

# PRESCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK

2025-2026

Dear Families,

On behalf of the entire preschool staff we take great pride in welcoming you and your child to Wapakoneta City Schools preschool program. We are looking forward to having you as a partner in education. Our staff recognizes the importance of the preschool years and strives to provide our students with a developmentally and exceptionally appropriate program that facilitates maximum learning for every student. As your child begins their educational journey, we are looking forward to working with your child and your family.

Sincerely,

Aaron Rex  
Superintendent

## **FOREWORD**

The Preschool Handbook was written for the following purposes:

- The handbook was written to answer frequently asked questions that parents of preschool students may have regarding the preschool program.
- The handbook was written to address the requirements of the Ohio Department of Education as it pertains to Preschool Program Rules Chapter 3301-37 Administrative Code 1-12.
- The handbook was written to comply with program standards for Step Up to Quality (SUTQ). With the passage of house bill 487 and Senate Bill 316 in July of 2012, all learning and development programs that receive funding from the Ohio Department of Education were required to participate in SUTQ. SUTQ is a tiered quality rating and improvement system.



**DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to provide a caring place to develop responsible, productive citizens.

**DISTRICT VISION STATEMENT**

Wapakoneta City Schools will be the leader in providing excellent learning experiences for our students.

**PHILOSOPHY**

WCS is committed to providing a nurturing, secure, play-based educational setting for young children and their families. We believe that all children are capable of learning when provided with developmentally/exceptionally appropriate learning opportunities that utilize a combination of play and research-based, student-focused instruction.

Developmentally appropriate practice embraces the understanding that each child is unique and has their own pattern of growth and development. The environment, curriculum, materials, and staff must be responsive to the individual interests and abilities of each child. Differing levels of ability and development are expected, accepted, and used to design appropriate learning activities.

The preschool's environment of active play is designed to stimulate and challenge students at a variety of developmental levels. We believe children learn through meaningful play. Our play-based learning opportunities integrate the physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, self-help, and aesthetic areas of development.

Our staff is well-versed in the use of research-based student-focused instructional strategies. It is our belief that our staff can best facilitate learning when capitalizing on those teachable moments that occur within the context of the child's self-directed play or within the context of developmentally appropriate teacher-initiated activities.

Wapakoneta preschool staff believe that when families are engaged in the child's education, the child's learning is enhanced, increasing school readiness and future academic success.



**PROGRAM OVERVIEW****PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND PEER ROLE MODELS**

All school districts in Ohio are required to provide services for students with disabilities who are three to five years of age. Children with special needs are served through a continuum of program options in the least restrictive environment appropriate for the child. Specialized instruction and intervention services are provided for each child in accordance with a team-developed Individualized Education Program (IEP). Related services include speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and transportation. Itinerant services in an early childhood education setting are provided when appropriate based on a child's educational needs.

Eligibility for the Special Education Preschool Program requires that children:

- Are three to five years of age and not yet compulsory school age
- Demonstrate a disability/exhibit significant delays
- Students with special needs demonstrate documented deficits in one or more of the following areas: communication, motor, social-emotional/behavioral functioning, cognitive, adaptive behavior, hearing, or vision as determined by a multidisciplinary team through an Evaluation Team Report

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS****Itinerant Program (For students with special needs)**

The WCS itinerant program is designed to assist preschool students with identified disabilities in their early childhood setting. The itinerant placement option may include the services of a traveling itinerant teacher (a minimum of four hours per month) and/or related services of speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and/or physical therapy. The child's Individualized Education Program team will determine goals and objectives and the supports/services needed for the child to make progress on the goals and objectives. The itinerant teacher provides a combination of direct and consultative services to support the child's progress.

**1/2 Day Early Childhood Classroom (For students with special needs and peer role models)**

Preschool students with special needs and peer role models participate in our center-based classrooms for 3 hours for four days per week during an AM or PM session. Please check the district website for site locations and hours for each site. Up to 16 children may participate in the classroom. Each room may contain up to 8 students with special needs and up to 8 peer role models. Each preschool classroom is staffed with an Early Childhood Intervention Specialist and a minimum of one teaching assistant. Additional classroom assistants may be assigned if the needs of the students in that room necessitate additional staffing. Speech language therapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists are assigned to classrooms as prescribed by the Individualized Education Program (IEP).



**PEER MODEL CRITERIA**

Peers serve as models of age-appropriate skills for children demonstrating delays in their development. For this reason, it is critical that peers demonstrate the skills listed below.

- Meet age criteria on peer application
- Completely toilet trained
- Separates easily from parents
- Able to follow rules and routines
- Attends to adult-guided activities
- Plays with a variety of toys appropriately
- Is able to play beside and/or with other children while sharing the same bin of toys
- Verbally interacts with peers in play situations
- Speaks in clear English sentences and can comprehend and answer simple questions
- Speech is clear and understandable by unfamiliar adults.

**ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF PEER ROLE MODEL PROGRAM**

- Parents must complete an application for a peer model space. WCS has a limited number of peer role model spaces. Acceptance into the program is not guaranteed. Please check the district website for the peer model application and application instructions.
- Peer role models must pay a monthly tuition. Please check district website for tuition costs

RESEARCH OVERWHELMINGLY SUPPORTS THE BENEFITS OF AN INCLUSIVE SETTING FOR BOTH STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND PEER ROLE MODELS. Many of our placement options for students with special needs include peer role models.

**Students with Special Needs benefit from exposure to peer models.**

Children with special needs learn through observation and the practice and modeling the behavior of their peers. As children with special needs observe and interact, the peer models are providing a model of age-appropriate skills in social, behavior, play, speech, language, and motor development.

**Peer role models benefit from the peer program in many ways.**

- Peers have opportunities to interact with children with a variety of special needs. Children learn compassion, tolerance, empathy, and to accept/celebrate differences and similarities among the children in the classroom.
- The WCS preschool teachers hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree and are licensed to provide services for both regular education and special education students. The teachers are trained to be responsive to the individual abilities and interests of all children. Differing levels of ability and development are expected, appreciated, and considered when designing appropriate learning activities for students with special needs and peer role models.
- Class sizes are small with low student-to-teacher ratios. Our classrooms are staffed with a minimum of one teacher and one assistant. Depending upon the needs of the students in the classroom, additional assistants may be added to support students. Our early childhood options for peer models can serve up to 16 students (up to 8 students with special needs and 8 peer models).



- Preschool staff is knowledgeable about WCS Kindergarten expectations, standards, and the curriculum. The Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards used in all of our preschool classrooms are aligned to the kindergarten learning standards. All learning opportunities are designed to help children enter kindergarten ready to learn.

## FEES

### Tuition/Application fee/Late fee

In order to apply, all families will pay a non-refundable \$25 application fee. Students accepted as peer models will be charged at the rate of \$180 for full service programming (4-day attendance). We will make reduced tuition available to families who qualify on a sliding scale. Please see the chart below for the tuition scale. Proof of gross income must be provided. Please request forms if your family qualifies. Payment should be made on a monthly basis. Make checks payable to the **Wapakoneta City Schools**. Payment may be given to the teacher or mailed/dropped off at the Administration Building, 1102 Gardenia Drive. Tuition is due by the 1st of each month. If it is not paid by the 15th of each month, a \$25 late fee will be applied. Two months of unpaid tuition will result in a child being withdrawn from preschool at the end of the 2nd month of non-payment. Tuition must be paid in full even if the child misses school due to illness, weather calamity or family vacation. Students with disabilities are not charged tuition, but pay a snack fee. \*If you choose to pay the total preschool tuition by 8/15/2025, you will receive a 3% credit.

### 2023 Federal Poverty Guidelines (Coverage Year 2024)

# in Household	100%	138%	150%	200%	250%	300%	400%
<b>1</b>	\$14,580	\$20,120	\$21,870	\$29,160	\$36,450	\$43,740	\$58,320
<b>2</b>	\$19,720	\$27,214	\$29,580	\$39,440	\$49,300	\$59,160	\$78,880
<b>3</b>	\$24,860	\$34,307	\$37,290	\$49,720	\$62,150	\$74,580	\$99,440
<b>4</b>	\$30,000	\$41,400	\$45,000	\$60,000	\$75,000	\$90,000	\$120,000
<b>5</b>	\$35,140	\$48,493	\$52,710	\$70,280	\$87,850	\$105,420	\$140,560
<b>6</b>	\$40,280	\$55,586	\$60,420	\$80,560	\$100,700	\$120,840	\$161,120
<b>7</b>	\$45,420	\$62,680	\$68,130	\$90,840	\$113,550	\$136,260	\$181,680
<b>8</b>	\$50,560	\$69,773	\$75,840	\$101,120	\$126,400	\$151,680	\$202,240

For households with more than 8 add \$5,140 for each additional person. Source: <https://aspe.hhs.gov>

Eligibility for premium tax credits for 2024 based on 2023 guidelines. FPL = Federal Poverty Level

### Meals

Parents of students on an IEP who attend classes in WCS buildings are charged a snack fee of \$1.50 per day paid in minimum increments of \$20. Typically developing students are not charged a meal fee as it is part of the tuition payment.



## MEDICAID SCHOOL PROGRAM

We attempt to access as much State and Federal grant dollars and special funding as possible. With ongoing budget cuts and increased costs, our school districts vitally need all additional funding possible to help us maintain and improve the quality programs that we offer our students. We owe it to the taxpayers and citizens of this county to bring all available State and Federal dollars into our county that we can.

One such source that we are actively seeking funding from is the Ohio Medicaid School Program, also known as MSP. This program allows Ohio School Districts to receive Federal Medicaid reimbursement for certain therapies that are provided by licensed therapists to students that have Medicaid insurance. In accordance with the "Individuals with Disabilities Act" (IDEA), we make every attempt to notify parents of our intent to seek this special funding when eligibility requirements are met.

The child's Protected Health Information (PHI) will only be shared with ODJFS, ODEW and Program Auditors. If you do not want to give permission to share your child's information, please print off the form and return it to Charlotte Schippel at 1102 Gardenia Drive, Wapakoneta, OH 45895. If we do not receive a form, we will take that as consent to bill. If you have any additional questions, please contact our Medicaid Billing agent, Healthcare Billing Services, Inc. at (740) 653-6711 between the hours of 9 a.m.—5 p.m. if you have any questions. HBS will be more than happy to assist you and answer any questions you may have.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival and dismissal times require the careful attention of the classroom teacher and assistant(s). Staff is unable to answer questions or conference with parents during arrival or dismissal. Please send a note or call the school if you wish to discuss something with your child's teacher, assistant, or therapists. Your child's safety is our primary concern during arrival and dismissal.

### **ARRIVAL**

Children should arrive within the window of time indicated by the child's teacher. If you are transporting your child to school, you must escort him/her into the building and wait with your child in the area designated by the teacher. Each building may have a different procedure and your teacher will inform new students of arrival and dismissal procedures during Open House or an individual class visit. The parent/guardian is responsible for managing the child's behavior in the school environment until the teacher or classroom assistant arrives to pick up the child from the designated location.

### **DISMISSAL**

Children will only be released to assigned bus drivers, parents/guardians, or those individuals who are designated on the release form. If someone else is picking up your child, please send a note or call the school. Those individuals unfamiliar to classroom staff may be asked to show identification.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is available **only for preschool students with special education needs** who qualify as a **related service** on their **IEP**. **The mid-day routes** for our typical peer models will receive transportation at the 11:00 am dismissal and 11:30 am arrival time. Parents must complete the transportation section in **Final Forms** when requesting services. Parents can choose to **transport their child**.

### **Transportation Logistics**



- Students receiving transportation as a related service will either ride a preschool-only bus or an elementary bus, which is determined by our Special Ed Department or WCS Transportation Director.
- Routes may be **up to an hour in length** due to the complexity of transporting students to multiple preschool sites.
- **Preschool enrollment grows throughout the year**, meaning **routes and times may change** as new students are added.
- Transportation includes **specialized equipment, vehicle adaptations, and the use of transportation aides if necessary**.
  - **Lap Seat:** A lap seat is a seat with a safety belt that goes across your lap to keep you safe while the bus is moving.
  - **Safety Seat Belt:** A seat belt that goes across your lap and sometimes across your shoulder to keep you safe in your seat during the bus ride.
  - **Harness:** A harness is a special type of seat belt that goes over your shoulders and around your waist to keep you extra safe.
- ❖ The determination of what transportation supports a student requires is made by the **IEP team** based on the student's individual needs. The decision considers factors such as safety, mobility, and specific support requirements to ensure the student's well-being during transport.

### Route & Placement Changes

- **Transportation changes** may take up to **five (5) business days** to process.
- If a student's **transportation location changes**, their school placement **may also need to change** if the new location is outside of the assigned preschool attendance boundary.

### Alternate Pick-Up/Drop-Off Requests

- Some children may require transportation **to or from a location other than their home** (e.g., a daycare or alternate caregiver).
- Requests for **alternate transportation** will be reviewed by the **WCS Transportation Director**, considering:
  - The **location** of the alternate pick-up/drop-off.
  - The **existing bus routes** and availability.
  - The **number of students** and **length of the route**.
- **Parents are responsible** for confirming whether a **daycare's transportation service** can pick up or drop off their child.
- WCS can transport students **to and from daycares within district boundaries only** if **no other parental or private transportation options are available**.

### Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures for ALL students

Arrive on time for drop-off and pick-up.

- **Park only in designated areas** (not in bus or handicap zones without authorization).
- Notify the school **in writing** if someone other than the parent will be picking up the child.
  - This individual **must be listed on the authorized pick-up form** and present **photo ID**.
- **Children will not be dropped off without a parent or authorized adult present**.
  - If no one is available at drop-off, the child will be taken back to the school, and parents must pick them up promptly.
  - **Follow building specific procedures**

### Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedure



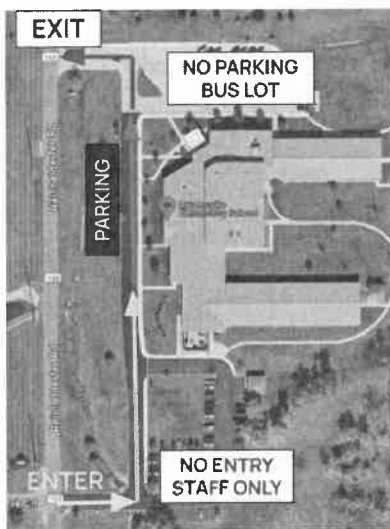


- During arrival, preschool parents need to walk their children to a preschool staff member at the front doors of the building. Preschool parents/guardians are not able to utilize the drop off line.
- During dismissal, preschool parents need to pick up their children from the preschool staff member at the front doors of the building. Preschool parents/guardians are not able to utilize the pick up line.

### Drop-Off & Pick-Up:

- **AM Drop-off:** 7:40 am
- **AM Pick-up:** 11:00 am
- **PM Drop-off:** 11:30 am
- **PM Pick-up:** 2:30 pm

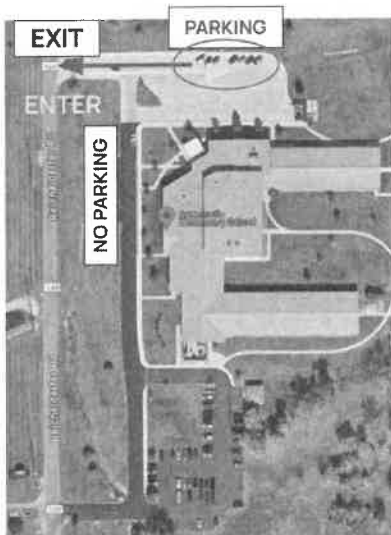
### Cridersville Elementary AM and PM Drop-Off: Procedures



#### Student Drop Off Procedures

- You will need to follow the South entrance (**yellow** arrow)
- Turn left at the 1st driveway (do not enter the staff parking lot)
- Student drop off is along the **pink** line as indicated on the picture. This is the same location where students are picked up after school.
  - If you need to park and walk your student in, please use the locations marked in **blue**
- Exit following the **red** line
- Additional information
  - Don't pass other cars
  - Stay in 1 single file line
  - The line will move quickly
  - Police will be present
- Busses will use the front parking lot to drop off and pick up students
- Preschool will follow the same routine for both AM & PM drop off
- Thank you for your cooperation in helping the process run smoothly!

### Cridersville Elementary PM Preschool Student Pick Up Procedures ONLY



#### PM Preschool Student Pick Up Procedures ONLY

- You will need to enter the North entrance and follow the (**yellow** arrow). You will also exit the same way you came in (on the **red** arrow), out of the North exit. Students will be dismissed at 2:25 pm
- Preschool teachers will walk students to the parent(s)/guardian(s) for drop off. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must buckle students into vehicles. Once students are buckled, vehicles must exit the way they entered.
- Vehicles must leave the parking lot prior to the buses. If the buses start to exit the parking lot, parent(s)/guardian(s) must wait until buses leave.
- If a preschool student has an older sibling that is also being picked up, both students will follow the standard pick up procedures that are already in place. They will report to the gym and be escorted to the driveway parallel to Reichelderfer Road.
- Additional information
  - Don't pass other cars or pull out in front of buses
  - Stay in 1 single file line, close to the curb
  - Police will be present
- Thank you for your cooperation in helping the process run smoothly!



For transportation-related questions, please contact the **WCS Transportation Department** at **Dorinda Schmerge (419) 739-2912**.

For **Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures** questions, please contact the building principal Brooke Seger Wapakoneta Elementary School **(419) 739-5000**. Kyle Cutnaw Cridersville Elementary School **(419) 739-3000**.

---

## **ATTENDANCE**

When your child attends preschool alongside typically developing peers, it's your decision as a parent. However, our preschool program is popular, and when a child is frequently absent without a good reason, it keeps other kids on the waiting list from joining.

If a child has a disability and needs special instruction to make progress, we work with parents to figure out how much time they should spend at school each month to achieve their goals outlined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Regular attendance is crucial for this to work effectively.

We understand that children get sick and sometimes have to miss school, but being there most days is important for them to get the most out of preschool and for the routines of the class to stay consistent. We believe attendance expectations should be similar to what Ohio Law defines for school-age children.

According to Ohio Law, schools must take action if a child in grades K-12 is habitually absent. Since preschoolers attend half days, we consider a child habitually absent if they miss 15 or more consecutive hours without a good reason, 21 or more hours in one month, or 36 or more hours in a school year.

With these things in mind, all preschool families are expected to abide by the following attendance policy:

1. Students in our preschool program are expected to attend school daily and on-time.
2. When a student is absent, the parent must call the school to report the reason for absence. This policy is in place for the safety of our students.
3. In the case of habitual truancy the following actions will be taken:

### **ABSENCE THRESHOLDS**

### **ACTION**

Student misses 19 hours of school in one month or 34 or more hours in one school year

- Excessive absence notification letter is mailed to parent

Student misses 36 hours of school in one school year

- Absence Intervention Conference is scheduled with parent
- School and parent identify barriers to attendance and determine potential solutions
- Absence Intervention Plan is completed and signed by school and parent



Student misses 50 hours of school OR parent fails to attend Absence Intervention Conference

- Typically Developing Students may be discharged from preschool
- Students with Disabilities may be reported to Children's Services as not attending school could be considered educational neglect. As school employees are mandated reporters we must report all suspicions of abuse and/or neglect

### REPORTING AN ABSENCE

When a student is absent from school, the parent should notify the building office of the student's absence and the reason for the absence. If an extended absence is planned, parents should send a note or email to the teacher indicating the dates the student will be absent and the reason for the absence.

### SHOULD I KEEP MY CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL TODAY?

It is important that students are not sent to school if they experience a fever (100 degrees F or above), vomiting, diarrhea, and/or persistent cough within the last 24 hours. Please keep your child home until the child is symptom-free for 24 hours without the benefit of any medication. If a child returns to school and remains ill, parents will be called. If you and the other people on your emergency contact list are unavailable and therefore unable to be reached, please designate a person we can call temporarily in the event of an illness or accident and notify the office of this change in writing.

### WITHDRAWAL FROM PRESCHOOL

When withdrawing a preschool student from WCS preschool, parents must notify the building office, preferably in writing/email. If the student is receiving special education services, the parent may want to provide information about where the family is moving to and sign the documents needed to transfer the child's Evaluation Team Report (ETR) and Individualized Education Program (IEP). Should a family move into the district, they will sign a copy of the records release form when they complete their child's registration. The board office will fax/email the last school which the child attended to procure appropriate records. Any records received will be sent to the school building where the child attends and the teacher will be notified.

### SCHOOL CLOSINGS/CALAMITY DAYS

In the event of inclement weather, school delays and closings will be posted on social media. Delay and closing information will also be reported using the district's automated phone system, the email notification system, the local television stations, and the radio stations.

**When WCS is closed for the day**, all preschool programs are also closed for the day.

**In the event of a two-hour delay**, AM: 10-11:30 and PM: 12:15-2:30

**In the event of a three-hour delay**, all preschool programs are closed for the day.

**There are rare occasions, when weather is worsening as the day progresses, when the PM session may be canceled.** In the event of the closure of the PM session, parents will be notified by preschool staff via a telephone call and/or email.

### DISTRICT SAFETY PLAN

In case of an emergency, district personnel will follow the District Safety Plan. This plan specifies steps to be followed should an emergency arise that threatens the well-being of students, staff and/or necessitates



the public utilization of school property. In addition to the steps outlined in the District Safety Plan, our staff routinely trains on many of these procedures. The drills include, fire, tornado, and lockdown. In the event of a lockdown, parents will be notified via email notification. If the situation causes a delay in the start of school or a change in release time, parents will be notified using the district's automated calling system. Parents are urged to make arrangements with a neighbor or friend so that their child will have a place to go in case of an emergency if a parent/adult is not home.

## **HEALTH**

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY**

- All preschool teachers and assistants shall receive a copy of the program's communicable disease policy for review upon employment. The parent of the child enrolled in a center shall be provided access to the program's written communicable disease policy.
- All WCS preschool teachers and assistants are required to attend communicable disease training. The training includes recognizing the signs and symptoms of illness, hand-washing procedures, and disinfection procedures.
- All classrooms must post the "Child Daycare Communicable Disease chart": (September 2009, [www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms](http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms) for appropriate management of suspected illnesses.)

**The program immediately notifies the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness is immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent or guardian:**

- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a twenty-four-hour period);
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;
- Difficult or rapid breathing;
- Yellowish skin or eyes;
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) eye discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain;
- Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness;
- Untreated infected skin patch(es);
- Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool;
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature;
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation;
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing; or
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness.

**A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness is immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be carefully watched for symptoms that require immediate discharge:**

- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Elevated temperature
- Vomiting



**When a child exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease, the preschool staff will adhere to the following guidelines:**

- The child will be isolated in a room or portion of a room not being used in the preschool program.
- The child will remain within sight and hearing of an adult at all times.
- No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
- The child will be made comfortable and provided with a cot or place to rest. If linens or blankets are used, the linens and blankets shall be laundered before being used by another child. After use, the cots/resting place shall be disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent, or if soiled with blood, feces, vomit, or other bodily fluids, the cots shall be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent.
- The child will be closely monitored for worsening symptoms.
- The child will be discharged to parent/guardian, or person designated by the parent/ guardian as soon as is practical.

**If there is a child in a classroom that has been diagnosed with specific communicable disease, letters notifying of possible exposure will be sent to all parents/guardians of children in that classroom.** Specific communicable diseases include diseases such as Conjunctivitis, Ringworm, Impetigo, Scabies, Chicken Pox, Lice, and Strep Throat.

**The following communicable disease must also be reported to the school nurse/designee:** Encephalitis, Hepatitis, Infectious Mononucleosis, Measles, Meningitis, Mumps, Polio, Reye Syndrome, Ringworm, Rubella, Scabies, and Whooping Cough.

### IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Your child must meet county and state health regulations for entrance to school, including compliance with state immunization laws. The school nurse checks health records each year. The school nurse will send you a reminder of the required immunizations your child still needs.

Immunizations for Child Care, Head Start and Pre-School Attendance:

Please follow the following link to ACIP Easy-to-read Immunization Schedule for Infants and Children  
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/downloads/parent-ver-sch-0-6yrs.pdf>

#### **Ohio Revised Code 5104.014, Division B:**

Each child's caretaker parent shall provide to the center, home, or in-home aide a medical statement, as described in division (D) of this section, indicating that the child has been immunized against or is in the process of being immunized against all of the following diseases:

1. Chicken pox	6. Influenza	11. Poliomyelitis
2. Diphtheria	7. Measles	12. Rotavirus
3. Haemophilus Influenzae type b	8. Mumps	13. Rubella
4. Hepatitis A	9. Pertussis	14. Tetanus
5. Hepatitis B	10. Pneumococcal disease	

#### **Ohio Revised Code 5104.014, Division C:**

A child is not required to be immunized against a disease specified in Division (B) of this section if any of the following is the case:

1. Immunization against the disease is medically contraindicated for the child;



2. The child's parent or guardian has declined to have the child immunized against the disease for reasons of conscience, including religious convictions;
3. Immunization against the disease is not medically appropriate for the child's age.

***In the case of influenza, a child is not required to be immunized against the disease if the seasonal vaccine is not available.***

#### **Ohio Revised Code 5104.014, Division D:**

The medical statement shall include all of the following information:

1. The dates that a child received immunizations against each of the diseases specified in division (B) of this section;
2. Whether a child is subject to any of the exceptions specified in division (C) of this section;
3. The medical statement shall include a component where a parent or guardian may indicate that the parent or guardian has declined to have the child immunized.

Follow the link below to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' Child Medical Statement

<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/findform.asp?formnum=01305>

-----  
Vaccine doses are only considered **valid** if administered according to the most recent version of the *Recommended Immunization Schedules for Persons Aged 0 Through 18 Years or the Catch-up Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 4 Months through 18 years who start late or Who Are More Than 1 Month Behind, as published by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.*

Vaccine doses administered **4 days** before the minimum interval or age are **valid** (grace period). Doses administered **5 days earlier** than the minimum interval or age are **not valid** doses and should be repeated as age-appropriate. **If MMR and Varicella are not given on the same day, the doses must be separated by at least 28 days with no grace period.**

**"Child" includes both of the following:** 1) An infant, toddler, or preschool age child; and 2) A school-age child who is not enrolled in a public or nonpublic school but is enrolled in a child day-care center, type A family day-care home, or licensed type B family day-care home or receives child care from a certified in-home aide.

**"In the process of being immunized"** means having received at least the first dose of an immunization sequence and complying with the immunization intervals or catch-up schedule prescribed by the director of health (in accordance with the ACIP catch-up schedule).

#### **CLINIC VISIT PROCEDURES - SICK OR INJURED AT SCHOOL**

If a teacher or assistant feels a preschool student is ill, they will bring the child to the clinic or request the nurse come to the classroom to have their temperature taken. If the child is ill enough, the nurse will contact the parents to come and get the child. The child will be supervised in the clinic until a parent or authorized person arrives to pick up the child. Nurses and clinic aides keep a log of all clinic visits and parent notifications.

If a child is injured, the child will be taken to the office/clinic for further determination by the office staff and/or nurse. In the case of severe illness or injury, the child will be brought directly to the office or 911 will be called.

#### **MEDICAL CONCERNS AND FIRST AID**



It is the desire of the School District to provide the best possible care for the students when sickness or injury occurs. It is important that there be procedures in place to outline existing practices which are aimed at providing routine care in relation to a minor injury or illness and to monitor students with chronic medical conditions or food allergies as needed to allow the student to fully participate in the academic process.

## MEDICATIONS

The board wishes to cooperate fully with students, parents and the medical profession to assure that any student receives required medication during the normal school day at the time the student needs it. It is preferred that medications be taken by students at home; however, it is recognized that certain circumstances may necessitate taking medications during school hours. Guidelines have been established to maintain control of authorized drugs within the schools and to ensure the health and welfare of the students.

For purposes of this policy, "prescription medication" shall include all medicines prescribed by an Ohio licensed health professional authorized to prescribe medication. "Nonprescription" medications shall include all over-the-counter drugs, preparations, and/or remedies.

All prescription medications and certain non-prescription medications, such as rectal suppositories, injections, or medications to be given by a gastric tube, must be prescribed and administered according to the procedures taught by a licensed school nurse to staff designated by the Superintendent. Effective July 1, 2011, only employees of the Board who are licensed health professionals or who have completed a drug administration training program conducted by a licensed health professional and considered appropriate by the Board may administer to a student a drug prescribed for the student.

Training will be provided to staff as needed and/or as required by law.

In accordance with O.R.C. 3313.713, prescription medications must be kept locked in the office and administered by school personnel.

Any parent/guardian requesting the school to administer prescribed and over-the-counter medication to a student must comply with the following:

1) Prescription Medicine: A Physician's Medication Procedure Request Form and Parent's Medication Procedure Request Form must be completed, signed, and dated by the physician and on file in the office before any prescription medication will be given.

2) Over-the-Counter Medication: Complete a Physician's Medication Procedure Request Form. A physician must sign and date this form for the administration of over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, Motrin, Benadryl, cold medicine, diaper cream/ointment, etc. Parent/guardian must provide written consent and waiver of liability by completing the Parent's *Non-Prescription Medication Request Form*.

Preschool students are not permitted to carry or to self-administer non-prescription medication.

Parents/guardians are to bring prescription and over-the-counter medication to school in the original container and medication must be kept in the clinic. Medication forms are available in the office and on the district website. It is the teacher's responsibility to send the student to the clinic at the appropriate time for the administration of medication.

## PARENT PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

### REQUIRED FORMS

In order to obtain and maintain an operating license, the preschool classrooms in WCS must comply with the Ohio Department of Education Licensing Rules and the Step Up to Quality standards. To be in compliance, each child enrolled in preschool must complete the following forms:



**Health/Medical Forms**

- **Medical Statement:** The medical statement form OR a copy of immunization records can be provided. The form or shot records are due upon enrollment and must be updated when additional immunizations have been administered.
- **Annual Medical Diagnostic Screening Form:** The form documents that a physical that meets all licensing requirements has occurred within the last year. The form must be dated and signed by a physician. The form is due within 30 business days of entrance to the preschool program and annually-- within 13 months of the date of the last physical.
- **Annual Dental Screening:** The form documents that a dental screening has taken place. The form must be dated and signed by a dentist. The form is due within 60 business days of entrance to the preschool program and annually--within 13 months of the last dental screening.

The health/medical forms will be provided to the parent prior to the child beginning school. Please complete and submit the forms according to the instructions and deadlines on each form.

The child's building clinic staff will track compliance with the medical/health mandates. Parents will receive letters requesting completion and submission if forms are not received by the mandated deadlines. When forms are about to expire, you will receive a letter with the deadline, new forms for completion and directions for submission.

**Additional Forms That Must Be Completed Annually**

For students new to preschool, the following forms will be provided during enrollment. For students returning for another year of preschool, the following forms will be provided as an attachment in an email. The forms are sent along with notification of your child's preschool site assignment and teacher assignment. If the family does not have access to email, the notification and forms will be sent via US mail.

- Emergency Contact and Child Release
- Emergency Medical Authorization Form
- Photography/Publication Release
- Family Roster Release
- Student Information Form

**CLASSROOM ROSTER**

A class roster of parent/child names, addresses and phone numbers is available to the families in your child's class. It is your choice to be on the roster or not. Parents can be a great support and resource for each other. The roster can also provide contacts for families to get students together outside of school.





**CLASSROOM SUPPLIES**

The supply list will either be provided to the family during Open House/classroom visit prior to the child's start date or via email along with the site/teacher assignment.

**SNACKS**

Snacks are provided by the district. A snack calendar will be provided by teachers each year.

**DIAPERS/WIPES**

All peer models must be completely toilet-trained to be considered for acceptance as peer role models. If a peer role model has five or more accidents during school hours, a meeting will be held with parents to discuss readiness to continue as a peer role model.

If your student with special needs wears diapers or pull-ups, please send in a full package of diapers/pull-ups and wipes labeled with your child's name. Your teacher or assistant will notify you when the child needs additional diapers and wipes.

We wish to *support* your potty-training efforts. We will place your child on the toilet according to a schedule and/or remind the child to use the toilet. Please note that for sanitary and health reasons, if your child is wearing underwear and continually has accidents at school, we **MUST** place your child in diapers or pull-ups until the child is able to remain accident free for the duration of the school day.

**PARENT DONATIONS**

Teachers will often have a wish list or send home requests for items needed for arts and crafts projects, theme-related play or day-to-day operations (hand soap, paper towels, etc.) in the weekly newsletter. Thank you for your support of our preschool program and students through your donations.

**STAFF GIFTS**

We consider the presentation of gifts to a professional staff member by students and their parents an undesirable practice because it tends to embarrass students with limited means and gives the appearance of currying favor. Such compensation includes, but is not limited to, cash, checks, stocks, or any other form of securities, gifts and other such things of value (more than \$25).

The superintendent may approve acts of generosity to individual staff members in unusual situations. However, at no time may a staff member accept compensation from any other source, other than the Board, for the performance of his/her duties of his/her public employment, or as a supplement to his/her compensation.

**CLOTHING**

Please send in a change of clothing in a large plastic baggie marked with your child's name. If your child becomes wet or soiled during the day, our staff will change the child's clothing and send home the original clothes in the child's backpack. Any wet or soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag.

Children should be properly clothed for daily outside play. Children may be taken outside for gross motor time when the temperature is 20 degrees Fahrenheit or above, the wind chill is 15 degrees Fahrenheit or above, and playground conditions permit safe play. Preschool teachers may decide to opt for indoor gross motor activities when the weather is cold or the playground is snowy.

Tennis shoes are preferred for preschool students. Our students engage in at least 20 minutes of gross motor activities daily. Our playgrounds have mulch and students often have difficulty on the playground if the student wears open-toed shoes, sandals or flip flops.

Many times preschool students engage in messy activities with paint, mud, water, markers, shaving cream, etc. Our staff covers the clothing with plastic smocks, but clothing will often come home with marks or stains. We purchase washable paint, markers, and other school supplies, but parents often report difficulty removing the stain unless the clothing is pre-treated with stain remover. Please do not send your child to school in clothing that you would be upset about if damaged or stained. Preschool is meant to be a messy place for exploration and fun.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent teacher conferences are scheduled two times annually and follow the district elementary conference schedule. If parents wish to meet with the teacher outside of the conference schedule, they are welcome to contact the teacher to schedule a conference/meeting.

### **ANNUAL IEP MEETINGS**

Annual IEP meetings are held for students with special needs. If parents wish to request an IEP prior to the annual review of the IEP, parents may contact the child's teacher to request an IEP meeting.

### **ONGOING COMMUNICATION**

Ongoing communication regarding classroom themes and learning activities occurs through weekly parent newsletters. Communication specific to your child may occur via notes, notebook exchanges, emails, phone calls, or face-to-face meetings.

### **PARENT VOLUNTEER/ CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES**

The Wapakoneta Preschool Program has a tradition of strong parent/school partnerships. We are fortunate to live in a community with a history of active and involved parents that have been willing to share their time and talents within our preschool classrooms. We value parent attendance at school events/parties and are thrilled when a parent is willing to volunteer.

Please keep in mind, there are some occasions when a particular classroom is not able to involve parents during parties and/or utilize parent volunteers due to the needs of the specific students in the classroom.



Some of our special needs students can become overstimulated when new people are in the environment and the routine is disrupted. Please check with your child's teacher to determine what type of participation/volunteer opportunities are available this school year in your child's room.

### **Volunteer Requirements**

#### **Guidelines/tips for observations, classroom visits and volunteer opportunities:**

1. We encourage parents to allow the child to attend preschool for a few weeks before observing, participating or volunteering in the classroom. Children naturally look to their parents for guidance and assistance. From the very first day, we want the child to participate in the activities designed to help the child understand routines/expectations, become comfortable with preschool and develop positive relationships with preschool staff. We find that when parents attend in the first few weeks of a child's experience, the child tends to resist participation in the activities that were selected to help the child make his or her transition from home to school.
2. When at all possible, we ask that you arrange for your observation or visit in advance. It is helpful for staff to prepare for your visit. Parental access to Wapakoneta City School's Preschool Programs adheres to the Ohio Administrative Code 3301-37-07, which states "Any parent of a child enrolled in the program shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation, to contact his child, evaluate the care provided by the program, the premises, or for other purposes approved by the director." Upon entering the building please stop at the office to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge.
3. Confidentiality is critical, especially for classrooms that provide services for children with special needs. Anytime you are present in a classroom, for any reason, you are required to maintain confidentiality during and after the visit. Please do not speak about a child with the staff, the child's parents or anyone else. Discussing any information about children obtained during any visit is never appropriate. Please respect all students and adults by maintaining strict confidentiality. If confidentiality is not honored, further opportunities to participate and volunteer may be eliminated for the parent(s) involved.
4. Follow the teacher's direction regarding your role during volunteer/visitation opportunities.
5. Please let the preschool staff handle all matters related to discipline/ behavior. Children in the classroom may have behavioral needs and a specific behavioral plan may be in place.
6. Your child will be excited about your school visit. Sometimes it is hard for the little ones to participate in activities when they are so excited about your visit. Please communicate the expectation that your child should be following the daily schedule with the other students. He or she should be encouraged to participate in all classroom activities and to sit/ play in the area designated by preschool staff. Your child will be so proud to have you see what he or she does during the preschool day.
7. Encourage the children in the classroom to be as independent as possible. For example, if a child asks you for help with a zipper, you could engage the zipper for the child and ask that the child pull up the zipper the rest of the way on her/his own.



8. Preschool staff is not able to conference/hold conversations about your child or answer questions during the time students are in session. When the children are present, the staff must devote their full attention to the students for safety and educational purposes. If you need to ask questions or have comments/concerns, preschool staff is happy to email, call, or arrange a meeting time to communicate with you outside of student hours. Preschool staff want to fully devote the time and attention needed to professionally address your questions, comments, or concerns.
9. At times, following a visit to school, you may have a concern related to another child. Due to confidentiality, our staff can't speak to you about other children. Preschool staff can tell you how concerns such as yours are generally addressed, but not how they will be addressed in a specific circumstance. For example: If you are concerned because you noticed a child taking a toy from another child, the teacher can't talk to you about how the situation will be addressed with that specific child, but instead, the teacher can share with you how taking toys from someone else is handled in the classroom when that behavior is demonstrated by any child.
10. If you have a question or concern about something observed in the preschool environment, please discuss this concern with a preschool staff member. You may email, call, or request a meeting to communicate your questions or concerns to a teacher, assistant and/or therapist. Preschool staff welcomes the opportunity to come up with appropriate strategies to solve problems and alleviate concerns. If you do not feel comfortable addressing questions or concerns directly with the teacher, assistant, or therapist on your own, you may set a meeting to discuss your questions or concerns with a supervisor present.
11. Parent volunteers can be of tremendous assistance to preschool staff by being an extra set of hands and another adult who is able to appropriately interact with students. A teacher may ask if you are willing to assist by conducting a table-top activity with an individual student or group of students. Also, children love it when adults facilitate play during center time. We want children to play with one another and encourage you to engage children in child to child interactions. You will find many new friends in preschool!
12. Help staff by being of assistance to a student. If a student needs assistance with something that he or she cannot do alone, offer assistance. Feel free to tie the shoe or assist a child with where the next puzzle piece may go. There are many opportunities to support students while encouraging learning and independence.
13. You must check with your child's teacher prior to taking pictures or videos in the classroom. Some parents choose not to have their child's picture taken and only the teacher will know each parent's preference. Please DO NOT post another child's picture on social networks without permission.
14. We hope the guidelines and tips help to make parent's time in our preschool classroom a success. Parent attendance at school events and willingness to volunteer is so appreciated. Staff recognizes that the excellence in our school system is due, in large part, to the involvement of our parents and their volunteer efforts.

## **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES**



**Wapakoneta City Family Engagement Activities**

**Annual Open House:** Families and children are invited to the Open House held in the evening before school begins. The Open House is meant to provide an opportunity for children and parents to meet staff and see the classroom/school before the first day of school. Open House helps students to be prepared for the first day of school, become familiar with the staff, interact with the toys/classroom materials and familiarize themselves with the facility. Parents and the child can stay for as much time as they would like.

**Wapakoneta City School's Family Education Information**

**Preschool to Kindergarten Transition Meeting for Parents of Students with Special Needs:** The two-hour transition presentation is held annually sometime during the month of February. The preschool supervisor and the special education director make a presentation regarding the transition process for students with special needs as they prepare for the exit from preschool and entry to Kindergarten. Topics include: Overview of the preschool to K transition process for special needs students, reevaluation process, special education services available in Kindergarten, Kindergarten registration, and Kindergarten expectations and curriculum information. Following the presentation, parents are given an opportunity to ask questions.

**Wapakoneta City Formal Family Engagement Model**

Wapakoneta City strongly believes that in order to address the district mission statement of facilitating maximum learning for each child, the preschool staff must develop meaningful relationships with the child's parents. Wapakoneta City preschool staff believe that when families are engaged in the child's education, the child's learning is enhanced, increasing school readiness and future academic success.

**The strategies below are used to:**

- Facilitate relationship building with families.
- Support families in developing or strengthening parenting skills.
- Value the family's role in the child's development.
- Provide links for families to access resources.
- Formal Family Engagement Strategies Used in Wapakoneta City Schools' Preschool:  
Wapakoneta City Schools' Preschool encourages family participation in decision making related to the child's education.
- Wapakoneta City Schools offers parents of special needs preschool students the opportunity to have input into the development of goals and objectives as a valued member of the IEP team.
- Parents of peers have the opportunity to develop annual goals for their child through the peer goal process.
- Additionally, parents have a chance to list preference for AM or PM sessions. If the child and teacher are returning to the same site, parents can request to remain with the same teacher or request a different teacher.
- Parents can choose what form of communication is preferred.

**Wapakoneta City Schools recognizes the importance of building relationships with families. WCS has designed effective forms of school to home and home to school communications about what is happening at school, what is happening at home and the child's progress.**

- Parents are offered the opportunity for two formal parent teacher conferences annually.



- It is Wapakoneta City Schools' policy that parents can request a formal or informal meeting or observation whenever the parent desires.

Throughout the years, preschool staff participate in ongoing communication in a variety of ways. Teachers use email, make phone calls, send messages through Class DoJo and meet upon parent requests or when the teacher has information she needs to communicate.

- Most therapists send home therapy notes on the day the child was seen by the therapist.
- All classrooms send home weekly newsletters regarding the weekly theme, learning activities, songs/books and learning targets for the week.
- Folders are checked daily for notes from parents.
- Frequent and positive communication from staff to parents is encouraged and valued.

**Teachers seek out information about their students' lives, families and communities in order to integrate this information into the curriculum and instructional practices.** Information from the parent is sought out through a variety of sources: the evaluation process, Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3, AEPS Curriculum Family Report, and Student Information forms. The teachers' choices for themes relate to learning more about the child, the child's family and cultural/ family customs and traditions. Common themes include: "All About You", Families, Cultural celebrations, etc.

**Wapakoneta City Schools seeks out information about what families/the community believes to be program strengths and program needs.** Wapakoneta City Schools' preschool completes an annual survey with families and the community. The survey helps the program to identify opportunities for improvement and set goals and objectives annually for addressing issues identified by parents/ the community.

**Wapakoneta City Schools places importance on creating and sustaining learning activities that extend the teaching of the program so as to increase the learning for each child.** Parents are encouraged to extend and share in learning opportunities. Weekly newsletters share the theme of the week. Parents have an opportunity to learn through the weekly newsletter what the child did at school and can repeat the experience at home. Books and songs are often listed in the newsletter. Activities are often described. Additionally, weekly therapy notes are provided by most therapists describing learning objectives addressed and activities used to address the learning objectives. Teachers must communicate with parents about strategies that are working at school. For example, many children use an individual picture schedule for transitions. Teachers often share these types of strategies and develop materials for home use. During parent teacher conferences and IEP meetings, teachers and parents discuss the child's progress and how to extend and facilitate progress at home.

**Wapakoneta City Schools supports the development of parenting skills.** Wapakoneta City Schools' preschool staff helps educate families about age appropriate expectations through staff/parent communications in the newsletters, sharing of health, educational and community resources and the provision of parent education opportunities such as curriculum night, positive discipline support, transition training. Wapakoneta City Schools is dedicated to identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen our preschool program. Often parents are able to share what is working at home or in private therapy. Our teachers and therapists request releases to collaborate with private therapists and service providers. When all parties involved in the education of the child are pulling in the same direction, maximum progress is facilitated. Families are educated about community resources to enhance learning opportunities.

**The program is dedicated to providing the teachers with the time, resources and education needed to develop an ongoing and comprehensive system for promoting family engagement.** Our preschool program provides Wapakoneta City preschool staff with extensive professional development opportunities and the resources needed to develop family engagement. Building administrators and supervisors have the expectation that high levels of parent support and communication are part of the Wapakoneta City culture.



## **STANDARDS, CURRICULUM, SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT**

### **PRESCHOOL EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In December 2011, Ohio was awarded the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant. To be awarded the funding, Ohio was required to have Early Learning and Development Standards in all Essential Domains of *School Readiness, Birth to Age 5*. These five domains included:

- Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Well-being and Motor Development
- Approaches Toward Learning
- Language and Literacy Development
- Cognition and General Knowledge

Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards describe key concepts and skills that young children develop during the birth-to-five-year period. Their purpose is to support the development and well-being of young children and to foster their learning. The standards promote the understanding of early learning and development, provide a comprehensive and coherent set of expectations for children's development and learning, and guide the design and implementation of curriculum, assessment and instructional practices with young children.

The standards present a continuum of learning and development from birth to age five in each of the domains. Because the infant/toddler years are marked by rapid developmental change, the standards are divided into three meaningful transitional periods: Infants (birth to around 8 months), Young Toddlers (6 to around 18 months), and Older Toddlers (16 to around 36 months). The standards during the preschool years describe those developmental skills and concepts children should know and be able to do at the end of their preschool experience.

The Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards were created as part of a collaborative effort of state agencies serving young children including Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Mental Health, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, and the Governor's Office of Health Transformation. The state agencies worked with national experts and writing teams made up of Ohio-based content experts and stakeholders to revise and expand the standards in the five developmental domains.

Ohio's revision of standards builds upon the strong set of existing standards in Ohio's Infant and Toddler Guidelines (for children birth to 36 months of age) and the Pre-Kindergarten Standards (for children ages 3 to 5). Ohio's *Infant and Toddler Guidelines* was the major source for the development of the infants' and toddlers' standards. Similarly, Ohio's *Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards* were revised and expanded in the Language and Literacy and Cognitive Development domains. The Cognition and General Knowledge standards were aligned with the kindergarten Common Core State Standards in English-Language Arts and Mathematics and Ohio's Revised Academic Content Standards in Science and Social Studies. Finally, the standards were reviewed and revised with particular attention to being appropriate for children with disabilities and for children with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Knowledge of the strengths and needs of each child is pertinent in order to implement differentiation strategies and culturally responsive pedagogy in a manner to help each child meet the standards.



## ORGANIZATION OF THE STANDARDS

The standards within each domain are organized according to strands, the developmental or conceptual components within each domain. Each strand contains one or more topics, the area of focus within each strand, and the standard statements, those concepts and skills children should know and be able to do for the different age-groups. Some topics reflect learning and development across the birth-to-five continuum, with standards for all age levels: infants, young toddlers, older toddler, and Pre-K, while other topics pertain only to a specific age-period. For example, some knowledge and skills such as the ability to identify and describe shapes or skills related to social studies and science emerge in preschool. Topics that address those competencies include standards only at the Pre-K level. Other topics such as *Self-Comforting* and *Social Identity* have standards only at the infant-toddler levels, because these foundational skills developed during the early years lead to more specific competencies at the preschool level.

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE DOMAINS

**Social and Emotional Development:** The standards for Social and Emotional development involve behaviors that reflect children's emotional growth and their growing ability to successfully navigate their social worlds through interactions with teachers and peers. These standards include a focus on children's developing abilities to regulate attention, emotions, and behavior, and to establish positive relationships with familiar adults and with peers. Research indicates that early skills of social competence and self-regulation are foundational to children's long-term academic and social success (National Research Council, 2008). Strands in the social and emotional domain are *Self and Relationships*.

**Physical Well-Being and Motor Development** standards address motor skills and health practices that are essential for children's overall development. These skills include the ability to use large and small muscles to produce movements, to touch, grasp and manipulate objects, and to engage in physical activity. These standards also describe the development of health practices that become part of children's daily routines and healthy habits such as nutrition and self-help. These skills and behaviors play an important role in children's physical well-being and set children on a path leading toward a healthy lifestyle. Healthy children are more likely to attend school, to be physically active, and to learn more effectively (Bluemenshine and others, 2008). The two strands in this domain are *Motor Development and Physical Well-Being*.

**Approaches Towards Learning** centers on the foundational behaviors, dispositions, and attitudes that children bring to social interactions and learning experiences. It includes children's initiative and curiosity, and their motivation to participate in new and varied experiences and challenges. These behaviors are fundamental to children's ability to take advantage of learning opportunities, and to set, plan, and achieve goals for themselves. This domain also includes children's level of attention, engagement, and persistence as they do a variety of tasks. These factors are consistent predictors of academic success (Duncan et al., 2007). Finally, children's creativity, innovative thinking and flexibility of thought allow them to think about or use materials in unconventional ways, and to express thoughts, ideas and feelings in a variety of media. The standards in the domain Approaches Toward Learning are organized in the following strands: *Initiative; Engagement and Persistence; and Creativity*.

**Language and Literacy:** The standards for language and literacy reflect knowledge and skills fundamental to children's learning of language, reading and writing. Young children's language competencies pertain to their growing abilities to communicate effectively with adults and peers, to express themselves through language, and to use growing vocabularies and increasingly sophisticated language structures. Early literacy skills include children's developing concepts of print, comprehension of age-appropriate text, phonological awareness, and letter recognition. Research has identified early skills of language and literacy as important predictors for children's school readiness, and their later capacity to learn academic





knowledge (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008). The Language and Literacy domain consists of the following strands: *Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing.*

**Cognition and General Knowledge:** This domain includes those cognitive processes that enable all other learning to take place, as well as children's knowledge of the social and physical world. This domain is organized into the strand, Cognitive Skills and those concepts and skills in **sub-domains, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science.**

**Cognitive Skills:** This strand refers to the underlying cognitive mechanisms, skills and processes that support learning and reasoning across domains, including the development of memory, symbolic thought, reasoning and problem-solving.

- **Mathematics.** The sub-domain of mathematics encompasses the mathematical concepts and skills that children develop during the birth-to-five-year period, including children's developing understanding of number and quantity, number relationships, and basic algebraic concepts. A meta-analysis conducted by Duncan and colleagues (2007) suggests that specific early math skills such as knowledge of numbers and ordinality are important predictors of later achievement in math and reading. The Mathematics subdomain also addresses children's developing knowledge of key attributes of objects, including size and shape, and the way objects fit, are positioned, and move in space. The standards in the domain of mathematics are organized in four strands: *Number Sense, Number Relationships and Operations; Algebra; Measurement and Data; and Geometry.*
- **Social Studies.** The sub-domain of social studies includes basic skills and competencies that set the foundation for learning about concepts of social science. At a young age, children begin to develop their social identity and to think about their place in the social world. As they grow, they develop an increased awareness of their personal histories and heritage, and a sense of time and place. Through everyday interactions with children and adults, they develop an appreciation for rights and responsibility within a group, and how social rules help people in promoting safety and fairness (Mindes, 2005). Such competencies are described in the domain of Social Studies under the following strands: *History; Geography; Government; and Economics.*
- **Science.** This sub-domain focuses on children's curiosity to explore and learn about their environment. It includes behaviors of exploration and discovery, and fundamental conceptual development such as problem solving and cause and effect. These early behaviors develop into increasingly systematic inquiry skills, and the ability to observe, investigate and communicate about the natural environment, living things, and objects and materials (Gelman and Brenneman, 2004). Early competencies in science are organized in four key strands: *Science Inquiry and Application; Earth and Space Science; Physical Science; and Life Science.*

Ohio's early learning and development standards illuminate the breadth of learning and development from birth to kindergarten entry that strengthens school readiness. An understanding of learning and development in each domain guides programs and teachers as they plan developmentally appropriate learning opportunities and environments for young children. In particular, teachers can use an understanding of standards to focus on the kinds of interactions and environments that support, for example, language development or approaches toward learning. While the standards facilitate a focused look at young children's learning in each domain, teachers and others responsible for the care and education of young children need to keep in mind that infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children learn holistically.

Moreover, social and emotional development stands at the center of their learning. For example, as an infant or toddler builds security in a relationship with a caring adult, that child is also learning to communicate with language and to use the relationship as a secure base for practicing new movement



skills and building knowledge about the world through exploration. Likewise, as preschool-age children tell stories about family experiences they are expanding their self-awareness, using their growing cognitive capacity to remember the past, and practicing narrative skills. Such examples of integrated learning are endless. In addition to providing focused looks in each domain, the standards can help us see how learning occurs in different domains at the same time.

Teachers and others can use the standards as starting points for observing and understanding young children's learning and development. With each learning encounter teachers observe, they can refer to the standards and ask what knowledge and skills the children are gaining in the areas of language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, social and emotional development, physical well-being and motor development, and approaches toward learning. Teachers can use their observations of integrated learning to plan new learning encounters for young children and support the building of knowledge in all essential domains of school readiness.

#### References

- Bluemenshine, S. L. and others (2008). "Children's School Performance: Impact of General and Oral Health," *Journal of Public Health Dentistry*, Vol. 68, No. 2, 82-87.
- Duncan, G.J. et al. (2007). School readiness and later achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, 43 (6), pp. 1428-1466.
- Gelman, R., and K. Brenneman. 2004. "Science Learning Pathways for Young Children." *Early Childhood Quarterly Review* 19:150-58.
- Mindes, G. (2005). "Social Studies in Today's Early Childhood Curricula," *Beyond the Journal: Young Children on the Web*, Vol. 60, No. 5, 12-18.
- National Early Literacy Panel (2008). *Developing Early Literacy: A Scientific Synthesis of Early Literacy Development and Implications for Intervention*.
- National Education Goals Panel (1995). *Reconsidering children's early development and learning: Toward common views and vocabulary*. Washington DC: Author.
- National Research Council (2008). *Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How*. Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessment for Young Children, C. E. Snow and S. B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and National Academies Press.

To review Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards, go to [www.earlychildhoodohio.gov](http://www.earlychildhoodohio.gov)

## CURRICULUM

Each of the WCS center-based preschool classrooms uses a Step Up to Quality approved, research-based curriculum. Wapakoneta City Schools has selected the Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System (AEPS) curriculum. The AEPS curriculum is aligned to the State of Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS). The AEPS curriculum addresses all of the ELDS developmental areas:

- Social Emotional Development
- Approaches Toward Learning
- Physical Well-being and Motor Development
- Cognitive Development and General Knowledge
- Language and Literacy

## SCREENING

**Peer Role Models** must participate in a screening within 60 days of entrance to the preschool program. WCS uses a screening that requires parent input. Parents of peers will be asked to complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 and return to the teacher within the first 60 days of the child's preschool program. The teacher will discuss the outcome with parents during parent teacher conferences, a phone conference or face-to-face meeting. Any student scoring below the range expected for the age of the child will be referred for additional follow-up.



All students with special needs have participated in an Evaluation Team Report prior to preschool entry and have been determined eligible for preschool special education services. No additional screening is required upon entry to school, as an evaluation has already identified areas of need for intervention. All students with special needs receive the support and services per the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

### **ASSESSMENTS/PROGRESS REPORTS**

**Ongoing/Informal Assessment:** All Wapakoneta Preschool sites use a variety of informal assessment processes on an ongoing basis throughout the school year for all students. Ongoing assessment is the process of gathering information in the context of everyday class activities to obtain a representative picture of children's abilities and progress.

Name of Process	Description and Supporting Evidence
Observation/Anecdotal Notes	Observation information within the context of daily activities can be used for a variety of purposes. Some observational information is recorded on state required assessments (ELA, COSF), IEP data collection forms or the curriculum-based assessment forms (AEPS) for the purpose of monitoring progress. Teachers use individual and group observations to inform instruction and adapt/customize learning opportunities within the context of the learning activity and/or for future learning.
Samples of the Child's Work	Samples of the children's work help teachers identify student or group learning strengths and needs. Teachers are able to use artifacts to determine if the child is progressing or needs additional support. Student work samples are a great way to document an individual child's learning progression over time. Teachers date and save samples in a variety of ways (journals, collections, albums, and portfolios, files, etc.)
Photos or Videos of Child	Photos or videos are used to document a child's progress and can be used to identify strengths and needs of the individual. The photos and videos are a great way to see how learning is progressing over time.
Anecdotal Verbal Information	Families and other service providers often have informal or formal conversations with teachers/assistants about the child and the child's performance/behavior. The information is valuable and can be used to document progress/inform instruction. The planning process is much more manageable when all those working with a child or



	group of children can discuss children individually and decide some logical next steps for the child.
--	---

**State-Required Assessments for Students with Special Needs:** Each teacher completes two state-required assessments for each child with special needs. Parent input from the AEPS family report, parent-teacher conference and other conversations is used to support the completion of the assessments. Teachers also use information from daily interactions, observations and curriculum-based assessment to complete the state-required assessments. Results of these assessments help the state of Ohio, the district and preschool staff to monitor whether students in WCS are making progress:

- Early Childhood Outcome Summary Form (COSF)
- Early Learning Assessment (ELA)

Parents of **students with special needs** receive quarterly progress reports regarding their child's progress on IEP goals and objectives: Teachers and related service staff collect weekly data regarding the child's progress on IEP goals and objectives.

The parents of **all students** are offered the opportunity for Parent Teacher Conferences two times annually. Parent teacher conferences are scheduled according to the WCS calendar and are scheduled on the same nights as the elementary conferences. During the conference, the child's progress in relation to the ELDS, the curriculum and formal/informal assessments is discussed.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

### **Overview:**

Use of appropriate behavior management/discipline policies and procedures ensure the safety, physical and emotional well-being of all individuals on the premises.

Our behavior management/discipline policy adheres to the Wapakoneta City School's behavior/ discipline policies (5630.1, 5600, and 5630) and the requirements (below) set forth by our licensing agency, the Ohio Department of Education:

- Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all times, and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.
- The preschool staff members in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.
- All preschool staff members shall receive a copy of the program's discipline policy for review upon employment
- The parent of the child enrolled in a center shall be provided access to the program's written discipline policy. The policy is included in the parent handbook provided upon enrollment.

### **Philosophy**

Wapakoneta preschool staff seeks to design supportive environments that guide students toward increasingly responsible and appropriate behavior. Behavior is best addressed through use of a system of positive behavior supports. Positive behavior interventions are a way to reduce challenging behaviors by increasing desirable behaviors through prevention, positive consequences and the teaching of appropriate behaviors. Use of a system of positive behavior support can help to establish a climate in



which positive, desired behavior is the norm. Use of a positive behavior support system will establish the social and behavioral supports students need to grow and excel.

**Methods of discipline include but are not limited to the following positive behavior support strategies:**

- Establish a clear set of expectations.
- Teach children expectations.
- Remind children of expected behaviors immediately before an activity.
- Consistently reinforce children who follow expectations.
- Use of visual cues for behavior.
- Teach, re-teach and practice social skills.
- Use stories about the social skills and behaviors that are desired.
- Determine the function of the behavior and teach an appropriate replacement.
- When necessary, develop behavior intervention plans for students in need of individualized behavior and social support.

**As required for all preschool programs licensed by the Ohio Department of Education, Wapakoneta Preschool's methods of discipline apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:**

- There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use, and food shall not be used as a reward for behavior.
- Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
- The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

### **WAPAKONETA PRESCHOOL MANDATORY HEAD COUNT PROCEDURES**

1. Both teacher and assistant are responsible for knowing the number of students present at any given point in the day.
2. Anytime the class travels from one environment from another, a staff member needs to be in front of the students and one needs to be behind the students. Most choose to use a line, but a line is not required. The staff member in the front is responsible for leading the group and the staff member in the back is responsible for making sure all students remain together as they travel from one environment to the next.
3. When traveling as a class and making any transition between environments, students should be counted before leaving one environment and upon arrival to another. For example: When using the restroom, students will be counted before they leave the classroom and upon arrival to the restroom.



Students will also be counted before leaving the restroom to return to the classroom. Students will also be counted before entering the classroom

4. When traveling to the playground, students will be counted before leaving the classroom and when they arrive on the playground (before allowing the children to run and play). When leaving the playground, students will gather at a designated location and be counted before entering the building. Once the students have entered the building, the students must have a designated stopping point. ANOTHER COUNT MUST OCCUR ONCE THE STUDENTS ARE IN THE BUILDING. Additionally, another count must occur before entering the classroom or restroom.
5. Anytime the staff divides the group, each staff member must know the number of students in their care. The staff member with that group of children must keep the children within their sight at all times. Counts must occur before leaving one environment and entering another.
6. During dismissal time, you must keep track of how many students you have as students are picked up by parents or placed on buses. Continue to subtract students from your count until all students have been dismissed from your care. For those taking students to the bus, you are responsible for making sure each child in your care has boarded the correct bus. If you are taking students to the parent pick up area, it is your responsibility to make sure all students have connected with the adult responsible for taking the child home.
7. If a child becomes separated from the group and is unsupervised, the staff member's direct supervisor must be immediately notified. In the event that the supervisor cannot be reached, the "other preschool supervisor" must be contacted. If neither supervisor is available, the building principal or assistant principal must be contacted. Parents must be immediately notified of the event as well. Face-to-face contact or a telephone call is the preferred method of notice for the parent. Email or third party notification is not preferred.

### **RELEASE OF STUDENT RECORDS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students 8 years or older certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights, which are fully explained in the WCS Board of Education Policy and Regulations, include:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records.
- The right to request the amendment of student's education records that are believed to be inaccurate and right to a hearing if the request is not honored.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding an alleged violation of FERPA.
- The right to consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information within the student records, unless disclosure is otherwise authorized by law or unless disclosure is made to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school is contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.



- The following is designated as “directory information,” which may be disclosed without prior written consent as student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight, if a member of an athletic team, dates of attendance, date of graduation, and rewards received.

Parents have the right to submit a written request to the Communication Department, preferably within two weeks after the first day the student is enrolled in a school year, directing the district not to release directory information concerning their child to third parties. Examples of third parties include PTO’s, Booster organization and the media. According to Ohio Revised Code, public schools are prohibited from releasing directory information to third parties who intend to use the information for profit-making ventures. The written request or any questions should be directed to the WCS District Board of Education at 1102 Gardenia Drive, Wapakoneta, Ohio 45895. Phone: 419-739-2900.

### **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING**

As required by law, all school employees and administrators must immediately report any suspicions of abuse or neglect to the County Children Services Board in the county in which the suspected abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred. The Preschool Supervisor shall be made aware of suspected abuse or neglect.

Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.421 states, “Any attorney, physician (including a hospital intern or resident), dentist, podiatrist, practitioner of a limited branch of medicine or surgery as defined in Section 4731.15 of the Revised Code, registered or licensed practical nurse, visiting nurse, or other health care professional, licensed psychologist, speech pathologist or audiologist, coroner, administrator or employee of a child day-care center, or administrator or employee of a certified child care agency or other public or private children services agency, school teacher or school authority, social worker, or person rendering spiritual treatment through prayer in accordance with the tenets or a well-recognized religion, acting in his official or professional capacity, having reason to believe that a child less than eighteen years of age or any crippled or otherwise physically or mentally handicapped child under twenty-one years of age has suffered any wound, injury, disability, or condition of such a nature as to reasonably indicate abuse or neglect of the child, shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of such information to the children services board or the county department of human services exercising the children services function, or a municipal or county peace officer in the county which the child resides or in which the abuse or neglect is occurring or has occurred.”

### **MISSING CHILD LAW REPORTING**

Ohio Revised Code Section 9.55.3 states “The third requirement of the Missing Child Law is the requirement that school administrators report to the police any child who is admitted to the schools of the district who has not presented acceptable birth documentation or copies of his previous school records. Within twenty-four hours of a child’s entry into a school, the school administration must request the student’s records from the public or non-public school he most recently attended. If school records or a birth certificate are not produced within fourteen days, or if the school claimed as the school of previous attendance has no record of the student’s attendance, the principal must report to the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction in the area where the child resides that the student may be a missing child.

In order to facilitate the enforcement of the Missing Child Law, and to assist in other aspects of school administration, the law requires each entering student to provide, in addition to the above, a certified copy of any child custody order or decree which has been issued with respect to the student. The custodial parent of such a student must also provide the board with certified copies of any later court orders which modify the original custody



order or decree.”

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

All complaints and reports concerning the operation of programs regulated by the chapter of the Administrative Code and sections 3301.52 to 3301.59 of the Revised Code may be reported to the department ombudsman (614) 644-6338. Parents may also request copies of inspection reports of the program from the child’s classroom teacher or the Preschool Director.

