

Webster City Community Preschools

**Asbury United Methodist Preschool
Riverview Daycare Preschool
St. Paul Lutheran Preschool
St. Thomas Catholic Preschool**

Program Policies and Procedures



Webster City Community Schools District Office
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Preschool Policies and Procedures

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Webster City Community Preschools Program Policies and Procedures

I. WELCOME TO WEBSTER CITY COMMUNITY PRESCHOOLS QPPS 10.1

Webster City Community School District was awarded the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Grant in 2008 as a result of the Preschool Advisory Committee's dedicated work. The program's goal is to provide a high quality preschool program meeting each child's needs, including children with disabilities and those from a diverse background. The preschool provides a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. This is an opportunity for all four-year-old children to take part in planned, active learning experiences to build their readiness skills. The preschool program has adopted and meets the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, administered by the Iowa Department of Education. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are used to guide expectations for the children and instructional practices.

I. MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND GOALS QPPS 10.1

Mission:

Webster City Community School District, in partnership with families and community, will provide a quality education in a safe environment for all students.

Preschool Philosophy of Education:

We believe:

- ♦ Student learning is the most important element of our society.
- ♦ Students learn best in a safe and caring environment.
- ♦ Innovative learning activities and various teaching strategies enhance learning.
- ♦ Respect for diversity develops tolerance within the school and our society.
- ♦ Effective learning produces life-long skills.
- ♦ Leaders never lose sight of best practice.
- ♦ Teaching the importance of citizenship benefits the school and the community.
- ♦ Productive discipline incorporates control, consistency, and care.
- ♦ Memorable and enjoyable activities foster learning.
- ♦ School, home and community cooperation facilitates and reinforces learning.

Goals for Children:

- ♦ Children will show competency in social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development skills.
- ♦ Children will be enthusiastic and curious learners.
- ♦ Children will be safe and healthy.

Goals for Families:

- ♦ Families will feel welcome in the classroom and school.
- ♦ Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help their children be better prepared to learn to read and write.
- ♦ Families will advocate for their children.

III. ENROLLMENT

Equal Educational Opportunity

It is the policy of the Webster City Community Schools not to discriminate in its education programs or educational activities on the basis of sexual orientation, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability. Students are educated in programs, which foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, as well as men and women, to society. Students who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to report it to the school district Affirmative Action Coordinator by writing to Affirmative Action Coordinator, Webster City Community School District, Webster City, IA 50595 or by telephoning (515)-832-9200. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the region VII Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, MO 64114 (816)268-0550 or the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, (515) 281-5294. Procedures and levels are outlined in district policy for resolving complaints and are available upon request from the curriculum director's office.

Eligibility

Children must be four years of age prior to September 15th of the current school year to enroll in four-year old preschool classes.

Pre-registration will begin in the spring of the year. Registration materials are available from the church offices or daycare offices. Final registration will occur in July/August with school registration.

Hours

Asbury Preschool Classes meet four hours each day, three days per week. Children attend on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:00-12:00.

Riverview Preschool Classes meet three hours each day, four days per week. Children attend on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12:30-3:30.

St. Paul Preschool AM Classes meet four hours each day, three days per week. Children attend on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:00-12:00.

St. Paul Preschool PM Classes meet three hours each day, four days per week. Children attend on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12:30-3:30.

St. Thomas Preschool Classes meet four hours each day, three days per week. Children attend on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:00-12:00.

Every preschool class has 12 hours of preschool per week. There are no classes on Friday afternoons as this is preschool team collaboration time for all Webster City 4 year old preschool teachers to work together, share ideas and plan learning activities.

Asbury, Riverview, and St. Paul Preschools follow the Webster City Community School District Calendar. A copy of the current calendar is attached as the final page of this handbook. St. Thomas Preschool follows the St. Thomas school calendar attached on the final page of this handbook.

General Information QPPS 5.1 10.4

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted 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.

The maximum class size is 20 children in each session based on square footage of the current location. A teaching staff-child ratio of at least 1:10 will be maintained at all times to encourage adult-child interactions and promote activity among children. The elementary principal will arrange for teacher substitutes. The preschool office will arrange for teacher assistant substitutes. Should one of the teaching staff need to temporarily leave the room, the teacher will call the preschool office and the secretary will arrange for coverage of the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio. **QPPS 10.4**

Inclusion

The preschool program provides developmentally appropriate learning opportunities for all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. Inclusion in the program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families. The preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements. **QPPS 9.10**

IV. A CHILD'S DAY

Who Works In The Preschool QPPS 10.2

Program Administrator The elementary principal is designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool program. The principal meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

Preschool Director Each preschool has a person designated as director to register students, keep track of records, and help to plan and organize activities.

Teacher A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an early childhood endorsement is assigned to the preschool classroom. **QPPS 6.3**

Teacher Assistant A full time teacher assistant in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher assistant will have specialized training in early childhood education. **QPPS 6.4**

English Language Learner Associate The preschools have a part time associate working at Webster City Daycare to help students and is also available to help parents and students from all preschools with communication needs.

School Nurse The preschool will have the assistance of the school nurse. The school nurse is a certified RN, and is recertified every three years. The nurse maintains student health records by updating them quarterly, and attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school. She is available for parent and teacher consultation when necessary. **QPPS 10.10**

Support Staff Prairie Lakes AEA 8 staff provide resources and assistance to the teacher and classroom upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist or others.

Daily Activities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities with solitary time, indoor and outdoor, quiet play with noisy play. Each child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day:

Large and Small Group Activities	Self-directed Play	Snack
<i>Learning Center Activities:</i> Art, Science, Writing Table, Games and Put together toys, Book Center, Blocks and Wheel Toys, Pretend Play	Story Time	Computers
	Outdoor Activities	Individual Activities

Lesson plans for each week are posted in the classroom showing how these activities are incorporated into the daily schedule. Monthly newsletters share upcoming unit topics and include a question to share input from home. Other methods of communication include phone calls, notes, email, and face to face conversations.

Curriculum QPPS 2.1 - 2.3

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. It is a process by which learners obtain knowledge and understanding while developing life skills. The curriculum is continually revised and evaluated to make learning fun and exciting.

It is the policy of this district that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and life styles open to women as well as men in society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, and physical disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in this country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society. **QPPS 1.7**

The preschool program uses *Creative Curriculum*, a research and evidence based comprehensive curriculum designed for four-year-olds. It addresses all areas of early learning: language, literacy, math, science, physical and social skills. It is based on thematic units familiar and meaningful to young children. Creative Curriculum provides children an opportunity to learn in a variety of ways - through play, problem solving, movement, art, music, drawing and writing, listening and storytelling. Suggestions for modifications and adaptations are an integral part of the curriculum. **QPPS 2.1, 2.2**

Child Assessment QPPS 4.1, 4.2

Guiding principles:

It is the school district’s belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. The results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. A family’s culture and a child’s experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child’s growth and development. All results will be kept confidential, placed in each child’s file, and stored in a secure filing cabinet. Children are assessed in the following ways:

- *Creative Curriculum Profiles* align with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. Profiles record student progress in all developmental areas throughout the year.
- Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- Early Literacy Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs) are given twice each year to monitor the growth of early literacy skills.
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data, and child work samples collected on an on-going basis.
- Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

The information from the above is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences for them;
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones;
- To indicate possible areas that requires additional assessment.

QPPS 7.3, 7.5

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Parent Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. In addition, the *Creative Curriculum Progress Report* will be sent home at conferences. The preschool teacher will have ongoing communication throughout the year. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time.

If, through observation or information on the *Creative Curriculum Progress Report*, or IGDIs, the teacher feels that there is a possible issue related to a developmental delay or other special need, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

The teacher requests assistance from the AEA early childhood staff as an early intervention process. This team engages in problem identification, plan interventions, provide support, and make outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance.

The preschool teacher would assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated. **QPPS 7.4**

If it is determined that a child needs special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom.

Program Assessment

Webster City community preschools implement the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Webster City preschools received a verification visit the 2009-10 school year to confirm the preschools are meeting these standards. A summary of the results of the verification visit are inside the back cover of this handbook. Administrators, families, staff, and other routinely participating adults will be involved annually in a program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. The annual evaluation process includes gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction. A report of the annual evaluation findings is shared with families, staff, and appropriate advisory and governance boards. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

Supervision Policy QPPS 9.2

Before children arrive at school, the preschool staff will complete the following daily safety checklist indoor and outdoor:

- All safety plugs and electric outlets covered, heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. in working order.
- All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children reach and stored properly.
- Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
- Supplies checked - first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
- Daily monitoring of environment - spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to head custodian.
- Upon arrival, each child is observed by the teacher for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate in the daily activities.

No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check every two to three minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently, who are in the library area, etc.) Staff will ensure that visitors and children will be supervised at all times so that the visitor is never alone with a child and a staff member can intervene immediately if needed.

Record checks Adults who have direct responsibility for child care or with access to a child when the child is alone, are subject to a record check. Direct responsibility is defined as, "being charged with the care, supervision, or guidance of a child." Owners, directors, staff members substitutes, volunteers, and subcontracted staff persons are subject to a record check.

Child Guidance and Discipline (QPPS 1.11)

Teaching staff will use Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is the teaching of expectations, positive guidance, redirection, planning ahead to prevent problems. Teachers 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. Where the child understands words, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. Teachers help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

Challenging Behavior (QPPS 1.2, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10)

The teaching staff in the preschool is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. If children exhibit challenging behaviors teachers promote pro-social behavior by:

- interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
- modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors
- helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials.
- engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed

Teaching staff guide children to develop self-control and respectful conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child become physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

Permissible Methods of Discipline:

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident.; (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action is there is a recurrence.

Prohibited Practices

The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

1. harsh or abusive tone of voice with children nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
2. physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
3. any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject children to neglect.
4. withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Water activities QPPS 5.9, 9.15

Each classroom has a water table. During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table. Preschool children do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

Snacks/Foods and Nutrition (QPPS 5.12- 5.21)

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, ability to learn, and overall behavior. This is an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture 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 atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form. All preschool children are served a snack at a regularly scheduled time.

At Webster City Daycare Preschool and Riverview Daycare Preschool breakfast/lunch is served so a snack is served two hours after breakfast/lunch has ended. Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in USDA guidelines. A written snack menu is posted in the classroom and available to families. All menus are kept on file for review by a program consultant. The preschool

serves a wide variety of nutritional snacks, and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered.

Asbury, St. Paul and St. Thomas Preschool staff take steps to ensure the safety of food brought from home with the following guidelines:

- The staff works with families to ensure that foods brought from home meet the USDA's CACFP food guidelines;
- All foods and beverages brought from home are labeled with the child's name and the date;
- Staff make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served;
- Food is provided to supplement food brought from home if necessary;
- Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.

All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. 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. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program in individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and 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 child during the day. Program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes when any child with a disability has special feeding needs and provide parents 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; spoonfuls of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

The preschools do not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Outside Play and Learning QPPS 5.5, 5.6 9.5-9.7

Preschool classes have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the weather air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. Preschools use the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

When weather conditions do not allow outdoor play, children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

In order to ensure that children can play comfortably outside it is important to dress them according to the weather. When it is cold outside each child needs a warm coat, mittens or gloves and a hat (labeled with

the child's name). For the warmer days dressing children lightly is just as important. For those in-between days dressing them in layers is a practical idea.

A parent should notify the preschool teacher if there is a need for sunscreen or insect repellent. Parents may need to sign a permission slip for sunscreen and insect repellent. Program staff complete the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance Checklist on a weekly basis. At the beginning of each day, staff complete a daily playground safety checklist.

Clothing

Children will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Children should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes to school. Teachers encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, but cannot guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal, or disruptive in nature. All families are encouraged to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Clothing should be labeled with the child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Toilet Learning (QPPS 5.7)

Four year old children entering preschool are expected to be toilet trained. In special circumstances toileting still needs to occur at school. For the children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

1. Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the bathroom adjacent to the classroom with a fold down changing table or other special accommodations. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.
2. 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), labeled with the child's name and sent home that day for laundering. (Cloth diapers may not be allowed unless prescribed by a doctor.)
 - Staff check 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 change children's diapers or soiled underwear 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.
3. Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.

4. All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an “accident” or messy play. All clothing should be labeled with the child’s name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Objects From Home

Because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, no toys should be brought from home. 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.

Weapon Policy

No student shall carry, have in his or her possession, store, keep, leave, place or put into the possession of another student any real weapon or a look-alike weapon on any school premises, in any school vehicle or any vehicle used by the school or for school purposes, in any school building or other buildings or premises used for school functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions. "Look-alike weapon" means any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. *A zero tolerance policy on dangerous weapons (real or toy) is in effect; i.e., gun, squirt guns, water rifles or pistols, slingshots, toy guns, toy grenades and other similar items knives, etc. Violation may result in a student suspension/expulsion.*

Classroom Animals and Pets (QPPS 5.26)

If a parent or legal guardian, wants to bring a family pet to share with the child’s classroom the animal must be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animal is fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and suitable for contact with children. The teacher would ensure staff and children practice good hygiene and hand washing when coming into contact with the animal and after coming into contact with the animal. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Teachers make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Reptiles are not allowed because of the risk for salmonella. The classroom teacher is responsible for checking requirements have been met.

Birthdays QPPS 5.13

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Those who have summer birthdays will also be recognized on a special day. Invitations to parties outside of school that do not include the entire class will not be distributed at school.

V. COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES (QPPS 1.1, 7.5)

The preschool program will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes, phone calls, informal conversations and e-mail. Staff will use these means of communication to inform families about the child’s experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child’s development and well-being.

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. It is recommended to send

written notes with important daily information so all the staff who work with the child can share the parent's communication

Open Door Policy

Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors are asked to check in at the office or with the preschool teacher. Visitors are asked to please use discretion with regard to bringing babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt class sessions. Photo identification will be required for any unknown visitor to the classroom.

Arrival and Departure of Children (QPPS 10.11)

All motor vehicle transportation provided by parents, legal guardians or others designated by parents or legal guardians will include the use of age-appropriate, and size-appropriate seat restraints.

When arriving or departing from school, adults are asked to park the car and turn off the engine before entering the building. Holding a child's hand will decrease the possibility of an accident. Parents or legal guardians must either accompany children to the classroom at the beginning of the day or leave their child in the care of one of the teaching staff. No child will be permitted to leave the building without an adult.

Other than parents or legal guardian, only persons with prior written authorization (Parent Consent Form) will be allowed to pick up a child from the school. Anyone who is unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them. Parents/legal guardians have unrestricted access to their child(ren) when the child is on site unless there is a court order that restricts access. The preschool director will maintain a copy of the court order.

For children riding the school bus to school, teaching staff will go to the bus as it arrives to greet and assist the student off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each student to the bus and assist the student onto the bus.

When all children have arrived, teaching staff will record attendance for the day. Throughout the day each time children transition from one location to another, i.e. classroom to outdoor, the teacher will be responsible for counting the number of children whenever leaving one area and when arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

Transportation

Webster City Community Schools will provide school bus transportation for four year old preschoolers if needed. Parents or legal guardians may request transportation at enrollment, indicating the pick up and drop off address, the name of the responsible person at that address, and emergency contact information for all parties involved. **An adult must pick up each preschool child from the bus at the designated drop off address.** Parents or legal guardians are asked to keep their information current by reporting changes to the preschool teacher or transportation director at 832-9260.

For children who have special needs for transportation, accommodations indicated in the child's Individualized Educational Program will be implemented as described.

Field Trips

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. The Webster City school buses are used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip. A parent or legal guardian must sign an informed consent form for trips. Adult family members may be allowed to volunteer to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios. Adults who go on field trips must have a background check approved prior to the field trip. Before every trip, the teaching staff will instruct/review safety information.

During the field trip, all children will wear identifying information that gives the program name and phone number. A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization information for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children will be counted frequently while on a field trip. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member or authorized adult. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult.

Attendance

Students who are enrolled for preschool classes are expected to be in school for the full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of the child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. Parents will call the preschool with the reason for an absence no later than 8:30 A.M. for the morning session and by 12:30 for the afternoon session. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

Ethics and Confidentiality

It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way to demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child. Information about a particular child shall not be shared with anyone other than the child's parents. Staff continually strives to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

All teaching staff will receive training on ethics and confidentiality.

Children's Records

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 the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the building administrator.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request 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 can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

Early Childhood Advisory Committee QPPS 7.2

Webster City Community Preschools have an early childhood committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets to provide feedback on services that meet children and family needs. This committee serves as a sounding board for new ideas and services. If interested in being part of the Early Childhood Committee contact the preschool teacher.

Grievance Policy QPPS 7.6

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. Should a concern arise parents are encouraged to address the concern with the preschool teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for assistance from the Elementary Principal, Mrs. Mindy Mossman.

If there is a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, please contact the Elementary Principal who is the program administrator for the preschool. If still dissatisfied, contact the Superintendent of Webster City Community Schools.

As part of the program assessment, in the spring of each year, a questionnaire will be given to parents to evaluate the program. This information helps to assess how the program is meeting the needs of families and children, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses.

VI. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT QPPS 7.1, 7.2

Webster City Preschools encourage families to be very involved in their child's education by observing their children during the day and meeting with staff. Family members are welcome to visit after the first few weeks of school.

Teachers use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with families. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year. Teachers learn from the families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. Goals for children's growth and development can be incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences or questions with the preschool teacher or administration at any time. Program staff communicate with families regularly regarding children's activities and developmental milestones. Parent- teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring, as well as when either party requests. At least one family event is held during the year.

Webster City Preschools invite families to become involved in any of the following ways:

1. Support the child's daily transition to school by sharing information about interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect the child allows the teacher to be more responsive to the child's needs.
2. Attend family meetings.
3. Return all forms and questionnaires promptly.
4. Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the fall and spring.
5. Take time to read the family bulletin board.

6. Check the child's backpack each day.
7. Participate in field trip activities.
8. Share talents in the classroom through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips.
9. Share cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
10. Help prepare snack.
11. Read all the material sent home.
12. Volunteer to help with special events. Helping takes many different forms such as preparation of materials at home, making telephone calls, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting donations or prizes, run errands, photography, setup before the event, or clean afterwards.
13. Serve on the Early Childhood Committee.
14. Other ideas.

It is the policy of the Webster City School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or physical disability in its education programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI or VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats on request, and, to the extent possible, in a language families understand.

The school district believes that families should be supported in making decisions about services that their children may need. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections.

Home Visits

Home visits are made prior to the start of school. This is an opportunity for the preschool teacher and family to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet the child's needs. This is a time to share what makes the family unique, how the family prefers to communicate with the teacher, and share knowledge about the child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. It is a time to share goals for the child and concerns to be addressed. Parents are also encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time throughout the year.

Family Teacher Conferences

The preschool program will have formal family teacher conferences in the fall and spring. During the conference the teacher will share results of classroom assessments and samples of the child's work. Together family and teacher form a plan to encourage the child's growth and development.

Family Event

A family event will be planned each year as an opportunity for the family to come to school to participate in fun as well as educational activities. With help from family volunteers, the event will be planned to meet the needs of the children and families in the classroom.

End of Year Transitions QPPS 7.9, 7.10

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 and continuity 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. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about Kindergarten Roundup, enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Webster City Community Preschools are committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in the program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, guidelines required by the Quality Preschool Program Standards and regulatory agencies are followed.

Health and Immunization Certificates QPPS 5.1

Health records shall be submitted prior to beginning preschool 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.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents or legal guardians, 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, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the office. Files are kept current by updating as needed. 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. **QPPS 10.10**

Child Health and Safety Records will include: **QPPS 5.1**

1. Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency;
2. 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;
3. Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up to date by a specified method during the year;
4. Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
5. 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);
6. Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures,

orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support; and **QPPS 10.14**

7. 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 implement a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

General Health and Safety Guidelines

- All staff must be alert to the health of each child, 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 are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures. These are posted in the classrooms.
- All teaching staff complete "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" annually.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is present in the program at all times. **QPPS 5.4**

Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children QPPS 5.3

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If a child has any of the following symptoms during the night, he or she will not be admitted the following morning for the safety of the other children.

- fever greater than 100 degrees F
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- pink eyes with drainage
- cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge

The center's established policy for an ill child's return:

- Fever free for 24 hours
- Chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably. If the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact, parents will be called.

When a child develops signs of an illness during his/her day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other person authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, the teacher must have current, accurate phone numbers, authorized emergency contact person and the child's pediatrician. In the meantime, the child will be provided a supervised place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then until she or he can be picked up, the child is located where other individuals will not be exposed.

Reporting Communicable Diseases QPPS 5.4

Staff and teachers provide information to families about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has makes contact with those authorities annually to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

Medication Policies and Procedures QPPS 5.10

Policy: The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. 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: If medication must be given during school hours, parent or legal guardian must provide written consent and the medication must be available in the original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the five 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. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at the school.

For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log. See sample form in Appendix.

Cleaning and Sanitization QPPS 9.11

The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately.

Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected after they are cleaned with soap and water. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using a non-toxic solution of one tablespoon household bleach to one quart of tap water made fresh daily. To disinfect, the surfaces will be sprayed until glossy. The bleach solution will be left on for at least 2 minutes before it is wiped off with a clean paper towel, or it may be allowed to air dry. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used. **QPPS 5.24**

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents.

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 QPPS 5.8

Frequent hand washing is key to prevent 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 to others.
- Staff 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 (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants);
- 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);
- after playing in water that that is shared by two or more people;
- after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals; and

Adults also wash their hands

- before and after feeding a child;
- before and after administering medication;
- after assisting a child with toileting; and
- after handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include

- using liquid soap and running water;
- rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water).

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any situation listed above.

- Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal material.

In situations where sinks used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

First Aid Kit QPPS 9.13

A first aid kit is located in the preschool classroom near the door. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from Healthy Child Care Iowa. Following each 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 daily. The first aid kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

Fire Safety QPPS 9.14

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. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents QPPS 10.13

Each preschool has a “Safety Procedures Booklet” that describes the following situations and procedures to follow:

- Emergency phone numbers
- Fire procedures
- Utility Failures (electric power failure, water line break, gas line break)
- Severe weather
- Bomb threats
- Physical Threats/Armed Intruder
- Evacuations
- Crisis Intervention Plan, Crisis Intervention Steps, and Media Procedures
- Accidental Injury or Illness procedures for life threatening and non-life threatening situations
- School crisis team members and a checklist to use
- List of CPR/First Aid experienced persons in each building

This booklet will be posted by the telephone and included in the first aid kit. The booklet will be reviewed by each staff member at the beginning of each school year and when changes are made to it.

In the event that a child receives a minor, non-life threatening injury during his/her time at preschool, the teacher will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. Any incident or injuries will be documented on an “Injury and Illness” form and a copy will be given to the parent within 24 hours of the incident.

All staff will have immediate access to a device that allows them to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers of the Fire Department, Police Department, Hospital, and Poison Control will be posted by each phone with an outside line. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member will be kept readily available. The list of emergency telephone numbers, and copies of emergency contact information and authorization for emergency transport will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.

Emergency phone numbers will be updated as changes occur. Families should contact the preschool teacher with any changes.

Inclement Weather

In the event that Webster City Schools must be closed due to inclement weather, KQWC will make announcements as has been done in the past. If classes in the Webster City School District are cancelled, there will be no preschool. If there is a 2 hour late start, there will be no morning preschool. If there is a two hour early out there will be no afternoon preschool.

Protection From Hazards and Environmental Health QPPS 9.16, 9.17

Program staff protect children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, or scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping.

The preschool classroom building has been tested for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, and other hazards that could impact children’s health with documentation on file. Water is checked by the City of Webster City. Custodial staff maintain the building’s heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children.

The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children. The program uses the techniques known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

Smoke Free Facility QPPS 9.19

In compliance with the Iowa Smokefree Air Act of 2008, Webster City preschool buildings and grounds are smoke free. A "No Smoking" sign meeting the law's requirements is posted at the entrance to the preschool classroom building to inform people that they are entering a non-smoking place. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children.

Child Protection Policies QPPS 10.8, 10.16, 10.19

The health and well-being of every child is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is a main responsibility. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with the preschool program involves direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children must have a background check. 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. Anyone required to register on the Sex Offender Registry will not be allowed on the premises unless that person has met with the director to develop an individualized written agreement.

The program has a written school board policy for reporting child abuse and neglect as well as procedures in place that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws. The policy includes requirements for staff to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers, or others to the appropriate local agencies. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious. All teaching staff complete "Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult Abuse" at least every five years and within six months of employment.

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, legal guardians, 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 Mindy Mossman at 515-832-9241. The alternate investigator is Karla Caquelin and may be reached at 515-832-9241.

Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of Webster City preschools. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Volunteers QPPS 10.15, 10.17

Parents, friends, grandparents, and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Adults may contact the teacher to be a school volunteer. A volunteer job description will be provided that defines the role and responsibilities of a volunteer. Volunteers will be expected to have a background check. 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. If a volunteer works more than 40 hours per month with children, he/she will also need to provide a current health assessment, not more than one year old.

VIII. Staff QPPS 10.15 - 10.20

General Information

Webster City Community School District has written personnel policies that define the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and specialized training required of staff and volunteer positions. The policies outline nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and policies for staff evaluation. Policies detail job descriptions for each position, including reporting relationships; salary scales with increments based on professional qualification, length of employment, and performance evaluation; benefits; and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures. Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. The policies are provided to each employee upon hiring.

Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks: criminal-record check, free from history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check, education credentials, verification of age, completion of high school or GED, personal references and a current health assessment.

St. Thomas also requires all new employees who spend one hour or more per week with children or vulnerable adults to complete the following:

- background check forms OPC 3, 4, 5
- read mandated policies (must sign the verification form to acknowledge policy was read)
- attend a Virtus training session within six months of employment/volunteering

Health Assessment

The preschool program maintains current health information from documented health assessments for all paid preschool staff and for all volunteers who work more than 40 hours per month and have contact with children. A current health assessment (not more than one-year-old) is received by the program before an employee starts work or before a volunteer has contact with children. The health assessment is updated every two years. Documented health assessments include:

- Capacities and limitations that may affect job performance
- Documentation by a licensed health professional of TB skin testing using the Mantoux method and showing the employee to be free from active TB disease. For those who have a positive TB skin test and who develop a persistent cough or unexpected fever, immediate assessment by a licensed physician is required. For those who have increased risk of TB according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), documentation is required annually by a licensed health professional showing that the employee is free from active TB disease.

Confidential personnel files, including applications with record of experience, transcripts of education, health-assessment records, documentation of ongoing professional development, and results of performance evaluation, are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Superintendent's office.

Orientation QPPS 6.2

Employees must know their role and duties. New preschool teaching staff will be required to participate in an initial orientation program that introduces them to fundamental aspects of the program operation including:

- Program philosophy, mission, and goals;
- Expectations for ethical conduct;
- Individual needs of children they will be teaching or caring for;

- Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques;
- Daily activities and routines of the program;
- Program curriculum;
- Child abuse and reporting procedures;
- Program policies and procedures;
- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria;
- Regulatory requirements.

Follow-up training expands on the initial orientations. See Staff Orientation Checklist.

St. Thomas also requires all new employees who spend one hour or more per week with children or vulnerable adults to complete the following:

- background check forms OPC 3, 4, 5
- read mandated policies (must sign the verification form to acknowledge policy was read)
- attend a Virtus training session within six months of employment/volunteering

The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. The superintendent's designee will explain payroll procedures, employee benefit programs and accompanying forms to the employee. Regular employees ineligible for the school district's group health plan will be given information regarding where they can obtain health care or health care insurance.

Staffing Patterns and Schedule

The preschool program is in compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. The program follows requirements for staffing for Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards of maintaining an adult/child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. The program administrator will maintain lists of current substitutes for the preschool teacher in case of absence. Each preschool director will maintain a list of substitutes for teacher assistants. If one of the teaching staff needs to temporarily leave the classroom, the person will call the office to arrange for coverage in order to maintain the adult/child ratio.

Staff are provided space and time away from children during the day. Should staff work directly with children for more than four hours, staff are provided breaks of at least 15 minutes in each four-hour period. In addition, staff may request temporary relief when they are unable to perform their duties.

Staff Development Activities QPPS 6.6, 10.15

Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. All teaching staff continuously strengthen leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community, and beyond. Teaching staff is encouraged to participate in informal and formal ways in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities. The staff may join an early childhood group or organization, attend meetings, or share information with others both at and outside the program.

Teaching staff is informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local Empowerment areas, and the area education agency. Staff is expected to attend all staff trainings and meetings throughout the year. Trainings will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community.

Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan QPPS 6.5, 6.6

All staff is evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor or, in the case of the program administrator, by the superintendent. Staff also evaluates and improves his/her own performance based on ongoing reflections and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. Teachers develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.