

Hillsboro Early Childhood Preschool for All Programs Parent Handbook 2017-2018

Hillsboro Early Childhood Program is the Hillsboro CUSD#3 Illinois State Board grant funded pre-school program for children 3-5 years of age. Our classrooms are located at 3 attendance sites in the district, Hillsboro Free Methodist Church, Coffeen Elementary School, and Hillsboro Community Child Development Center (HCCDC) on the hospital grounds. All 3 sites offer the same family involvement activities, parent resources, developmentally appropriate curriculum, certified Early Childhood teachers and state certified teaching assistants. Our district provides the least restrictive inclusionary setting for all children, regardless of their developmental level or disability.

It is the mission of Hillsboro Early Childhood Programs to facilitate the development of children and to strengthen and support families in their efforts to prepare their children for future school success, using research based, developmentally appropriate methods and fully including all children.

Your child will benefit from an enriching preschool environment and experience the joys of making new friends, the excitement of learning new skills, and the opportunity to develop independence. Activities are always aligned with the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. Our curriculum is entirely *play-based* and assessment is *authentic* in the natural play setting using appropriate practices for preschool age children as outlined by The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, 4th Edition.

IMPORTANT DATES AND TIMES

Registration: Wed Aug 2, 8:00am-3:00pm at Beckemeyer School in Hillsboro
 Mon Aug 7, 8:00am-4:00pm at Coffeen School
 Tues Aug 8, 12:00-6:00pm at Coffeen School

ALL Pre-K students must register on these dates, new and returning!

Registration will only take about 10-15 minutes. Your child does not need to be present. Final paperwork is done at that time. A school nurse will be there to review health info. Please bring the following to registration:

- ✓ **Completed Physical/Immunization Form(s) (*new students only*)**
- ✓ **Accurate address(s) for transportation (*if using bussing*)**
- ✓ **Birth Certificate (*unless previously provided*)**

Orientation PARENTS ONLY at your child's attendance center:

FMC and Coffeen Centers: Wednesday, Aug 16th 10:00am OR Thursday, Aug 17th 6:00pm
 HCCDC (Hillsboro Community Child Development Center): *ONLY* Thursday, Aug 17th @6:00

ONLY families **NEW** to Pre-K are required to come to Orientation!

Open House CHILDREN AND PARENTS: Thursday Aug 24th, stop by between 3:00 and 7:00pm to drop off supplies, see the classroom, and meet the staff!

First Day Pre-K: Monday, August 28 at FMC and Coffeen (HCCDC to be arranged).

YOU AND YOUR CHILD

You are your child's first teacher. Parents are THE most important people in a child's life. Everyone needs help being a parent! None of us are born parents. We learn to be parents by:

1. Talking to and watching other parents.
2. Reading books.
3. Listening to the advice of doctors and other professionals.
4. Remembering how our parents raised us.

Parents teach their children by **PLAYING** with them, **TALKING TO** and **EXPLAINING** things to them, and by **SETTING CONSISTENT LIMITS**. We believe that parents are the biggest influence on their child's school success. For that reason, we find as many ways to communicate with you as possible. Because there is **NO COST** for the pre-Kindergarten Program, we **REQUIRE** parents to volunteer in some way. Your child's teacher will provide you with a list of ways that we want you to help us.

COMMUNICATION

We encourage you to visit your child's school anytime. It is best to wait until after the first couple weeks, until they have established a routine and feel comfortable with teachers and peers.

We provide a journal to write back and forth notes from school to home, especially important if your children are being bussed to and from school.

You will receive a monthly calendar from the main office with Pre-K news, family events, parent workshops, and attendance schedules. You will also receive a weekly calendar from your classroom teacher with classroom activities and reminders.

The phone contact is provided on your monthly calendar if you need to speak with the program director for any reason, Mrs. Lockett at 217-534-2314.

CLASS SCHEDULES

Classes at Coffeen and the FMC are half-day sessions, AM and PM. They meet 5 days per week, Monday - Friday for 2.5-3 hours per day. To attend the Friday class, parents must make a year-long commitment for their child's enrollment on the 5th day. Morning sessions are approximately 8:15-10:45, afternoon sessions are 12:15-2:45, but vary by location due to transportation schedules.

Hillsboro Child Development Center (HCCDC) is a daycare located on the Hillsboro Hospital grounds. This center is part of the HCCDC daycare program. All Pre-school children at this site must be enrolled full-time in the daycare center. The fees for 3-5 year olds are reduced because of the Pre-School program provided by the Pre-Kindergarten grant. This class meets 5 days per week, Monday - Friday from approximately 8:45-11:30. There is no bussing to or from this center.

BUSSING

ISBE Early Education Program funding does *not* require that school districts provide bussing for pre-school aged children. With the rising cost of transportation, bussing is not provided from the door of every home to and from school, and is only available Monday-Thursday. You will receive information about transportation after registration.

- HCCDC daycare center Pre-K children are only transported to and from school by parents. No bussing is available to the center unless a child has a special education program they must attend elsewhere.
- FMC Pre-K children are only transported to and from school by parents. No bussing is available to the center.
- Coffeen students are provided with bussing Monday - Thursday*, but may have *designated bus stops* for children in some areas. Your child's teacher will discuss the designated location with you prior to enrollment. The only Friday bussing to Coffeen is for children attending Mrs. Isaak's special education class.

*Children attending Special Education Classes have bussing Monday-Friday.

FEES AND CHARGES

There are no fees or charges for Pre-K. We are funded through grants from the Illinois State Board of Education. All school supplies or wish lists sent home by teachers are donations, and not required for attendance. If your child attends HCCDC, all 3-5 year olds participate in the pre-school program and automatically receive a discounted monthly fee from their daycare fees.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS—EARLY DISMISSALS

A parent alert broadcast with any changes in school closing times due to snow, ice, fog, or emergencies will go out to the first 2 primary contact numbers on file for each student. It is very important to keep contact numbers up to date and on file in our office.

School closings or delayed opening times will usually be broadcast from 6:00 a.m. until school opening time. In the event of early dismissals, the call will go out as soon as the decision is made from the unit office during the school day.

All school busses are equipped with radios with a base unit located at the bus garage and all attendance centers. If at any time you are concerned about your child's late arrival, call the Pre-K office and we can contact the bus driver directly!

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Our parking lots can become very congested at arrival and dismissal times. If you are ever transporting your child to or from school, please escort your child into the classroom and out. Check with your child's teacher for the best time to drop off or pick up. Please hold your child's hand in the parking lot and never leave a car running on school grounds. If you have an infant, please do not leave them unattended. Speak with your child's teacher about special arrangements if you have physical limitations, a child with special needs, or an infant. We understand that situations make it difficult for you to come in and out of the building, and will accommodate this need to the best of our ability.

If someone other than parents are to pick up your Pre-k Child, you **MUST** *notify us in writing, or give us a call* when there is not time for a note. We cannot legally send a child with anyone other than parents or those designated by the parents or guardians in writing.

SCHOOL BUS INFORMATION

(This section does not apply to HCCDC)

Many children will ride the bus to and from school, unless they are attending the daycare center program. You will be notified as to the exact time and place your child will meet the bus.

1. Have your child at the bus stop **before** your scheduled pick-up time. Children should be ready for the bus (coats and backpacks already on) before it arrives.
2. Remind your child to follow the bus rules, especially: **STAY IN ONE SEAT. REMAIN SEATED AT ALL TIMES. KEEP HANDS TO YOURSELF. USE YOUR QUIET VOICE.**
- 3.* A responsible person **MUST** meet the bus and see the child home safely. A bus driver **CANNOT** drop off a preschooler unless he/she knows someone is at the bus stop to meet the child. If no one is there to meet the preschooler, the child will be kept on the bus and taken to the bus garage at the high school. You will be called and it will be your responsibility to pick your child up. **You will only be allowed to have this happen two times, if it happens a third time, your child may lose bus privileges.**
4. Please notify the school and bus garage if your child is ill or unable to attend so that the bus driver can be notified and not stop to pick up your child. Bus garage: 532-6012 Pre-K: 534-2314.
5. If your child is to be picked up or dropped off at a different location other than his regular bus stop, you need to make these arrangements in advance with the Pre-K Coordinator unless it is an emergency.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The teachers and assistants value the privacy of your child and your family. Our staff is trained and carefully follows our confidentiality policy. You can be confident that no staff member will discuss your child in any way at school unless it pertains to their educational plan. You can also be confident that they will not discuss any child outside of the school setting.

It is just as important that when you visit your child's school that you respect the privacy of all children and families. When you visit you will see many children who are just developing the social skills of turn taking, sharing, interacting with peers and following a routine.

All children have emotional ups and downs as they learn, just like at home. They are likely to act very differently when parents are present at *their* school. We find that children fully accept and understand their peers at this early age, no matter what the behavior, delay or disability may be. Please do not make judgements or comments about others.

When you visit our classrooms, please fully respect the privacy of all families and children. Every child and family deserves the same respect that you want others to have for your own child and family.

DRESS

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that they can learn to manage themselves in the bathroom. They also need comfortable shoes, as part of their program involves large motor skill development of running, jumping, hopping, skipping and riding bikes, all of which we do daily. Cowboy boots and shiny dress shoes should be saved for other occasions.

We go outdoors until temperatures fall below 32 degrees! Please send the appropriate gloves, hats, and jackets as the weather requires.

SPECIAL POLICIES

1. Please do not send toys with your child to school. Remind them that it may get lost or broken and that we have plenty of toys at school.
2. Each teacher will inform by her calendar how she will celebrate each holiday. We are very careful to respect the traditions and beliefs of all families. We are also careful to make holidays fun, not stressful or confusing to young children. Your teacher can explain this.
3. Birthdays will be celebrated by each teacher in a special way. Your child's birthday will still be celebrated even if you do not send anything. If you choose to send something, it must be a healthy treat approved by your teacher and pre-packaged.
4. We do not serve children sugary unhealthy snacks like candy or things with icing in our classrooms. Some suggestions are ice cream, yogurt, popsicles,

jello, pudding, fruit, or let us provide the snack and send hats, plates or napkins in your child's favorite color or theme.

HEALTH, IMMUNIZATIONS, MEDICATIONS

Your child's health is very important! Good health will make it easier for him/her to succeed. Children need to develop good health habits at an early age and YOU are the teacher they learn from the most! Please set a good example for your child.

1. **Before your child begins school, he/she will need a current PHYSICAL EXAM completed by your doctor.** The IDHS physical form is required for all IL schools. A visit to the dentist is also strongly recommended. Your child's immunizations including the lead screen portion of the form, parent signature and physician signature, **MUST be turned in to the school by the first day of attendance, or you child will not be allowed to attend.**
2. Children DO NOT need to be "potty trained" to come to school! We are ready for your child wherever they are in the many stages of toilet training.
3. Please ensure your child bathes regularly. Teeth need to be brushed daily. Children, even at age 3 and 4, are extremely honest and verbal about what they see and smell and can make a child who has poor hygiene feel very bad unintentionally. Children of this age delight in being able to bathe and brush their own teeth and develop quite a sense of confidence and good self-esteem as they care for their own needs.
4. Your child needs **ten hours of rest per night**. Going to school is a big job and children need lots of energy to be ready to go each day. If bedtime is a problem, please discuss this with us as we have had lots of success with some solutions to this common problem.
5. **DO NOT send your child to school if ILL or has:**
 - a. a fever (or has had a fever within 24 hours)
 - b. a bad cold or cough
 - c. diarrhea
 - d. sore throat
 - e. been vomiting, or has a severe stomachache
 - f. a rash of unknown cause
 - g. a severe toothache, earache, or headache
 - h. watery, red, swollen eyes of unknown origin
5. **It is extremely important that you share with your child's teacher any allergies your child has to food or the environment!** She will pass that information on to the building nurse.

*The official policy of the Hillsboro School Board is that all medication that a child needs to receive during the day must be left with the school nurse or designee. All medication should be in its original container or prescription bottle with the child's name, doctor's name, contents, and dosage clearly marked as appropriate. **NO MEDICATION CAN BE ADMINISTERED WITHOUT A SCHOOL MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM** signed by the parent and physician.

PRESCHOOL TO KINDERGARTEN TRANSITION PLAN

Fall:

- Parents will be notified in mid-August by letter from the Elementary Building Principal of the school they will attend regarding Kindergarten entry, registration, and any first week activities, including meeting their child's teacher and visiting the classroom for the first time.
- Pre-Kindergarten teachers meet with Kindergarten teachers at the beginning of the school year to review student portfolios and focus their discussion on your child's strengths and how they learn best, giving attention to any special circumstances that may impact your child's learning.

Winter:

- The Kindergarten/Pre-Kindergarten teachers discuss their expectations and what they believe the students need to be learning.
- Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten teachers meet on a School Improvement Planning day to discuss expectations for the children going into Kindergarten.
- They compare expectations and create an appropriate list of expectations agreeable to both groups of teachers and align to the IL Early Learning Standards and IL Early Learning Kindergarten Standards.

Spring:

- Four to six weeks prior to the last day of preschool, a parent/teacher conference will be held to review portfolios with parents. The teacher will discuss your child's progress and show evidence of their strengths from photos, documentation, and skills checklist. She will discuss skills that are still emerging and provide suggestions of ways you can help your child over the summer months to continue to encourage the development of these skills.
- Two to three weeks before the last day of preschool, teachers will begin incorporating activities and discussions into the daily routine about the transition they will be making to a new teacher, classroom, and in some cases, school. Children will be reading related books, participating in group activities, and taking active rolls in group discussions about transitioning to Kindergarten.

- One to two weeks before the last day of preschool, we will hold a Kindergarten Transition parent meeting to discuss the expectations of Kindergarten with you. During this meeting, you will have a chance to meet and speak with the teachers and learn the health requirements for attending Kindergarten. Your child will visit a Kindergarten classroom, read a related book, and participate in a few learning center activities related to the book. At the Kindergarten Transition meeting, your family will receive a copy of the Kindergarten Transition book to read and discuss Kindergarten with your child throughout the summer, and your family will get a tour of the building to familiarize you and your child with the building they will be attending in the fall.

Summer:

- Visit the school and play on the playground periodically. Take frequent walks or drive by the school so that your child can become comfortable with the new surroundings.