



Dubuque
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

» 2025-2026

PRESCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Dubuque Community School District will not discriminate in its educational activities on the basis of age, ancestry, color, creed, familial status, marital status, national origin, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, political belief, political party preference, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The Dubuque Community School District offers Career Technical Education (CTE) programs in the following service areas:

- Applied Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Manufacturing
- Business, Finance, Marketing, and Management
- Health Sciences
- Human Services
- Information Solutions

To be admitted for CTE courses, students must meet the necessary course prerequisites. The district will not discriminate in determining CTE admission and participation. Lack of English language skills will also not be a barrier to admission and participation in the district's CTE programs.

Please direct inquiries about this statement to:

Brian Kuhle
Dubuque Community Schools
2300 Chaney Road
Dubuque, Iowa 52001-3095

bkuhle@dbqschools.org
563/552-3000

For the full policies, see SCHOOL BOARD POLICY #1005.

WELCOME FAMILIES!

Our goal is to provide a high-quality preschool program meeting each child's needs, including children who are typically developing and children who are entitled for special education services. Our preschools provide a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead a new skill development. It is a setting where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. This is a opportunity for children to take part in planned, active learning experiences to build their readiness skills. Our preschool programs have adopted the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS), administered by the Iowa Department of Education, and use the Iowa Early Learning Standards which provides developmental expectations for preschool-aged children.

Because IQPPS have been adopted by the Dubuque Community Schools Early Childhood Program, specific criteria are referenced throughout this handbook.

Susan Meehan
Administrator, Seedlings Preschool Center

Lynn Glaser
Preschool Educational Support Leader

DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
2025-2026 PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

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»» ABOUT THE DISTRICT

OUR MISSION

TO DEVELOP **world-class learners** AND **citizens of character**
IN A **safe and inclusive** LEARNING COMMUNITY

OUR VISION

Unfolding the potential of every student by empowering the educator/student relationship through:

- » promoting the roles and responsibilities we all have in the 21st-century learning process;
- » removing barriers;
- » creating an environment where character and citizenship count;
- » leveraging content knowledge to become critical thinkers and problem solvers; and
- » providing multiple pathways to unlocking student potential.

OUR VALUES

The Board of Education believes:

- » **we will** celebrate the value each individual brings to our diverse learning community;
- » **we will** make decisions that are student-centered, data-driven and always anchored in sound process;
- » **we will** operate transparently, ethically and equitably with unwavering certainty;
- » **we will** steward our resources wisely, efficiently and purposefully;
- » **we will** improve continuously, seeking to always do better when we know better;
- » **we will** develop and empower leadership across all levels of the district; and
- » **we will** cultivate strong relationships and shared goals as we seek success for all.

Want to see the MISSION, VISION and VALUES come to life?

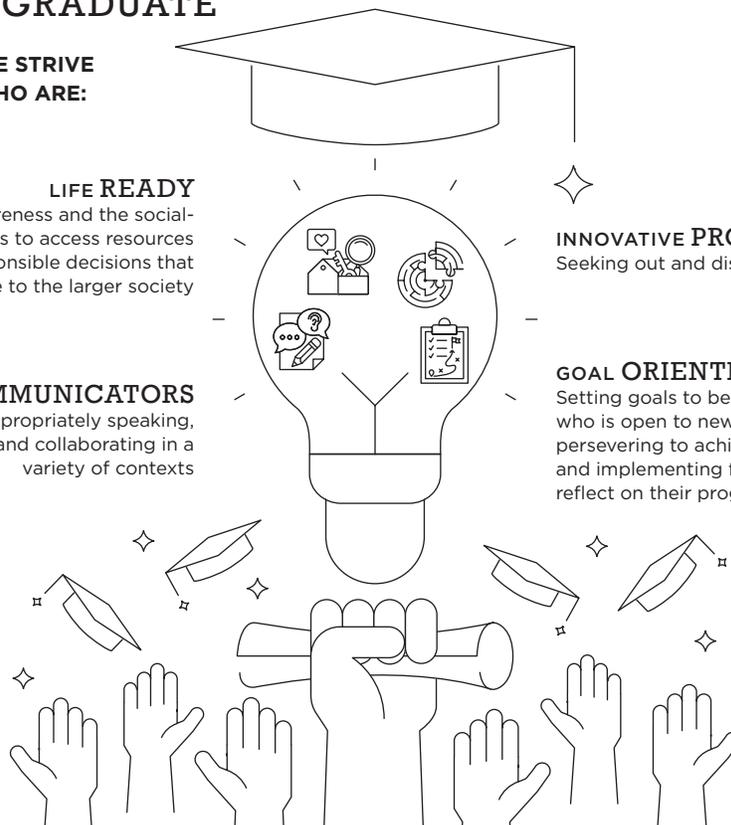
Look no further than the district's strategic plan. Online now at www.dbqschools.org/strategicplan.

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

**IN LIVING OUR MISSION, WE STRIVE
TO CREATE GRADUATES WHO ARE:**

LIFE READY
Having self awareness and the social-emotional competencies to access resources in order to make responsible decisions that contribute to the larger society

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS
Clearly, accurately and appropriately speaking, writing, listening and collaborating in a variety of contexts



INNOVATIVE PROBLEM SOLVERS
Seeking out and discovering original solutions

GOAL ORIENTED
Setting goals to become a well-rounded person who is open to new challenges and experiences, persevering to achieve their goals, accepting and implementing feedback, and are able to reflect on their progress

» PROGRAM DETAILS

ENROLLMENT

ELIGIBILITY

The Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) is for students who are four years old or before September 15 of the school year for which they are enrolled. SWVPP is funded through the Iowa Department of Education.

INCLUSION

Our preschool programs provide for all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs, through a variety of center options. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff members are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children, and their families. Our preschool facilities meet the American Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

PROGRAM OPTIONS + FEES

Children must be four years old on or before September 15 of the year being enrolled. Tuition is paid by SWVPP.

Free four-year-old preschool is offered through both public elementary schools and a number of private community partner preschools that operate independently, yet coordinate with the Dubuque Community Schools to provide consistent and comparable programming. All programs meet the requirements set forth by the Iowa Department of Education for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program.

For a listing of all participating preschools, see page 6.

ATTENDANCE

Students who are enrolled for classes in the DCSD preschool programs are expected to be in school for the full session. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat necessary information and adjust for those students who have been absent. Please call your child's school or center when your child will be absent, with the reason of absence. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school/center will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

According to Iowa Code 299.1A(2) (2013), "A child who has reached the age of four by September 15 and who is enrolled in the statewide preschool program under chapter 256C shall be considered to be of compulsory attendance age unless the parent or guardian of the child submits written notice to the school district implementing the program of the parent's or guardian's intent to remove the child from enrollment in the preschool program." The school/center administrator and Early Childhood Facilitator reserve the right to review attendance of students.

TRANSPORTATION

Preschool students are expected to arrive and depart from their preschool site at the designated beginning and ending times for their classroom. Children should be secured in appropriate safety car seats when arriving and departing from the preschool.

If your child is eligible for and uses district transportation, teaching staff will go to each bus as it arrives to greet and assist the student off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each student to the bus. All students will be in an appropriate bus vest, seat belt, or restraint system. Families are asked to keep their information current by reporting changes to the preschool teacher.

STAFF

Our preschool programs follow staff regulations and certification requirements. Our programs follow requirements for staffing for Iowa's Quality Preschool Program standards of maintaining an adult/child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. Student/teacher ratios may be different at each site based on the continuum of services provided.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteering is a rewarding and enriching way to serve students in our community. Those interested in volunteering should contact the main office at the school/center to request the necessary paperwork.

» PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT PRESCHOOLS

Audubon Elementary School

605 Lincoln Avenue
audubon.dbqschools.org
Principal: Ed Glaser
eglaser@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-3300

Bryant Elementary School

1280 Rush Street
bryant.dbqschools.org
Principal: Megan Richardson
mrichardson@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-3400

Carver Elementary School

2007 Radford Road
carver.dbqschools.org
Principal: Erik Johnson
ejohnson@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-4500

Eisenhower Elementary School

3170 Spring Valley Road
eisenhower.dbqschools.org
Principal: Andy Ferguson
aferguson@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-3500

Irving Elementary School

2520 Pennsylvania Avenue
irving.dbqschools.org
Principal: Renee Wagner
rwagner@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-3800

Kennedy Elementary School

2135 Woodland Drive
kennedy.dbqschools.org
Principal: Andy Peterson
apeterson@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-3900

Lincoln Elementary School

555 Nevada Street
lincoln.dbqschools.org
Principal: Megan Elsinger
melsinger@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-4050

Marshall Elementary School

1450 Rhombert Avenue
marshall.dbqschools.org
Principal: Nick Hess
nhess@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-4100

Prescott Elementary School

1151 White Street
prescott.dbqschools.org
Principal: Chris Nugent
cnugent@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-4200

Sageville Elementary School

12015 Sherrill Road
sageville.dbqschools.org
Principal: Kathleen Walech-Haas
kwalech@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-4300

Table Mound Elementary School

100 Tower Drive
tablemound.dbqschools.org
Principal: Matthew Hull
mhull@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-4400

Seedlings Preschool Center

7810 Chavenelle Road
www.dbqschools.org/seedlings
Administrator: Susan Meehan
smeehan@dbqschools.org
P: 563/552-3680

COMMUNITY PARTNER PRESCHOOLS

ABC Learning

15 Nightengale Lane
Director: Holly Richards
hollyabclearn@gmail.com
P: 563/583-6654

Dubuque Child Care Center

3100 Cedar Crest Ridge; #5
Director: Mackenzie Sertle
m.c.sertle@gmail.com
P: 563/556-0943

Frog Hollow Kid Campus

5005 Asbury Road
asbury.froghollowkids.com
Directors: Nicole Schottmiller or Kayla Parcell
asbury@froghollowkids.com
P: 563/582-2200

Grand View Child Development Center

3342 John Wesley Drive
www.grandviewdubuque.org
Director: Brandi Shinkle
grandviewpreschool@gmail.com
P: 563/582-1125

Holy Ghost Early Childhood Center

2981 Central Avenue
www.holyfamilydbq.org/early-childhood
Director: Anita Valentine
avalentine@hollyfamilydbq.org
P: 563/582-2578

Key West Early Childhood Center

10244 Key West Drive
www.kwecc.com
Director: Sue Ellen Nolan
kwecc@yousq.net
P: 563/583-1881

Mercy Child Development Center

250 Mercy Drive
www.mercyone.org
Director: Maddy Marty
madeline.marty@mercyhealth.com
563/589-9680

New Horizon Academy

799 Locust Street
www.newhorizonacademy.net/location/
dubuque-ia-cottingham-butler
Director: Christina Berger
3011@nhacademy.net
P: 563/216-1254

Noah's Ark

1755 Delhi Street
htlcbdq.com/noahs-ark-preschool
Director: Jenifer Montgomery
director@noahsarkdbq.com
P: 563/557-8629

Our Lady of Guadalupe Early Childhood Center

2005 Kane Street
www.holyfamilydbq.org/early-childhood
Director: Tina Pothoff
tpothoff@hollyfamilydbq.org
P: 563/556-2820

Our Redeemer Lutheran Preschool

2145 JFK Road
www.orlpreschool.org
Director: Amy Kruse
orlpreschool@gmail.com
P: 563/588-1247

Resurrection Early Childhood Center

4320 Asbury Road
www.holyfamilydbq.org/early-childhood
Director: Emily Burke
eburke@hollyfamilydbq.org
P: 563/583-5206

St. Columbkille Early Childhood Center

1198 Rush Street
www.holyfamilydbq.org/early-childhood
Director: Marcy Weidenbacher
mweidenbacher@hollyfamilydbq.org
P: 563/583-1620

St. Joseph the Worker Early Childhood Center

2105 St. Joseph Street
www.holyfamilydbq.org/early-childhood
Director: Joann O'Connell
joconnell@hollyfamilydbq.org
P: 563/582-1246

University of Dubuque Childcare Center

1001 McCormick Street
www.dbq.edu/aboutud/childcarecenter
Director: Tammy Pierro
tpierro@dbq.edu
563/585-7461

Young-Uns Preschool and Childcare Center

3375 Kennedy Circle
www.young-uns.org
Director: Barb Weber
bweber@yousq.net
P: 563/584-9284

PLEASE NOTE:

This listing is current as of August 1, 2025.

Find the most up-to-date listing of participating preschools online at:

www.dbqschools.org/preschool/directory

» STUDENT EXPERIENCE

DAILY SCHEDULE

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning opportunities are formal and informal. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day: small and large group, self-initiated learning, creative expression, early literacy experiences, and fine and gross motor activities. Purposeful play is planned for each day.

CURRICULUM

Our preschool programs use The Creative Curriculum as its framework. The Creative Curriculum is a research-based preschool curriculum that focuses on four main developmental areas: social and emotional development, physical development, cognitive development, and language development. A family's culture and the child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important part of the child's growth and development. The curriculum goals and objectives will guide teachers' planning and instruction on the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool and/or other research-based assessment tools.

👉 LEARN MORE ABOUT...

The Creative Curriculum at:
teachingstrategies.com/solutions/teach/preschool

Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment at:
teachingstrategies.com/solutions/assess/gold

Each day, the children have an opportunity to self-select where they might like to play and work. Here is a list of some of the centers and some typical activities:

- **Art:** Students may choose a variety of art materials to create works of art.
- **Blocks:** Students can build with different types of blocks and also engage in imaginary play with play people, dinosaurs, animals, etc.
- **Dramatic Play:** Students may role-play and pretend with props and settings, as well as utilize social skills.
- **Library:** Students have an opportunity to enjoy a variety of books independently or with peers.
- **Science:** Children will explore their world with a variety of science materials.
- **Sensory Table:** Students can develop their senses and cognitive development through play in a sensory table. (Items may include: water, sand, snow, pasta, rice.) Materials are rotated on a regular basis to sustain interest and maintain cleanliness.
- **Technology:** Students will have learning opportunities using various media and technology.
- **Toys and Games:** Children will develop cognitive skills, such as counting, problem-solving, categorizing, and matching, as well as play games with rules through a variety of toys, learning materials, and games.
- **Writing:** Students have access to a variety of writing utensils and materials.

ASSESSMENT

Children may be assessed in any of the following ways:

- Teaching Strategies GOLD (learn more at: teachingstrategies.com/solutions/assess/gold)
- Ongoing observations help to ensure child's progress during daily activities.
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and may include assessments and child work samples that are collected on an ongoing basis.
- Information shared by families.

The assessment information from the above is used to help guide instruction based on the children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan individualized and effective instruction.

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Family/Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time. If the observation and/or assessment data indicates a need for further assessments of screening, the teacher can assist the family through the process. The preschool team, along with the family, and Keystone AEA staff will come together to discuss concerns and create an action plan. Likewise, if a family member has a concern about the progress of their children they are encouraged to share those concerns with the teacher. Families and teachers can then work together toward making an action plan.

FOOD + NUTRITION

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy and request a variety of foods from their own cultures and others, and to help them begin to appreciate that their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods and eating in a relaxed and social atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form. Snack is also an excellent time for language modeling.

Children are offered one snack during the preschool session. Our preschools serve a wide variety of nutritious snacks, and encourage children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered. Snacks need to be commercially packaged.

Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach, and foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served. All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and a specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the children during the day. When any child with a disability has special feeding needs, the program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes and will provide family with that information.

High-risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. For children younger than four years, these include hotdogs, whole or sliced into rounds: whole grapes: nuts: popcorn: raw peas and hard pretzels: spoonful of peanut butter: or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Our preschool staff will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline. An appropriate snack is offered to all children.

OUTSIDE PLAY + LEARNING

We have daily opportunities for 15-30 minutes of outdoor play as the weather permits. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active together. Parents are informed of appropriate outerwear and encouraged to provide those items. Staff will ensure that children are appropriately dressed for outdoor play. The outdoor play equipment is age and developmentally appropriate, is fenced to avoid hazards, and arranged so staff can easily supervise children. A playground safety checklist is completed and on file.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather or other conditions), children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

WATER PLAY

When a water play table is present in the classroom for the children to stand and play with their hands in the water, the following procedures will be followed. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water play. Children are not allowed to drink the water in the water table. When the activity is complete, the water table is drained, sanitized, and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children come to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers, as well as the water table. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound during such water activities.

FIELD TRIPS

Refer to district school board policy #6200, available on the district website at www.dbqschools.org/school-board/policies.

» FAMILY CONNECTION

INVOLVEMENT

We encourage families to be involved in their child's education. Teachers use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of the child's learning practices and communication, as well as any information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural background that they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year for all Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program students. Family/Teacher Conferences are held in both fall and spring semesters for all students. At least one Family Night is held during the year.

We invite families to be involved in one or all of the following ways and welcome other ideas!

- Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities.
- Keep the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child and allow the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
- Attend family meetings.
- Return all forms and questionnaires promptly.
- Attend Family/Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring semesters.
- Check your child's backpack every day.
- Read all materials sent home with your child.
- Share your cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
- Share your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or items from your travels.
- Come to play!

The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency and to families with children with disabilities. This will include providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent possible, in a language the family understands.

In our preschools, we believe that families should be supported in making decisions about the services that their child may need. Each district and community preschool program support families so that they may best advocate for their child. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections.

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child, whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Preschool staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting the family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will also provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

Home visits are made prior to the start of school. This is an opportunity for the preschool teacher to get to know your child and family, and begin to create a partnership between home and school. The visits are a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs.

OBJECTS FROM HOME

The preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, and we ask that you limit toys brought from home. If your child brings an "attachment" item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside their backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

COMMUNICATION

The program will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informal conversations or email. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information so all staff who work with the child can share the family's communication. Families are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs — email, in-person, notes, or phone calls.

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high-quality early childhood program. Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the school/center office. The preschool staff wants families to feel confident that their child is being well cared for and is receiving a quality experience at school. Families are always encouraged to address concerns with the child's teachers. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for assistance from the school/center administrator or Early Childhood Facilitator.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Parent/guardian input is vital to our preschool programs' improvement. Input can be provided through communicating with your child's preschool teacher, the school/center administrator, the Early Childhood Facilitator, and/or completing the annual preschool survey. The survey will be provided to every family during the spring family/teacher conference and is used to determine goals for our programs. Survey results will be shared with each preschool program. Families can be part of center/school through volunteering, and/or joining committees; if interested please contact the school/center administrator.

» HEALTH + SAFETY

Our preschool programs are committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow the guidelines required by the Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

HEALTH + IMMUNIZATION CERTIFICATES

By the first day of a child beginning in the program, health records that document the dates of service must be submitted that shows the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Up-to-date health records include:

- A physical completed within the last 12 months.
- Immunizations: The record of immunization requirement may be met through submission of an approved:
 - Iowa HHS immunization record,
 - Iowa HHS provisional record demonstrating that the student has begun the required immunizations,
 - Iowa HHS religious exemption record or,
 - Iowa HHS medical exemption record signed by a prescribing doctor specifying that the immunizations required would be injurious to the student or to any household member (exemptions do not apply when the Iowa Council of Health and Human Services has determined and the Director of Iowa Health and Human Services has declared an emergency or epidemic exists)

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both must provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program. The program must follow the requirements for exclusions related to immunizations established by the Iowa Department of Public Health [IAC 641-7.3].

GENERAL HEALTH + SAFETY GUIDELINES

All staff must be alert to the health of each child they are working with, known allergies, or special medical conditions. Under the supervision of the preschool teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.

- All staff members are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff members are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training and pediatric CPR is always present with each group of children.

HEALTH + SAFETY RECORDS

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. The school nurse or center director maintains student health records that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records, the child's parent or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, upon request.

Child Health and Safety Records will 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.
- 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).
- Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergies, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems and other chronic conditions); conditions that require regular medication or technology support.
- Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implements a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

ILLNESS POLICY + EXCLUSION OF SICK CHILDREN

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that the preschool has current, accurate phone numbers for you and your authorized emergency contact person. A staff member (who is familiar with the student) will provide the child a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian, or designated person arrives. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then he/she will be kept in an appropriate area where new individuals will not be exposed.

Refer to district or center illness policy for additional information and guidance.

REPORTING COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of a communicable disease occur.

MEDICATION POLICIES + PROCEDURES

Policy: The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent/guardian and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in the school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Procedure: The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian and health provider has given written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional, on the practice of the six right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. (6) The person giving the medication signs documentation of items (1) through (5) above. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these six right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at the school.

For students attending a district preschool, the Request for Medication to be Given at School Form is available in your school's nurses office.

For students attending a partner preschool, contact the director of the preschool to request the necessary paperwork.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES + NOTIFICATION OF ACCIDENTS OR INCIDENTS

A student who becomes ill or is injured at school must notify his or her teacher or another employee as soon as possible. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school/center shall attempt to notify the parents/guardians with the phone numbers on file. If no one is available by phone and the condition is or has the potential to become life threatening, the school/center personnel will call 9-1-1. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student will be released to the student's parents/guardian or, with parental permission, to another person directed by the parents/guardians.

FIRST AID KIT

A first aid kit is located in every preschool classroom. It is inaccessible to children but readily available for adult use. The first aid kit is appropriately and fully equipped to the nurse's guidance. Following use of the first aid kit, the contents will be inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. The first aid kit will be inspected monthly. The kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

FIRE SAFETY

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request.

SMOKE FREE FACILITY

In compliance with the Iowa Smoke Free Air Act of 2008, Dubuque Community School District buildings and grounds are smoke-free. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children. At community partner preschools, the facility and outdoor play areas are smoke-free and no smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

CLEANING + SANITIZATION

Classroom areas will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated will be removed immediately and disinfected prior to using again. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using an acceptable and safe disinfectant. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used. Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers, such as gloves, and proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency table in Section III, page 47 of the QPPS manual. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Nontoxic substances will be used whenever possible.

HAND WASHING PRACTICES

Frequent hand washing is key in preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding 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 when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and others.
- Staff will assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day.
- after diapering or using the toilet.
- after handling body fluids (e.g. blowing or wiping a nose; coughing on a hand; or any touching of mucus, blood, or vomit).
- before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g. meat, eggs, poultry).
- before and after playing in water that is shared by two or more people.
- after handling pets or visiting animals.

DIAPER PROCEDURES

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. The teacher and/or administrator will work with the family to develop a toileting plan for a child who is not toilet trained before school begins.

For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

- Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area (which has an elevated surface).

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

- Clothing that is 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 will check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every two hours.
- Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
- 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. step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
- Diapering posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words.

ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

Student safety and the cleanliness of the building are put at risk when animals accompany their owners for a drop-in visit at school. Other than a few exceptions, animals are not allowed in Dubuque Community School District buildings. In keeping with state and federal law, we recognize there may be a need for employees or students to use or have access to qualified service animals. Students who have a need of a service animal which is defined by law as “animals that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for persons with disabilities,” should consult with their building administrator.

Refer to district school board policy #7202, available on the district website at www.dbqschools.org/school-board/policies.

INCLEMENT WEATHER + CANCELLATION DUE TO WEATHER

For district preschools:

- Inclement weather may cause the district to delay start times, release early, transition to a virtual learning day or, in rare instances, cancel the school day. This decision is based on district-wide conditions, on-site observations and weather reports.
- When a schedule change is made due to inclement weather, families will be notified by phone, email and/or text message using the district’s mass notification system.
- The district’s inclement weather line (563/552-3035), website (www.dbqschools.org), and social media channels (facebook.com/dbqschools and x.com/dbqschools) will also be updated and area television and radio stations will be notified of the change.
- When a virtual learning day is called, it is considered a school day. If a day was canceled completely, it would be made up at the end of the school year.

For partner preschools:

- Schedule changes due to inclement weather will be shared by the partner preschool.
- Contact the director of the preschool for their policy regarding delays and cancellations.

» POLICIES + PROCEDURES

ETHICS, CONFIDENTIALITY + STUDENT RECORDS

Staff members follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. The preschool staff members will refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent/guardian.

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest are allowed to access a student's records without parent/guardian permission.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign the Authorization for Release of Confidential Information form should they or the school request student records information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways the parents/guardians can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

SUPERVISION POLICY

Our preschool staff will be responsible for making sure all indoor/outdoor environments are safe for children. No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Children will be supervised primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (such as those who can use the toilet independently). Staff will make every reasonable effort to protect the children in their care from hazards. Each preschool classroom provides at least 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child.

CHILD GUIDANCE + DISCIPLINE

Teaching staff will use positive guidance, redirection, and pre-planning with all children in the classroom. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent, clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. Using appropriate language for the child, discipline will be explained before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people be fair, respect property, and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

The teaching staff in our preschools is highly trained in behavior management. Aggressive physical behavior toward children or staff is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive in order to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior. Teachers will communicate with family members about their child's behavior, and seek their input. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff and family members with support from AEA consultants will problem solve to determine the most effective strategies for the student to successfully participate. All district preschool classrooms are equipped to support children on Individual Behavior Plans.

EXPULSION/ SUSPENSION

Preschool and administrative staff will provide alternatives to expulsions so they are infrequent or unnecessary. Expulsions and suspension will only be used as a last resort when a serious concern cannot be eliminated with reasonable modifications.

Removals such as expulsion or suspension will only be used as a last resort when there is a serious safety concern that cannot be reduced or eliminated with other reasonable interventions by staff. We want to avoid these interruptions in learning and the negative impact that these removals have on positive relationships within our preschool classroom.

WEAPONS POLICY

Refer to district school board policy #5202, available on the district website at www.dbqschools.org/school-board/policies.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

The health, well-being, and protection of every child is of the utmost importance. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with the preschool program (who has direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children) must execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition, no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

MANDATORY REPORTING

The Dubuque Community School District strongly supports Chapter 232 of the Iowa Code and requires that all employees who are mandatory reporters under this Chapter be familiar with the requirements therein.

The Code of Iowa requires mandatory reporters to report to the Department of Human Services all instances of suspected child abuse involving students. The law further states that any person required to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly fails to do so, or who knowingly interferes with the making of such a report in violation of section 232.70, is civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by such failure or interference.

The Code provides immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, to anyone participating in good faith in the making of a report or in the judicial proceedings that may result from the report.

BOARD POLICIES + LEGAL NOTIFICATIONS

SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

The full listing of district school board policies can be found at www.dbqschools.org/school-board/policies.

- #1001: Anti-Bullying / Anti-Harassment
- #1003: Cultural Proficiency Philosophy
- #1005: Anti-Discrimination
- #1006: Discrimination and Harassment Based on Sex Prohibited
- #2210: General Complaints by Citizens
- #4601: Tobacco Free Environment
- #4606: Abuse of Students by School District Employees
- #4609: Substance-Free Workplace
- #5103: Student Records Access
- #5107: Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy
- #5200: Student Conduct
- #5308: Student Expression
- #5405: Wellness
- #5501: Law Enforcement-School Collaboration
- #5507: Student Use of Personal Electronic Devices
- #5504: Student Responsible Use of Technology
- #9005: Public Conduct on School Premises

NOTICES

The full listing of notifications the Dubuque Community School District is required by law to provide can be found at www.dbqschools.org/district/notices.

- Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)
- Release of Student Information

