweaters, caps, backpacks/book bags, and all other personal items in order that we may help in returning lost items to the correct child. To claim lost items, please check with your child's teacher.

Snacks

If you choose for your child to bring a snack please read the following:

We don't have enough refrigerator space to keep snacks so please ensure you send items that need refrigeration in a lunchbox with an ice pack. Snacks should be healthy. Preferable snacks are fresh fruits and/or fresh vegetables, (something that grows on a tree or bush), fruit snacks, fruit cups, yogurt, cheese sticks, etc. **Candy, chips, gum, sodas, etc., should not be brought to school** unless

the teacher asks the students to bring them for special occasions. Snacks should be brought to school with the student, not delivered at a later time.

School Nutrition Program

The breakfast and lunch programs are designated to provide nutritious food which help develop healthy food habits. This year Crisp County School System will be participating in a program which will provide **free** meals to all children enrolled in the Crisp County Pre-K Program.

Parents are encouraged to take advantage of the free breakfast and lunch provided by the school. However, you may choose to bring your child's lunch. If your child brings lunch, it must be in a lunch box or brown paper bag.

Parents who send meals and snacks to school are encouraged to include only foods that meet the nutritional standards of the school nutrition program. Parents may provide foods of minimal nutritional value for their own child's consumption, but may not provide restricted items to other children at school. Carbonated beverages are not allowed in school cafeterias.

It is recommended that foods of minimal nutritional value, such as candy or fried chips, be reserved for special occasions as designated by the principal and not be routinely served, sold, or given away to students on the school premises by the school, school or non-school organizations, teachers, or any other person or group.

Consider portion size and nutrient content when selecting snacks. Current healthy snack guidelines per serving are:

- 200 calories or less for middle and high school students and from 125-150 calories for elementary students
- 35 percent or less calories from fat (except for seeds or nuts)
- Low in saturated fat
- Zero grams of trans-fat
- Sodium – No more than 360 mg sodium
- Fiber – At least one gram of dietary fiber

A snack can also be considered healthy if it meets at least four of the above guidelines and has at least 10 percent of the daily value of one or more major nutrients such as Vitamins A, C, and E, Iron, Calcium, Protein, and Fiber.

Illness

Children who are ill should not be brought to school**. Your child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.** If your child should become ill during the day, you will be called and asked to pick your child up. Anyone picking up a child from the school ***must sign the child out in the office.***

Photo/Video Release

When you registered your child for the Crisp County Pre-K Program you completed a registration form which included a photo/video release. If you did

not sign the photo release, teachers will follow up with parents/guardians. Photos taken at school can be used for press releases, the Crisp County School System Facebook page, reporting, and assessment of your child.

Field Trip Release

When you registered your child for the Crisp County Pre-K Program you completed a registration form which included a field trip release. The field trip release form allows your child to attend all field trips we take during the school year. Field trip dates and locations will be shared throughout the year.

Medication Policy

Medications may be administered under the following conditions:

1. Medication prescribed by a physician:
    A. Medication must be in the original prescription container
    B. Medication release form must be completed and signed by the legal guardian
    C. The parent or legal guardian must deliver the medication to the school

2. Non-prescription medication for five days or less:
    A. Medication must be in the original labeled container
    B. Medication release form must be completed and signed by the legal guardian
    C. The parent or legal guardian must deliver the medication to the school

3. Non-prescription medicine for more than five (5) consecutive days:
    A. Medication must be in the original labeled container
    B. Medication release form must be completed and signed by the legal guardian
    C. A statement from the child's physician authorizing the medication shall be required

These policies are designed to protect your child and our employees.

Medical Concerns

Chicken Pox:

- Chicken pox is **very contagious**. Children can spread the disease the **day before** the spots appear and until all the spots have become dry.
- If your child scratches the spots it can cause a scar or infection. Cut his/her fingernails very short to stop scratching.
- Oatmeal baths, such as Aveeno, may help the itching.
- Ask your doctor about giving Tylenol for fever and Benadryl for the itching.
- Do not take your child to school until the spots become dry. This usually takes about one week.

Ringworm:

- Ringworm looks like a red ring on the skin. It may itch or hurt.
- It is usually caused by a fungus.
- **RINGWORM IS VERY CONTAGIOUS. CHILDREN SHOULD NOT ATTEND SCHOOL UNLESS THE AREA INFECTED IS BEING TREATED. ANTIFUNGAL CREAM, SUCH AS TINACTIN CAN BE USED.**
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist about other treatments for ringworm.

Pink Eye:

- "Pink Eye" is a viral or bacterial infection of the eye.
- The eye may be red, sensitive to light, may itch, and may have thick drainage which becomes "crust-like".
- **Pink eye is very contagious! Do not bring your child to school if he/she has pink eye.**
- **Ask your doctor about treatment. Do not use Visine, or other (over the counter) eye drops.**

Bus Rules

Students shall observe the following rules while riding Crisp County School buses:

1. Students must practice acceptable conduct at all times.
2. Food or drinks must not be consumed on the bus.
3. Objectionable or dangerous objects are not permitted.
4. Smoking, chewing, and dipping is prohibited.
5. Drivers may assign seats to students.
6. When crossing a street is necessary, students should immediately cross in front of the bus in full view of the driver.
7. Students will keep arms and head inside the bus at all times.
8. Nothing is to be thrown from the bus.
9. STUDENTS MUST BE QUIET AT RAILROAD CROSSINGS.
10. The emergency door is to be used only at the discretion of the bus driver.
11. Students are to be at the bus stop at the scheduled time and to wait in an orderly manner.
12. The use of obscene language or gestures is prohibited.
13. Willful destruction or defacing school property is prohibited.
14. Students shall not operate the door or stoop arms of the bus.
15. Students failing to respond to corrections by bus drivers shall be reported to the school administration that may deny the students bus transportation. Improper bus conduct may result in bus suspension.

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Improper conduct on buses may result in that privilege being denied. At the beginning of the school year, a letter will be

sent home explaining the consequences for students who have inappropriate bus behavior.

Parent Workshops

Parent Workshops will be offered throughout the year. Your cooperation and participation at the workshops will greatly benefit you, your child, and the school. Notices will be sent home with each student prior to the workshops. **Parent Orientation is required by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.** We will host PAW Time (Parents are Wonderful) once a month on Fridays at 9:00. Always check your child's calendar which will be inside the folder that is sent home daily for the PAW Time date.

Internet Use

The Crisp County School System provides technology and internet access for students and faculty to use for educational purposes only. Site restricting software and procedures compliant with the "Child Internet Protection Act of 2000" (CIPA) are in place to reduce access to inappropriate websites and ensure the safety of our users, but the ultimate responsibility for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and

information sources belong to parents. To that end, the Crisp County School System supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their child's access to these resources. Our internet access is monitored by our teachers and paraprofessionals. Please notify your child's teacher if you do not want your child to have internet access.

ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

Crisp County Pre-K is committed to providing a safe learning environment and to promptly address any bullying behaviors. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated.

Restraint and Exclusion Procedures

All Crisp County schools support a positive approach with proactive strategies to address students with behavioral needs. Therefore, restraint and seclusion shall be used only when there seems to be an imminent risk of danger to the individual student or to others. Restraint and seclusion shall be used only as a last resort as an intervention choice. In the event that restraint or seclusion is used, the dignity, privacy, and safety of individuals shall be preserved. Restraint and seclusion shall be initiated only in situations that are identified as an emergency and shall be implemented only in a competent and responsible manner.

Crisp County Pre-K Parent Agreement/Acknowledgement Form

By signing below I agree to the following:

__I have read and understand the Crisp County Pre-K Student Handbook.

__I agree to send my child to school for 180 school days.

__I agree to have my child arrive on time to school. School starts at 8:00 AM daily. Early drop off is 7:30 AM. Tardy is 8:05 AM.

__I agree to send my child for the entire school day which runs from 7:45 AM to 2:30 PM daily.

__I understand that after 3 tardy or leave early days I will be contacted by the Parent Engagement Specialist for a parent conference.

__I agree to call the school and report any absences. I also agree to send a note and documentation for each absence my child has. I understand I will be contacted daily for any absence my child has.

__I agree to abide by the Parent Pick-up and Drop-Off rules. It is my goal as a parent to ensure the safety of my child, other children and CCPK staff.

__I agree to phone the school office by 2:00 PM daily for any transportation changes. I understand that changes can't be made after 2:00 PM.

__I agree to stop by the office and sign in and obtain a visitor's pass each time I plan to visit the school.

__I agree not to send toys to school. All of the learning materials your child needs are provided.

__I agree to read my child's communication folder DAILY and sign and return it in my child's book bag DAILY.

Student Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____