

# **Tri-County Community Schools**

## **Preschool Parent Handbook**

**2023-2024**



## **Tri-County Staff**

**Dara Fisher**--Preschool Teacher

**Jill Hall**--3 year old Preschool Paraeducator

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Elementary Vocal

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# **Tri-County Community School District Mission Statement**

Tri-County Community School District  
will challenge students by offering  
engaging experiences, encouraging  
them to participate, overcome  
barriers, and to learn to their full  
potential.

## **Access to the Preschool**

No adult, other than those authorized by the parent or guardian, will have access to the child while in the care of the staff. The staff will strictly adhere to this provision. Parents have access to their children while in preschool.

## **Accidents**

If a child has a toileting accident while attending preschool or gets extremely wet while at recess, the child's clothing will be changed. Wet or soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic sack and secured. The preschool staff will not clean the garments. If the child has an extra set of clothing available, that will be used (please mark all clothes with your child's name). If the child does not have an extra set of clothes at preschool, the preschool or school will provide clean garments for the child to borrow. In the case that the child uses school clothes, it is the family's responsibility to clean and return the garments as soon as possible.

Incidents or accidents resulting in injury to the child are reported on the day of the incident by phone and/or written correspondence on the day of the incident in writing to the parent or person authorized to pick up the child in emergencies. The written report is prepared by the staff member who observed the incident or accident and includes a general description of the incident and of the action taken, if any, by the staff at the preschool.

## **Admittance**

Students from the ages of four to five years-old may be admitted to the Tri-County Community Preschool regardless of all protected classes at no cost. Four year-olds will attend full days Monday-Thursday from 8:20 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Students must turn four years-old by September 15 of the present school year to be admitted to the program. Students may ride the school bus.

Due to the Statewide Four-Year-Old Voluntary Preschool Program grant, four year-olds attend preschool at no cost.

Requirements for admittance to preschool are:

- Current physical
- Immunization Card
- Registration forms completed to include emergency information
- Permission form signed for emergency care
- Authorization for pick up

All forms must be completed and returned to school before admittance into the program.

## **Three year old Program**

The three year old program will operate from 8:20 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on Monday-Thursday. There is no program on Friday. The three year old program fee is \$50/month. Scholarship opportunities are available through Early Childhood Iowa. The cut off date for enrollment will be November 1st if the preschool program is not full.

### **Allergies**

If a student has food allergies or other allergies that might be impacted by others, a note will be posted outside the classroom door. Every precaution will be taken to ensure the child with the specific allergies is not exposed to the elements that create the allergic reactions.

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

Preschool students may ride the bus to school. Students not arriving via bus may be dropped off no earlier than 8:10 a.m. School is dismissed at 3:30 p.m. and adults will ensure that preschoolers are on the correct bus for dismissal. Non-bus riders will be dismissed through the preschool doors and picked up on the west side of the school unless otherwise stated by the parent. Please notify your child's teacher with a written note or phone call (641-634-2636) if there is a change in dismissal plans. **Please make sure you drop off your child and pick up your child at the elementary office. If you are visiting, please make sure you check in and check out with June in the office. Visitors are required to wear a Visitor Badge. The doors by the preschool room are for staff only.**

### **Asbestos Notification**

Asbestos has been an issue of concern for many years. The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA) was designed to determine the extent of the asbestos concerns in schools and to act as a guide in formulating asbestos management policies for the schools. The school district facilities have been inspected by a certified asbestos inspector as required by AHERA. The inspector located, sampled and determined the condition and hazard potential of all material in the school facilities suspected of containing asbestos. The inspection and laboratory analysis records form the basis of the asbestos management plan. A certified management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for the school district facilities which includes: notification letters, training for employees, a set of procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos-containing materials, and plans for regular surveillance of the materials. A copy of the management plan is available for inspection in the office.

### **Assessing Your Child**

Your child will be assessed by daily observations and record taking, GOLD, IGDIS, and *World of Wonders* assessments, and a skills checklist.

Curriculum is age-appropriate and based on developmental skill levels. Curriculum standards are followed clearly and assessment protocols are embedded into the preschool program.

Teachers also do portfolio assessments, which follow the Iowa Early Learning Standards. This assessment is ongoing and informal, and can be used for several years – as long as your child is in preschool. Students may be at the exploring, emerging, building, or mastering level.

Preschoolers will be assessed in the Fall, Winter, and the Spring. Assessment data and progress will be analyzed weekly and also at monthly STAT meetings. Assessment data will be shared out quarterly and student progress will be shared out twice a year at conferences. Conference dates in October and February. Student communication will be handled in newsletters, email, text, phone calls, assignment books, and also face to face. Progress monitoring reports are sent home as well.

Families are invited and encouraged to participate in school events and activities. Parents are invited to classroom parties and school events or to come in to visit.

Students who need additional support and services can be referred to special education services and early access programs. Early identification and interventions services are available through the school and the local Great Prairie AEA.

### **Attendance**

Parents of students who know they will be absent must notify the office prior to the absence. If advance notification is not possible, parents must notify the office at 641-634-2636 Ext. 140 on the day of the absence prior to 8:00 a.m. The office has an answering machine for this purpose which can be utilized at any time. If notification is not received, the office will attempt to contact the parents. Students who need to leave school during the school day must receive permission from the office and have a note signed by the student's parents, have their parents telephone the office at 641-634-2636, or have their parents pick them up. Students who arrive after the school day has begun must check in at the elementary office. In order for any preschool students to be allowed to leave school property during the school day, an adult must come to the office and sign him/her out.

### **Birthday Treats**

Birthday treats or treats for special occasions may be brought to preschool. They need to be store-bought (pre-packaged). It is recommended that they be nutritious in value. Additionally, our regularly scheduled nutritious snack will be provided.

### **Books and Reading**

Interactive reading experiences encourage children to question, comment upon events, and make predictions as the story progresses. This interactive process facilitates language development. Story reading is not a performance but is an opportunity for children to construct meaning from print.

### **Bug Spray**

When public health authorities recommend the use of insect repellents due to high risk of insect borne disease, only repellents containing DEET will be used. Repellents will only be applied once. Children will need written permission to be given bug spray. A note in regards to bug spray will be in the registration packet.

### **Bus Pass**

If students ride a bus that is different from their regular route to a different location, a parent must call in prior to the end of the day, so the child can get a bus pass granting them permission to ride on a different bus. The pass is given to the bus driver.

### **Calendars of the School Year**

Please consult the school calendar for information about school vacations and scheduled early dismissals. A Tri-County calendar is distributed to all patrons of the district.

### **Cancellations, Delays or Early Dismissals from School**

Announcements of school cancellations or early dismissal are made over radio stations WHO, KBOE, and KGRN or TV stations WHO, KCCI, WOI, and KCRG for weather-related dismissals or closings. You will also hear weather-related announcements through School Messenger (formerly AlertNow). When there is an early dismissal due to unforeseen circumstances, preschool parents will be notified.

### **Changing Table/Diapering**

Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the bathroom adjacent to the classroom with a designated changing mat.

Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7:

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

Staff checks children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.

Staff will change children's diapers or soiled garments. Underwear will be kept in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.

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

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

Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.

Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.

All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an accident.

Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

### **Center Time**

Center time is a learning time. During centers, children have opportunities to learn problem solving, creativity, rules of games, how to take turns and share, math skills such as counting and patterning, pre-reading and writing skills, and many other functional skills that are necessary for success in school and life. There are a variety of quiet and active areas to accommodate children's different temperaments and needs. Centers include areas for manipulatives (or table toys) and games and puzzles, discovery center, blocks, pretend play, books, sand and water, arts and crafts, writing, and a computer with age and developmentally appropriate programs. Props contained in these learning centers are changed periodically to reflect these or areas of interest to the children. The teachers encourage children to go to different centers and do not stereotype by gender.

### **Change of Address, Emails, or Phone**

Please notify the school immediately if you have a change of address, email address, or phone number during the school year. Parents/Guardians must change or update any information in Powerschool themselves. It is very important for emergency and administrative reasons that up-to-date information on every student be available in the school office.

### **Child to Teacher Ratio**

The recommended child to teacher ratio is 10:1 for four-year olds. This ratio will be adhered to in all preschool settings which include the classroom, outdoor time, indoor time, transportation, and field trips.

### **Classroom Visits/Volunteering By Parents**

Parents are encouraged to visit their child while at preschool. They may also be regular volunteers in the classroom. A volunteer schedule will be established by the classroom teacher. When arriving, check into the elementary office to be recognized as a volunteer or visitor and receive a badge. Volunteers are limited to half a day unless prior authorization has been granted.

### **Clean Up**

After center time, children are responsible for cleaning up after themselves and making their spaces neat and tidy. Children develop a sense of industry and independence when cleaning up their areas. Putting away equipment improves classification skills as well as large and small muscle development and creates a sense of cooperative teamwork. They also develop motor skills as they use brooms, dustpans, and sponges.

### **Cleansing and Sanitation Table and Procedures**

Staff will ensure that monthly Cleansing and Sanitation records are kept and all precautions and guidelines will be followed under Standard 5: Health (5.23)

Staff will clean and sanitize frequently all surfaces in the preschool environment as indicated in the Cleaning and Sanitation Table from NAEYC.org. Ventilation and sanitation, rather than sprayers, air freshener chemicals, air deodorizers, control odors in inhabited areas of the facility and in custodial closets will be followed. (5.18)

### **Communication**

Pertinent school announcements will be in the PK-6 news calendar which is sent home with students at the beginning of each month. Parents are responsible for knowing the contents of the notes or papers sent home and for promptly returning any requested forms. Daily assignment books are an excellent bridge between home and school.

### **Community Resources for Parents**

Keokuk County Extension Office Sigourney, Iowa 400 220th Ave A, Sigourney, IA 52591 (641) 622-2680 <https://keokukcounty.iowa.gov/business/organizations/keokuk-county-extension>

Offers extension activities and enrichment camps for school age children, family oriented activities and workshops, and 4H opportunities.

What Cheer Methodist Church Food Pantry What Cheer, Iowa 106 E Broadway St, What Cheer, IA 50268 (641)634-2205  
<https://www.facebook.com/WhatCheerUMC/>

Offers a free food pantry monthly and assistance with bills.

### Family and Educator Partnership

Annette Clarahan

Family & Educator Coordinator

641-682-8591 or 800-622-0027 Ext. 5517

[annette.clarahan@gpaea.org](mailto:annette.clarahan@gpaea.org)

<https://www.gpaea.org/services/iowa-family-and-educator-partnership-fep>

Offers services to families in need of assistance for all youth with special education and disability needs. Annette serves as an advocate for students and families in our district.

### Tri-County Community Schools

Offers a free food pantry onsite. Items may be picked up by parents/guardian(s) or sent home in student backpacks. Contact is Jennifer Berg.

### What Cheer Public Library

308 S Barnes St, What Cheer, IA 50268 (641)634-2859



Offers free book check-out to all ages, free internet use, storytime programs and family oriented activities such as holiday festivities.

### **Concerns/Ideas**

If you have any concerns regarding a situation at school, you are urged to follow this procedure:

- Contact the involved staff member to discuss the problem and possible solutions.
- If the concern is not resolved, request a conference with the principal.
- If the concern is not resolved, contact the superintendent.

The Tri-County preschool also invites parents to share their ideas in regards to instruction, curriculum, and assessment.

### **Curriculum**

The Tri-County preschool uses Little Treasures which is a developmentally appropriate literacy curriculum. The curriculum aligns to the program goals to promote high levels of student learning. The curriculum enhances an active learning environment that nurtures social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth.

### **Derogatory Remarks or Verbal Threats**

Teachers will not use derogatory remarks or verbal threats towards any preschool child or adult in the preschool or school environment.

### **Dress**

Students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate to their age level and does not disrupt the school environment. Students are prohibited to wear clothing advertising items illegal for minors. Shoes with cleats or rollerblades are prohibited. Children should wear comfortable clothes and shoes that will permit them to participate actively in recess each day. During cold weather students need to wear warm clothes, hats, and gloves. Boots and snow pants may be required for playground activities depending on the condition of the playground areas. Children should have extra shoes and socks so that they do not track their snowy boots in the classroom. Slippers are not allowed in place of shoes. Please mark all clothes with your child's name.

### **Drinks**

Children will have the opportunity to consume clean, sanitary water throughout the preschool day. Please send a water bottle with your child. If you do not have one, please let the office know and we will provide one for your child.

## **Emergency Drills**

Periodically the school holds emergency fire, lockdown, and tornado drills. Additionally, each preschool classroom will conduct monthly fire and tornado drills. At the beginning of each school year and as needed, the teacher will notify students of the procedures to follow in the event of a drill. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms. Students are expected to remain quiet and orderly during a drill or an emergency. Students who pull the fire alarm will be disciplined under the school district's rules and regulations.

## **Emergency Information**

At the beginning of each school year or when a student begins school, parents must file an emergency form with the office providing the emergency telephone numbers of the parents as well as alternate persons to contact in the event the school is unable to locate the parents. The emergency form also includes a statement that gives the school district permission to release the student to the alternate person in the event the parents cannot be reached. Parents must notify the elementary office if the information on the emergency form changes during the school year.

## **Equal Educational Opportunity/Non Discrimination**

The Tri-County Community School District offers career and technical programs in the following service areas:

Agriculture Education

Business Education

Health

Industrial Technology

It is the policy of the Tri-County Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Chad Straight, Superintendent, 3003 Hwy 22 PO Box 17, Thornburg, IA 50255, (641) 634-2636, [chad.straight@tri-countyschools.com](mailto:chad.straight@tri-countyschools.com).

Director of the Office for Civil Rights U.S. Department of Education, Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661-7204, Telephone: (312)730-1560 Facsimile: (312) 730-1576, Email: [OCR.Chicago@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Chicago@ed.gov)

## **Section 504 - Notice of Nondiscrimination**

Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services for the Tri County Community School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, gender identity, physical or

mental ability or disability, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, physical appearance, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII Title IX, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), § 504 or Iowa Code § 280.3 is directed to contact:

Superintendent of Schools  
3003 Hwy 22 PO Box 17  
Thornburg, Iowa 50255  
641-634-2636

who has been designated by the school district to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII Title IX, the ADA, § 504 or Iowa Code § 280.3.

### **Family Involvement**

The monthly calendar has upcoming events, menus, and calendars. Informal parent participation in the preschool is always welcome. Ask your teacher about volunteering opportunities in the classroom. The preschool teacher will have continual contact with parents during the school year and we encourage family participation and input.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips may be taken throughout the school day. Written permission will be requested prior to leaving the school. Some field trips will require the use of bus transportation. Parent chaperones may also be needed but will be limited in number. Occasionally, a preschool classroom may take walks around the neighborhood. Parents give permission by signing a statement at registration that the student may participate in this outing.

### **Food and Nutrition**

Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in prepackaged containers. All-day preschool programs offer meals that meet the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. All foods and beverages brought from home need to be labeled with the child's name and the date.

Prepackaged snacks and fresh fruit are refrigerated if needed until served and all opened snack items are stored in a plastic tote.

Food that has an expired date is discarded.

Liquids or foods hotter than 110 degrees will be kept out of the reach of all preschoolers.

Children four and under must have meats sliced into rounds;

Grapes must be sliced; no popcorn or hard pretzels.

### **Four-Year Old Preschool Program**

Students in the four-year old preschool program will attend four full days a week, Monday Thursday. Students attend preschool at no cost.

### **Hand Washing**

Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand washing procedures and are periodically monitored. Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children on arrival for the day, after using the toilet or diapering, after handling bodily fluids, before and after snack/lunch, after playing in water that is shared by two or more people, after handling animals, and after handling dirt, sand, or other surfaces contaminated by contact with animals.

### **HAWK-I Insurance**

Parents can apply for low or no cost health insurance for their children through the State's Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa (HAWK-I) program. Children, birth to 19, who meet certain criteria are eligible. The coverage includes doctor's visits, hearing services, dental care, prescriptions, immunization, physical therapy, vision care, speech therapy and hospital services. Parents are encouraged to call 800-257-8563 or go to the web site at <http://www.hawk-i.org> for more details.

### **Health**

The program maintains current health records for each

Child: Within six weeks after a child begins the program, and as age-appropriate thereafter, health records will document the dates of service to show that the child's current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended, published in print, and posted on the Web sites of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control of the United States Public Health Service (CDC-USPHS), and the Academy of Family Practice

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for these services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunizations for which parents are using religious exemption. The school nurse will send out notices to parents.

**Child health records include:** Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency; Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results.

Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up-to-date by a specified

method during the year. The following information will be included: names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child; Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes); and Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implement a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program. (5.19)

### **Hearing Screening**

Hearing screenings will be conducted for each student in the preschool. A teacher or a parent/guardian may also make requests for screenings. If there is any concern, parent/guardian(s) will be notified.

### **Illnesses/Absences**

Regular attendance is a very important part of education. In order to decrease the chance for spreading illness to others at school, please keep your child home if he/she has:

- had a temperature of 100 degrees or more in the past 24 hours
- vomited in the past 8 hours
- had a diarrhea in the past 8 hours
- a bacterial infection (strep throat, etc.) that hasn't been treated with antibiotic for 24 hours
- a constant cough that would disturb your child and the class
- a communicable disease (chicken pox, impetigo, conjunctivitis, etc.) that has not received written authorization from your doctor or school nurse for readmission to class
- an ailment that would override your child's learning.

**Students must be fever free and have not vomited for 24 hours before returning to school.**

### **Immunizations and Vaccinations**

Prior to starting school or when transferring into the school district, students must present an approved Iowa Department of Public Health immunization certificate signed by a health care provider stating that the student has received the immunizations required by law. Students without the proper certificate are not allowed to attend school until they receive the immunizations or the student makes arrangements with the principal or school nurse. Only for specific medical or religious purposes are students exempt from the immunization requirements. Parents who have questions should contact the elementary office or nurse's office.

### **Infectious and Communicable Diseases**

Students who have an infectious or communicable disease are allowed to attend school as long as they are able to do so and their presence does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves or does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. If there is a question about whether a student should continue to attend classes, the students shall not attend class or participate in school activities without their personal physician's approval. Infectious or communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, mumps, measles, and chicken pox.

### **Initiations, Hazing, Harassment**

Harassment, bullying, and abuse are violations of school district policies, rules and regulations and, in some cases, may also be a violation of criminal or other laws. The school district has the authority to report students violating this rule to law enforcement officials. Students who feel that they have been harassed or bullied should:

- Communicate to the harasser or bully that the student expects the behavior to stop, if the student is comfortable doing so. If the student needs assistance communicating with the harasser or bully, the student should ask a teacher, counselor or principal to help.
- If the harassment or bullying does not stop, or the student does not feel comfortable confronting the harasser or bully, the student should:
- Tell a teacher, counselor or principal:
- Write down exactly what happened, keep a copy and give another to the teacher, counselor, or principal including:
  - what, when and where it happened
  - who was involved
  - exactly what was said or what the harasser or bully did
  - witnesses to the harassment or bullying
  - what the student said or did, either at the time or later
  - how the student felt: and

o how the harasser or bully responded

Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Harassment or bullying on the basis of age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status or familial status includes conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, or trouble persons when:

- places the students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property
- has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance: or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse
- pressure for sexual activity
- repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications; and
- suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats

Harassment or bullying based upon factors other than sex includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse
- repeated remarks of a demeaning nature
- implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc; and
- demeaning jokes, stories or activities

### **Large Muscle Activities**

Recess time is incorporated into the daily schedule to develop large muscles. The children are

able to use the playground equipment, play in the grass field, and to use playground balls that are provided. When the weather is unfit to be outside, a gym or multipurpose room may be utilized and a variety of materials will be offered. Gross motor games or dancing played in the classroom, may also be used when the weather is unfit.

### **Legal Status of Student**

If a student's legal status, such as the student's name or the student's custodial arrangement, should change during the school year, the parent or guardian must notify the school district and provide the necessary paperwork. The school district needs to know when these changes occur to ensure that the school district has a current student record. Only legal names are recorded on students' permanent records.

### **Medication**

We prefer that medication be managed by the parent/guardian at home, if at all possible. If necessary, with proper documentation, prescription and non-prescription medications will be administered during the school hours. Any prescription medication brought to the school must be brought to the elementary office in the original container provided by the pharmacist. Medicine must be brought to the office by a parent or guardian. All the following pertinent information must be on the container: student's name, name of medication, dosage, time to be given, special instructions, date and name of physician. Inhalers are prescribed medication. However, a student may carry his/her inhaler if we have a written doctor's note on file in the elementary office. Over-the-counter medications can be administered in the elementary office if parents/guardians have signed a permission form and the medications are sent to school in the container in which they were purchased, labeled with the student's name, name of medication, dosage, time to be given, and special instructions. A note must be sent for your child to have cough drops at school. With a note, students may take a cough drop at the elementary office's discretion, as long as there is no disruption to the class. The cough drops stay in the teacher's possession.

Medicine administrators must complete the Right to Administer Medication training. Annual performance of the medicine administrator will be reviewed by the school or county nurse following the five right practices of administration.

All medications are locked in the cabinet in the elementary office.

### **Non-Custodial Parents**

Upon request, non-custodial parents of students may receive school bulletins, report cards, and other school communication. It is the responsibility of the non-custodial parent to contact the school to make requests for such items each year.

### **Nurse**

A school nurse is employed by the Tri-County Community School District. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school each year if your child has serious health problems such as diabetes, epilepsy, heart problems, etc. The school nurse will convey this confidential



information to the appropriate staff members at the start of the school year. The elementary secretary, in conjunction with the school nurse, is responsible for the maintenance of health records, screenings, parental contacts concerning absences and/or health problems, care of minor injuries, and assistance in the teaching of health. The nurse is not responsible for medical diagnosis. The nurse also serves as a member of the staffing team for children with special concerns, and as a liaison person with medical personnel and community health agencies when appropriate.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held two times during the school year in conjunction with K-6 conferences. Conferences will be scheduled prior to the date. Other scheduled conferences may take place throughout the year on a need basis.

### **Personnel**

The preschool teacher is highly qualified in early child education and early childhood special education. A para-educator assists the teacher with preschool. Staff is trained in pediatric first aid and CPR. The school nurse is accessible to the staff and nurse.

### **Pets**

Pets or visiting animals must have documentation from a vet or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Teaching staff will supervise all interactions between children and animals and will instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Staff will make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal will not be exposed to that animal. Reptiles are NOT allowed because of the risk for salmonella infection.

### **Philosophy**

The Tri-County Community School District is committed to a quality educational program that we believe is essential for every child.

We believe that it is important for children to develop cognitive (thinking), physical, social, emotional, and self-help skills in a nurturing environment. Young children learn best through hands on activities, which gives them first hand knowledge and gives them a foundation for future learning. We work to have a good balance of structured activities, which involve listening and following directions, and unstructured activities, which encourage independence and self control. The curriculum that will be the foundation of Tri-County's program is Creative Curriculum and *World of Wonders*. By doing all of these things, we feel that we are preparing all children for a successful year in kindergarten and making their first school experience positive.

### **Pictures**

Individual student pictures are taken each fall and spring. Detailed information about the prepaid packages will be sent home about one week in advance. Parents should communicate with the classroom teacher if their child is participating in pictures for the Spring.

## **Physical Environment**

The physical environment anticipates individual and small group involvement with a variety of manipulative materials. Spaces are arranged to accommodate movement of children among equipment and materials. Interesting centers invite children to explore and learn necessary skills. To foster creativity, the children are provided with appropriate supplies and are able to obtain these materials on their own when they need to use them.

## **Program Evaluation**

The preschool program will be annually evaluated with a parent/community survey being sent to all preschool parents/guardians. Staff and families will meet to consult on program planning and opportunities. Families are informed of all program changes and events through newsletters, emailed, scheduled meetings, and schedules sent home. (10.15)

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are sent home 3 times a year and progress will be discussed during conferences. If at any time a parent has questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the classroom teacher.

## **Restroom**

There is a restroom located in the preschool room. The children can use the restroom whenever necessary.

## **Roles of the Teacher**

In the preschool classroom, the teacher's roles are that of facilitator, enabler, and coach who observes, asks provoking questions, and provides an island of security and comfort when needed. The teacher provides an environment in which teachers and students learn from one another. Creating a classroom which follows the interests of the children builds a community of learners. The teacher sets up the environment to facilitate the development of skills, to pique interest, to allow for independence, and to challenge students to comprehend at deeper levels by the nature of the questions that they pose. There will be a balance between teacher directed and child directed activities in the classroom.

## **School Safety**

In our efforts to provide a safe environment for your children at school, all entrance doors will be locked except for the west entrance of the high school and the north entrance of the elementary. Please press the button, state your name, and we will let you in.

## **Sexual Abuse and Harassment of Students by Employees**

The school district does not tolerate employees physically or sexually abusing or harassing students. Students who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, teacher, principal, or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees. That procedure requires the school district to designate an independent investigator to look into the allegations. The school district has designated Jennifer Berg at 641-634-2636 as Level I Investigator. Physical abuse is a non-accidental physical injury that leaves a

mark at least 24 hours after the incident. While employees cannot use physical force to discipline a student, there are times when the use of physical force is appropriate. The times when physical force is appropriate include, but are not limited to times when it is necessary to stop a disturbance, for purposes of self-defense or to protect the safety of others, to obtain a weapon or other dangerous object, to remove a disruptive student, to protect others from harm, for protection of property or to protect a student from self-infliction of injury. Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, sexual acts involving a student and intentional sexual behavior as well as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual condition of the student's education or benefits; submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

### **Snack Time**

Children are encouraged, but never forced to eat. Nutritious snacks and drinks are made available as children sit down in small groups enjoying socialization and practicing proper table manners. A list of possible snack items will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Tri-County is a peanut-free campus.

### **Special Feeding and Toileting Needs**

For children with disabilities who have special feeding needs, staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes and will provide families with this information.

For children who are not able to use the toilet consistently, all bulleted guidelines will be enforced as stated in Standard 5: Health (5.7)

### **Special Needs**

When program staff suspect that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this possibility is communicated to families in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner and is provided with documentation and explanation of the concern, suggested next steps, and information about resources for assessment.

### **Staff**

Expectations and role duties will be discussed. Training will be provided as needed.

Specialized training is required for all staff including volunteers. Certified staff are evaluated every three years. Support staff are evaluated annually.

Salary increases by lane each year.

### **Staff Supervision of Children**

Teaching staff supervise children primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out-of-sight (for example: while using the restroom).

### **Staying Inside Due to Illness**

In order for your child to stay inside for recess while everyone else is outside, we will need to have a written doctor's excuse. If your child is too sick in your opinion to go outside for recess, then your child needs to stay home.

### **Student Illness or Injury at School**

A student who becomes ill or is injured at school must notify his/her teacher or another employee as soon as possible. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school shall attempt to notify the parents according to the information on the emergency form. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student will be released to the student's parents or, with parental permission, to another person directed by the parents. While the school district is not responsible for treating medical emergencies, employees may administer emergency or minor first aid, if possible. The school will contact emergency medical personnel if necessary, and attempt to notify the parents where the student has been transported for treatment. Sigourney Hospital is the hospital for the county.

### **Student Records**

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. A copy of the district's policy is available in the office. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of receipt of the request.

Parents should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent of the eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the parent believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents may ask the school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parents, the district will notify the parents of the decision and advise them of their rights to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff, law enforcement, and certain volunteers); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, AEA employees, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or student assistance team, as 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 right to inform the school district the parent does not want directory information including name, address, and telephone number to be released. The objection needs to be renewed annually.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/Ill/fpco>

The preschool must have on file and it is the parent's responsibility to provide

--Preschool enrollment forms

--Physical examination

--Immunization record

### **Sunscreen**

Sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher will be provided to preschool students when students will be outside longer than 20 minutes. A sunscreen note will be in the registration packet.

### **Technology**

All children will have opportunities to access technology (DVD, CD players, computers, iPod Touch, iPads, etc.) that they can use by themselves, collaboratively with peers, and with teaching staff or a parent. Technology is used to extend learning within the classroom and to integrate and enrich the curriculum.

### **Television and Videos**

The use of passive media such as television, film, videotapes, and audiotapes will be limited to developmentally appropriate programming. Usage of these materials will be limited in the preschool classroom.

**Tobacco Free**

The Tri-County building and grounds shall be off limits for use of tobacco products.

**Toilet Training**

If the child is eligible for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program based on age and Iowa residency, the child is eligible for participation in the program regardless of whether the child is toilet trained. The preschool would implement procedures for children not yet toilet trained and assist with classroom practices.

**Tooth Brushing**

Because a preschool child attends preschool for the entire day and is offered lunch and at least one snack, the child may brush his/her teeth on a daily basis following lunch.

**Toy Cleaning**

When toys have been put in a child's mouth, they will be put in a holding basket. Toys will be appropriately cleaned as stated in Standard 5: Health (5.24).

Chemicals are stored in closets.

**Toys from Home**

It is recommended that all toys from home stay at home. The school is not responsible for toys that are lost or damaged. Occasionally, we will have a sharing time when specific items may be brought to class.

**Volunteers**

Volunteers must submit a background check and be approved to be in the classroom.

**Water Table**

Precautions will be taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. No child should drink the water from the water table. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. Fresh portable water will be used, and water will be changed before a new group of children comes to participate in the water play activity. When the activity period is completed with each group of children, the water will be drained.

**Weather**

When the temperature is 60 degrees or above, children may go outside without coats but may still need a sweatshirt. If the wind chill or temperature is below 15 degrees, the preschool children will be kept inside.

**Winter Weather Wear**

During the winter months, recess will be outside unless the wind chill or temperature is below 15

degrees. Everyday your child must have snow pants, boots, gloves/mittens, and a hat or hood. By having these items, children can freely play in the snow and on the equipment instead of walking around on the sidewalk. In the event that a child's clothes get wet from the snow, their clothes will be changed in the privacy of the bathroom. Clothes that they wear will be extras that the family provides or extras provided by the preschool. In the case of using clothes provided by the preschool, it is the family's responsibility to clean the garments and promptly return them to the preschool.