



Welcome!

Brooke County PreK



Brooke County PreK

A collaboration among:

Brooke County Schools

Northern Panhandle Head Start

Little Bear Daycare PreK

BROOKE COUNTY PRE-K

Dear Parents,

Your child's enrollment in the Brooke County Pre-K program is a significant milestone in your child's development. As the beginning of "formal" education, it is the start of a process that will lead to a lifetime of learning. During this time, we will work with you to foster the early literacy, social, emotional, and physical development that is the essence of our program. We look forward to this partnership.

We are dedicated to making your child's PreK experience an outstanding one for you and your child. Our administrators, teachers, and support staff are looking forward to working with you and your child during this transition. We know that you will share their enthusiasm and excitement throughout the school year and beyond.

I encourage you to read this booklet carefully. It provides you with information regarding our program. Please do not hesitate to contact any of our team members for further assistance.

Welcome to Brooke County PreK!

Sincerely,

*Lori McLaughlin, Brooke County Schools PreK, and Elementary Director
Brittany Garrison, Brooke County Schools Special Education Director
Stephanie Skadra, Northern Panhandle Head Start Executive Director
Misty Wood, Little Bear Daycare PreK*

WELCOME TO BROOKE COUNTY PRE-K

We know that the first day of PreK, although highly anticipated, might be a “nerve-wracking” occasion. Planning and preparing for the “big day” may help calm the nerves and help your child move with confidence into this new stage of “school” life.



TRANSITION TO PRE-K

Transitions are major life changes. This transition to a new school environment is one of the most significant transitions your child will experience. They will need to adjust to a new environment, new peer group, new authority figures, new routines, and a new role as a student.

Since each child's degree of readiness differs and is highly individualized, PreK readiness entails the capacity of schools to be prepared to serve all children effectively regardless of a child's individual developmental level in each of the five developmental domains of school readiness. The five developmental domains of school readiness are:

1. Health and Physical development
2. Social and Emotional development
3. Language Development and Communication
4. Cognition and General Knowledge
5. A child's individual approaches to learning.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

A child is eligible to enter our pre-kindergarten if they are four years old on or before June 30 of the year of enrollment. *At registration, the following are required:*

1. An **original state-issued vital** birth certificate
2. Proof of compliance with the immunization law
3. Social Security Card
4. A Health Assessment completed by the child's pediatrician
5. A comprehensive oral health screening by the child's dentist



ATTENDANCE

Regularity of attendance and punctuality are both important to the child from the very first day in PreK. The earlier a child learns that school is important, the more satisfactory will be his/ her growth. Please contact your child's PreK teacher/site to report absences, or reasons for absence. Written explanation of the cause of absence or the nature of the illness is encouraged from

parents. These will be recorded and filed. *The full PreK attendance policy will be provided at the beginning of the school year.*

PRE-K SCREENING

By law, all school districts are required to screen all new entrants to determine if they might have vision or hearing impairments, speech and language disabilities, or developmental delays. Screenings will take place at the beginning of the school year.

SCHOOL HOURS and TRANSPORTATION



Brooke County PreK classrooms are in operation Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. At this time, our Northern Panhandle Head Start Brooke 8 site in Wellsburg runs Monday through Thursday, and instructional times will be communicated at the beginning of the year. Transportation for PreK students is primarily the responsibility of the parents unless your child is enrolled in our developmental or Head Start programs. Northern Panhandle Head Start does not guarantee transportation.

BREAKFAST and LUNCH

Breakfast and hot lunch are served at each school. Currently, all Brooke County students receive free breakfast and lunch through our Child Nutrition Program.



PARENT INFORMATION

The education of your child is a joint venture between you and the school. Together, we can accomplish the goal of offering your child and all children a quality education. To reach this objective, a more intimate understanding of your child's progress and our educational program is necessary. An opportunity to share our mutual thoughts is made available through parent-teacher conferences and assessment results. ***Your child's teacher will share with you:***

- ❖ A report of your child's academic, social, and physical progress
- ❖ An evaluation of your child's potential as it relates to his/her success
- ❖ A description of the relative standing of your child within his/her own class
- ❖ A review of materials used in the school and specialized services available ***You need to provide the teacher with information concerning:***

- ❖ Your child's attitude toward school as reflected by his/her remarks and incidents mentioned at home
- ❖ Significant out-of-school experiences
- ❖ Relationships with members of the family and playmates
- ❖ Unusual interests, hobbies, or activities.

HEALTH SERVICES OFFERED TO YOUR CHILD



THE SCHOOL NURSE:

- ❖ Administers medications to students only with written orders from doctor
- ❖ Assists in maintaining the first aid program
- ❖ Considers the needs of each child in planning the health program
- ❖ Investigates health problems
- ❖ Screens each child for hearing deficits
- ❖ Screens each child for visual acuity
- ❖ Keeps an up-to-date record card for each child in school

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, parents are advised to keep children at home when they show any of the following symptoms:

****fever *skin rash *headache *coughing *sore throat *pain *earache *red
or discharging eyes *vomiting *chills *enlarged gland *diarrhea***

If any of the above symptoms are found in a child at school, parents will be notified, and the child will be sent home. Remember to call the main office when your child is absent. When your child returns to school he/she should bring a note from a physician or parent explaining the absence.



MEDICATIONS

Medication is not given in school unless it is absolutely necessary and then only with a written order from the doctor and a written request from the parent. For your convenience, there is a comprehensive form available from your school nurse that explains the required procedure.

HEALTH HABITS

As you know, good health habits begin at home. These habits must be started early in life and continued to keep your child strong and healthy. Working together, let us try to train your child to:

- Eat regular well-balanced meals.
- Avoid an atmosphere of strain and hurry by allowing ample time for dressing, eating, and getting to school.
- Wash hands before eating and after going to the bathroom.
- Keep hands and objects away from their mouth and nose.
- Cough and sneeze into the inside of their elbow.
- Cover any open cuts or wounds with a band aid.
- Carry a tissue and use it properly.
- Maintain an early bedtime to get at least eleven hours of sleep every night.

SUGGESTIONS TO PARENTS

As a parent you can:

- Talk about school as a pleasing experience.
- Help your child develop independence by encouraging him/her to do things for him/herself.
- Enrich your child's background of experiences by taking him/her on simple trips to the zoo, farm, railroad station, firehouse, library, etc.
- Stimulate your child's creativity and imagination by supplying him/her with a variety of art materials.
- Attend or participate in pre-k activities when opportunities arise. Children enjoy having their parents present on field trips, at parties, and programs.
- Submit to the teacher upon school entrance any information that will help them better understand your child. Having advance information may help to prevent adjustment difficulties.
- Inform the school nurse of any physical handicap or special health problem prior to opening of school.
- ***Help your child to become self-reliant and feel secure by:***
 - ❖ Labeling each article of wearing apparel with full name
 - ❖ Labeling backpack, lunch box, etc. with full name

- ❖ Buying boots that are large enough to slip on and off with ease
- ❖ Selecting articles of clothing for outdoor wear that are easily fastened and unfastened by child
- ❖ Teaching how to tie shoelaces
- ❖ Teaching name, address, and telephone number
- ❖ Supervising the amounts and content of video games and television program listening.
- ❖ Avoid stimulating programs, especially those that interfere with rest and outdoor play.
- ❖ Meeting his/her needs for affection and security
- ❖ Helping him/her develop courteous habits, e.g., saying *please*, *thank you* and *excuse me*.
- ❖ Encouraging them to value the rights and property of others
 - Reading stories and listening attentively to the stories they like to tell
 - Warning them against taking rides or gifts from strangers
 - Teaching them about bus safety while boarding and riding the bus



The PreK Curriculum

The WV PreK Standards Framework



Children benefit from high quality preschool experiences, which can take place in a variety of settings that include an enriched environment that supports maximum development and optimizes learning opportunities. In March 2002, the West Virginia legislature passed Senate Bill 247 that became West Virginia Code §18-5-44, a mandate for high quality early education programs for all four-year-old children and three year old children with identified special needs. These early education programs are now known as West Virginia Pre-kindergarten (WV Pre-k). To support the provision of enriched environments for young children, a collaborative group of West Virginia early education professionals developed the **Early Learning Standards Framework**, a document that is developmentally appropriate and based on what preschool children should know and learn. The standards are designed to serve as early learning guidelines for all children ages three through five regardless of the setting.

The **West Virginia Early Learning Standards**, now referred to as WV PreK Standards, are grounded in scientific research of child development, children's approaches to learning and effective educational practices. Vital to implementing these standards is the ability to teach using appropriate strategies. ***The foremost goal for West Virginia's children is to be lifelong learners.*** Young children live in a society where information is constantly changing and the ability to function well in an increasingly global economy is essential. Children must have the ability to continuously learn. Therefore, it is essential that children develop skills that allow them to become competent, independent learners capable of higher intellectual functions. To fulfill this role, teachers of young children must also be lifelong learners, continuously building their professional knowledge and functional competencies based on current research.

The **WV PreK Standards** are intended to guide practitioners in offering high-quality early education environments and educational experiences that are responsive to individual children and maximize learning and skill development. Using this standards framework, educators can plan high-quality learning experiences designed to promote school readiness skills for all children, including children with disabilities. The framework is not designed as an assessment tool, nor should it be used as a way to delay the entry of eligible children into kindergarten. The Standards are considered an integral part of an inter-related comprehensive curriculum and assessment system as defined by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525.

Guiding Principles:

1. **Representation and symbolic thinking is an essential elements in providing high-quality early education programs.** The ability to pretend and use symbols is at the foundation for symbolic and abstract thought leading to the development of academic skills such as math, science, and literacy. Children use representation and symbolic thinking across all domains to develop an understanding of concepts and generalizations from concrete to abstract. The experiences that lead to a child's ability to think abstractly are embedded in the curriculum through opportunities for active exploration, pretend play, and symbolic communication. Promoting advanced play by assisting young children to use objects symbolically to represent other objects and/or actions and to use language to create pretend situations is vital. Children do not have to have exact props or play situations but rather the opportunity to invent with materials, words. For example, instead of native costumes – pieces of fabrics that can represent various outfits is more beneficial.

2. **Children are active learners.** Children learn through active involvement (exploring, playing, manipulating, and problem-solving). Young children construct their own knowledge as well as benefit from instructions by more competent peers and adults. Therefore, opportunities must be available through spontaneous play, teacher-directed activities, projects of in-depth studies, and collaboration with peers in inclusive settings. Whether child-guided or teacher guided, the most significant educational experiences are those that engage children's minds. Content does not have to be entertaining but it must be meaningful and significant to the participants. It is more than content; it is the process of learning that is so critical.
3. **Development and learning are interrelated.** Early learning and areas of development interact and influence each other. The dynamic interaction of all domains of development must be considered. All domains are interrelated, and experiences related to the Early Learning Standards Framework must be integrated and offered daily or frequently. Teachers of young children must adjust their teaching to fit the child. Often teachers rationalize that development must come first, which reduces teaching to presenting materials that a child already knows. On the other hand, teachers can not completely ignore the child's developmental level. For example, children must master language before thinking logically. Adjusting for each child is challenging but necessary for teachers of young children.
4. **Each child is an individual learner.** Children go through similar stages of development but at individual rates. All children within an age group should not be expected to arrive at early learning expectations at the same time or with the same degree of proficiency.
5. **Children with special needs and English Language Learners develop best in inclusive early education settings.** The early learning standards are best taught from intentional adult guidance and planned assistance in environments conducive to the various learners. Attention to individual variation is critical. Individualized modifications and adaptations provide each child with the opportunities to reach his or her full potential.
6. **Family engagement is critical.** The family is the child's first and most important teacher and integral to the child's success. Teachers work collaboratively with parents and establish a frequent two-way communication with them.
7. **Development and learning are embedded in culture.** Early education settings and programs must be purposefully planned to expand the child's awareness and understanding of cultures and people different from his/herself. Culture influences cognition. The way the child thinks, remembers, listens, and communicates is a reflection of the social context (family and society) in which the child lives. Therefore, the teacher must embed within the environment, aspects of the various cultures represented into the classroom. Cultural aspects must be included in a nature kind of way---not by isolated activities. Each child's home culture and language are brought into classroom as part of the shared culture of the class.
8. **Young children learn by experiencing the world in which they live.** The classroom environment is a key factor in providing high quality learning experiences for young children. Classrooms should be designed and equipped in a manner that supports discovery, small group and individual learning, exploration, problem solving, and development. The early childhood classroom must be a community of learners. To facilitate this, teachers must know the children and families well so they can plan ways for children to work and play together collaboratively.
9. **School Readiness is a multi-faceted definition and approach.** It includes a child's physical growth and development, social and emotional development, language development and cognitive competencies, as well as the capacity of families, community, and schools to support children's learning and development. Because each child develops at an individual rate and has a variety of experiences,

children enter school with varied levels of skills and learning experiences. Besides academic benchmarks, there are a range of learning skills and developmental milestones that are essential to children's future success in school and life. These school readiness indicators include:

- ❖ Child's health and physical development
- ❖ Social and emotional development
- ❖ Language development and communication

Academic competencies, including cognition, general knowledge, and approaches to learning *School Readiness Performance Indicators* are domain areas identified in four of the early learning standards domains -- ***social and emotional development, language and communication, math, and science***. These domain areas, along with the child's immunization and health and physical development report, as required for school entry, will create a WV School Readiness Report.

10. Assessment of PreK standards is a systematic, performance-based measure using student data collected through observation and work samples. Assessment is across all domains, informs instruction and guides children's development and learning. Comprehensive, performance-based assessment is necessary due to children's day to day changes, interests, and strengths. This assessment approach informs teaching, as well as provides a meaningful approach to communicating to parents about their child's growth and development.

All of our PreK teachers utilize a formative assessment process to provide feedback on student learning. The formative assessment process helps guide daily instruction by using authentic evidence of student learning during the teaching/learning cycle. PreK teachers also use the WV Early Learning Reporting System (ELRS) to document this evidence of learning during three benchmark periods throughout the academic year. This data may be shared with parents as part of our ongoing efforts to partner in your child's early learning journey.

Whose Child Is This?

"Whose child is this?" I asked one day
Seeing a little one out at play
"Mine", said the parent with a tender smile
"Mine to keep a little while
To bathe his hands and comb his hair
To tell him what he is to wear
To prepare him that he may always be good And each day do
the things he should"

"Whose child is this?" I asked again
As the door opened and someone came in
"Mine", said the teacher with the same tender smile
"Mine, to keep just for a little while

To teach him how to be gentle and kind
To train and direct his dear little mind
To help him live by every rule
And get the best he can from school"

"Whose child is this?" I ask once more
Just as the little one entered the door
"Ours" said the parent and the teacher as they smiled
And each took the hand of the little child "Ours to
love and train together Ours this blessed task
forever."

~Author Unknown~