

2026-2027

Decatur County Pre-K Manual



The Learning Center

Welcome

Welcome to Decatur County Pre-K! We are so excited to have your child join us this year! We know they will have a wonderful year filled with lots of learning, growing, and making new friends!

This handbook helps explain our Pre-K program and procedures. We will notify you if we make any updates/changes to these during the school year.

Philosophy

The Decatur County Pre-K Program provides an educational program that integrates hands-on learning and activities into the curriculum. Our classrooms will offer a variety of activities to promote the development of language, literacy, writing and math skills, physical and social emotional skills in various domains to form the foundation for success in school.

-  Develop necessary language skills. This will help with cognition, understanding spoken language to communicate and solve problems and develop early literacy skills.
-  Establish relationships with other children and adults. This encourages friendships, cooperation with others, and learning social skills and rules that will help them as they get older.
-  Demonstrate confidence and independence.
-  Promote the physical development of fine motor and gross motor skills (small and large muscles). This helps children recognize the importance of healthy lifestyles.
-  Develop early literacy skills. This lays the foundation for reading and writing.
-  Develop math skills. Children will gain an understanding of numbers, shapes, quantities, sequencing, time, patterns and problem- solving.
-  Develop science skills. Hand-on activities will help children explore their senses; understand movement, weight, volume, and where they and animals live.
-  Understand social studies concepts. Children will gain a sense of their role in being a family member, discover how they are alike and different, learn how to get along and share responsibilities, follow rules and cooperate. They will also become aware of people in their community such as a police officer, firefighter, doctor, etc.
-  Explore the creative arts. Understand that they can be creative through art, music, and dance. They can imitate "real-life" through dramatic play by taking on roles of people in their life.
-  Report progress daily, weekly, and every nine (9) weeks. Teachers will capture a student's learning through observations, checklists, and work samples. Progress will be shared daily, weekly and twice (2) a year during parent teacher conferences held in the fall and late winter.

Goals

The Decatur County Pre-K Program provides a hands-on curriculum and experiences to ensure the success of each child in the areas of language, academic, sensory and socialization skills. The Pre-K program goals are to:

- 🐾 Engage and inform parents
- 🐾 Encourage effective communication between parents and the teacher
- 🐾 Provide a comprehensive curriculum that fosters a child's ability to learn in all content areas and build language and social skills required to be successful in the classroom and outside the classroom
- 🐾 Promote positive relationships with peers and adults
- 🐾 Align program and assessments with the *Revised Tennessee Early Childhood Developmental Standards for Four Year-olds*
- 🐾 Curriculum: Kaplan: Connect4Learning

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Operational Hours

The Decatur County Pre-K program begins at 7:45 am and ends at 2:30 at The Learning Center. The Pre-K program follows the regular school calendar.

Sign In/Sign Out Procedures

All Pre-K students must be signed in and out each day by their parent, guardian, or designated person by the custodial parent. This is in accordance with the "School Administered Child Care Rules, Chapter 0520-2-1". Parents/Guardians of a Pre-K student must walk him/her to the classroom each morning, sign him/her in and let the teacher and/or the assistant know that the child is present. Never leave your child alone without an adult in the room. When picking up your child, you must sign him/her out and make sure the teacher or assistant knows the child is leaving. **If an adult comes to pick up a student under the influence or is thought to place the child in imminent risk, then the student will not be released to his/her care and the Decatur County Sheriff's Department will be contacted.**

Dismissal Procedures

Your child will be released only to those persons authorized on the Student Emergency Contact Sheet. Your child **will not** be allowed to leave with an unauthorized person. It is the custodial parent or guardian's responsibility for providing court documents if there are any legal restrictions on persons from picking up or visiting a student. If there is a change in who is picking up your child, **you must notify the teacher in writing or by calling the school office.** Please keep all staff informed of any changes throughout the year, especially phone numbers. **REMEMBER** this is our only way to contact you when an emergency should arise.

After School Care

After school care will be provided for parents who work after the program's operational hours. There is a daily fee for the Extended School Program. For more information, please contact:

Michelle Haggard, Parsons Elementary 847-5916

There is a fee for afternoon care and full day care during breaks and holidays. Only Parsons Elementary provides day care during breaks and holidays. You must complete an enrollment form for Ms. Michelle for extended care during breaks and holidays. Afternoon care at Parsons Elementary School is \$5 for one child, \$8 for 2, \$12 for 3, \$16 for 4, and \$20 for 5. All accounts must be paid in full each week- Friday. If your child is staying at aftercare at the Learning Center, you must pay on Friday to the adult working that day. If there is a problem, please contact Ms. Michelle.

Custody

Parents who have custody issues should consult with an attorney regarding legal protection for their child. To assist us in protecting the rights for you and your child, please provide to the teacher and Pre-K director any court documents that are relevant to custody, visitation, and rights of parents.

Transportation

Decatur County Board of Education provides bus transportation to and from school. Your child will be picked up and dropped off only if an adult is present to receive the child. The bus driver will sign a document stating the child has gotten on and off the bus. The bus driver will only pick up at the address given to him/her from the director. Any change of address should be communicated to your child's teacher and she will notify the director.

Clothing

Please send a change of clothing to school for your child. These will be used in case of accidental soiling and spills.

Dress your child for play and according to the weather conditions. Your child will be extremely active indoors and outdoors on the playground.

"An opportunity for outdoor play shall be extended to children of all ages who are in care more than three (3) Daylight hours; when the temperature range, after adjustment for wind chill and heat index, is between Thirty-two (32) degrees and ninety-five (95) degrees Fahrenheit and not raining." **Chapter Section 0520-12-01- .09 Educational Activities C, Summary of Child Care Rules and Regulations Chapter 0520-12-0**

Birthdays and Holidays

The Pre-K program will have various celebrations throughout the year that relate to the curriculum. In addition, birthdays, Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day and End-of-Year parties are celebrated. If you want to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please contact your child's teacher for specific policies at each school.

Birthday parties will not be held during the instructional day. Please bring your treats in when you bring your child to school that morning.

Field Trips

Field Trips provide a wonderful extension to classroom learning. Parents will be informed about field trips through announcements, newsletters, and teacher notes. Permission slips must be completed in order for children to participate.

Family Engagement Session Schedule

Raising the next generation is a shared responsibility. When families, communities, and schools work together, students are more successful and the entire community benefits. Strong partnerships with families are key to children's school readiness and healthy development. **Parents are required to attend Parent Activity Sessions.**

Dates are subject to change. Notice will be given in time for you to make arrangements if dates do change.

August	Handbook/Child Abuse Training Parsons Elementary	5:30 PM - PES
September 8th	Parent Teacher Conference	2:00-6:00 PM Encouraged
October	Parent Activity Night - TBA	TBA Encouraged
December	Christmas Program	TBA Encouraged
January	Parent Activity Night - TBA	TBA Encouraged
February 16th	Parent Teacher Conference	2:00-6:00 PM Encouraged
March	Parent Activity Night - TBA	TBA Encouraged

May	Pre-K Completion Program	TBA Encouraged
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Attendance Tardiness and Early Dismissals

It is important for your child to attend school all day, every day. Please arrive on time and pick up your child on time. We are an early childhood education program and not a childcare center. Your child's day is scheduled for many learning opportunities that will help them meet the goals of our program and future success in school. Persistent tardiness and early dismissals result in valuable learning time that is lost and is subject to being dismissed from the program. A meeting will be set up with the Parent, Teacher, and Pre-K Director if a student has an excessive amount of tardiness or absences.

Safety Inclement Weather/School Emergencies

If the school is closed for inclement weather or other emergencies, please listen to the local radio station (WKJQ 97.3FM or information line 847-9797) and local TV stations for announcements in school closings. There will also be an announcement on our district website and district social media. The school system uses an automated phone system. Please **make sure that all numbers are current** in order to benefit from this service and so that you may be notified when school dismisses early.

Child Abuse Reporting

Any suspected incident of child abuse and neglect will be reported immediately to the Tennessee Child Abuse Hotline. **Everyone in Tennessee is a mandated reporter.** Tennessee Code Annotated 37-1-403(i) (1) requires all persons to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. "Any person who has knowledge of or is called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition shall report such harm immediately if the harm is of such a nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality abuse or neglect or that, on basis of available information, reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect."

Phone: 1-877-237-0004

Web: <https://apps.tn.gov/carat/> in non-emergency situations only.

Fax: 615-254-6018 for non-emergency situations only

Nutrition

The cafeteria will prepare regular breakfast, lunch, and snacks each day. Menus for breakfast and lunch will be on the Decatur County Schools app and your child's teacher will try to inform you of the menu as well. Breakfast and lunch prices are free this year so please encourage your child to eat and try new foods.

Extra juice is \$0.25 and milk is \$0.40 per carton. Parents must send a note stating their child can get extra milk or juice before they are allowed to get it.

If you plan on packing your child's lunch, then it must be brought in a lunch box or bag. **NO** fast food wrapped items, pizza boxes or soft drinks in a cup or can. **Please do not send anything that will spoil or that needs to be heated.**

Food Allergies

Food Allergies can be life threatening. We have several children with food allergies in Pre-K. Classroom teachers will discuss and post special precautions to help keep our classrooms safe for students with food allergies. If your child has food allergies or if you have any questions about a food product, please contact your child's teacher.

Health Illness or Sickness

If your child wakes up sick with a fever or upset stomach, please keep them at home. If your child gets sick at school, the nurse/principal will determine if they are too ill to remain at school. A child who experiences any of the following contagious symptoms will be sent home:

- A fever of 100.4 degrees or more
- Contagious skin or eye infections
- Diarrhea three times in the course of two hours
- Vomiting
- Profuse bodily discharge of any kind

Must be fever-free, diarrhea-free, and vomit-free for at least 24 hours without the aid of any medications such as Tylenol, Pepo, etc.

Other communicable diseases that require a child to stay home are as follows:

- Chicken Pox
- Measles
- Mumps
- Pink eye
- Impetigo
- Ringworms
- Pinworms
- Scabies or other parasitic conditions
- Flu
- Meningitis
- Fifth's Disease
- Covid

Emergency Procedures and Medication

Teachers and assistants have had training in First Aid and CPR, along with designated people in the school building, and have access to an emergency medical kit. A first aid kit is located in each classroom.

In case of a contagious disease, the procedures are as follows:

- The parent is contacted.

- The parent is asked to take the child home or to the doctor.

For more serious incidents or accidents:

- The school calls 911.

- The parent is notified.

If necessary, the student is sent with an accompanying adult to the hospital. Parents who object to the procedures contained in this policy shall submit to the Pre-K Director a written emergency plan for his/her approval.

ALL MEDICATION SHOULD BE GIVEN AT HOME. However, some students need medication on a regular schedule to receive the maximum benefit in treatment. *Written orders from a physician should contain the name of the drug, dosage, and the time the medication is to be given so the School Nurse can administer it appropriately.* Physician forms can be picked up at the school. Nonprescription medication such as Tylenol cannot be given to the student unless the parent comes to school and gives it to the child themselves. **Children are not to handle any medication.** Parents or Guardians must deliver the medication directly to the school. **All prescription drugs must be in the original container with the prescription label.**

Discipline

The policies and procedures concerning discipline are designed to promote the safety, health, and well-being of each child. The development of self-discipline, self-esteem, and responsibility is perceived as an ongoing process in a child's growth and is an integral part of school success. Our Pre-K uses the Pyramid Model in helping Pre-K students with social-emotional development. The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning Pyramid Model is a national resource center for disseminating research and evidence-based practices to early childhood programs across the country. Pyramid Model is focused on promoting the social-emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5. To support this goal, Pyramid Model has developed a conceptual model of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's social emotional competence and preventing and addressing challenging behavior.

Each Pre-K classroom has a set of rules and consequences that the student must follow every day. A copy of the rules and consequences will be given to each parent/guardian when your child starts school. **Corporal punishment is not permitted for Pre-K students.** Time-out and rewards such as praise, stickers, happy notes, happy faces, and the Treasure Box will be used. If severe behaviors continue, then a conference will be held with the parent/guardian, teacher, and Director of Pre-K. A behavior plan may be implemented. If severe behaviors continue, it could result in dismissal from the program.

Transitions to Kindergarten

1. Parents will be notified of Kindergarten Registration in the spring.
2. All Pre-K students will be able to meet the kindergarten staff and tour the school and kindergarten classrooms.

Grievance Procedures

These procedures have been designed to help resolve conflicts in an effective, professional manner. A positive approach combined with a professional demeanor will allow us to resolve conflicts in a climate of mutual support and cooperation. When conflict occurs, the following procedures are to be followed:

- Parents are encouraged to think about the situation and define the concern or problem. Parents should talk to the teacher first about the concern and try to resolve the problem by clearly communicating the concern and discussing various solutions.
- If the teacher cannot resolve the issue, the parent should contact Angela Inman, Pre-K Director. In the unlikely event that the parents and the Pre-K director cannot arrive at a satisfactory solution, parents may arrange to discuss their concerns with the Director of Schools.

Questions or Concerns

Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with the classroom teacher whenever they are experiencing children or classroom related problems. Every effort will be made to resolve the problem or, when indicated, make appropriate referrals to other agencies within the community. **Never use social media sites, texts, or email to send important information or discuss issues or concerns.** Communication should occur face to face, through written notes given directly to the teacher or direct phone calls.

If you have any questions regarding the Pre-K program, please contact the following people:

Angela Inman, Pre-K Director 852-3822

