

FRONTIER SCHOOLS

PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM HANDBOOK 2020-2021

I. PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

A. Program Philosophy

It is the philosophy of the Frontier Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program that children be encouraged to learn and grow by providing a foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences where all children can succeed in a safe and nurturing environment.

At Frontier Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program, we believe:

- Each child is a unique individual and that all children can learn. Our Pre-Kindergarten programs provide inclusive settings that recognize children's varied abilities, interests, needs, and learning styles.
- Children learn best through meaningful play. Our play-based, child centered program reflects the integration of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, self-help and aesthetic areas for the total development of the child. Meaningful play encourages curiosity, discovery and problem solving which allows individual growth and development of a positive self-image.
- Teachers are role models that guide children in a friendly and secure environment. Our rooms are busy, interesting, activity-centered places where staff follows a daily schedule. Children enjoy learning through both structured activities as well as supervised free play.
- Parents are the child's first teachers. Children learn best when parents are involved in their educational program. The primary bridge between home and school is the involvement of family and community.

B. Program Goals and Objectives

1. To provide a safe, high quality, nurturing, and stimulating environment for all children to learn and develop.
2. To prepare children to enter kindergarten with all of the skills necessary to be successful lifelong learners by providing a balance of educational, social, and physical opportunities.
3. To establish partnerships with families, which include opportunities for parents to provide input and feedback, volunteer and actively participate in all aspects of the program.
4. To identify and refer children and families to appropriate agencies in the community based on health or social service needs.
5. To partner with the community to support our program and to provide information to the community regarding services available through our program.
6. To provide a developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate educational program that is inclusive of all children, including those with special needs.
7. To routinely assess and evaluate children to plan and conduct age and developmentally appropriate lesson plans and activities.
8. To routinely and not less than once per year, complete a self-review and make necessary improvements of each classroom and outdoor space.

9. To provide wholesome, nutritious meals and snacks that meet the federal Child Care Food program guidelines and are culturally and developmentally appropriate.
10. To invest in staff by identifying and providing training and professional development opportunities.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Ages Served

Frontier Schools provide a developmentally appropriate Pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten readiness program for children ages 4 to 5 years or until entering kindergarten. Enrolling children must be 4 on or before September 1st of the current program year.

B. Inclusion of All Children

Frontier Schools values diversity and welcomes all children without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, gender, disability, or handicap. Children are accepted into Frontier Schools' Pre-Kindergarten Program as long as we are able to provide a program and atmosphere that meet the needs of the child and the other children enrolled; the child must not be a danger to himself or other children or adults. Each child admitted must be determined to be ready for the Pre-Kindergarten group experience and able to benefit from the program offered. Frontier Schools will make reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities and special needs as described by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

C. Days and Hours of Operation

Our Pre-Kindergarten program operates on the same calendar of Frontier Schools K-12 program (from August to May). The Pre-Kindergarten program will close on the same dates as the K-12 educational program. School is open Monday-Friday, 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Parents will receive exact program start and end times in August.

D. Transportation

Frontier Schools provides transportation for the Pre-Kindergarten program students.

E. Teacher Qualification

Pre-Kindergarten program teachers hold a valid teaching certificate issued by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

III. ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Tuition-Free Eligibility

To be eligible for tuition-free Pre-Kindergarten program, your child must meet the following criteria listed below.

- Reside within the boundaries of the Kansas City Public School District
- Qualify for free and reduced price lunch

B. Parent Paid Tuition

If the child is not eligible for the tuition-free Pre-Kindergarten, the program cost will be \$60/school day.

Frontier Schools' employees will receive 30% reduced tuition rate for the children enrolled in the program.

A \$200 non-refundable deposit is required to reserve a tuition-paying Pre-Kindergarten spot and it is due on April 1. This fee will be applied to the August tuition bill.

All tuition payments are due and payable on the 1st day of the month PRIOR to the start of the month for which your child will receive services. The first tuition payment is due by August 1st. Payments not honored by your financial institution will result in suspension of services. Reinstatement can occur only after all fees are paid in full and space is available. Continued late or non-payment may result in your child's permanent removal from the Pre-Kindergarten program. A \$30.00 late fee will be charged for each week the payment is late. Your balance must be paid in full to avoid this late fee. A \$25.00 fee will be assessed for all unhonored payments by your financial institution. No adjustments will be made if the child cannot attend the school for sickness, car problem, etc. All payments are non-refundable.

Families may complete an application through the Child Care Assistance Program by contacting the Department of Social Services at 855-373-4636 or online at dss.mo.gov/cd/childcare or dss.mo.gov and search "child care application".

C. Lottery & Admission Process

If capacity of the Pre-Kindergarten program is insufficient to enroll all pupils who submit a timely application, a computerized lottery will be conducted. If the number of pupils from the applicant list is equal or less than the opening at a grade level, all applicants on that grade level will be admitted.

The principal or designee of each campus will conduct the computerized lottery, with supervision by the superintendent or designee from Frontier's central office. This ensures that the admissions list and the waiting list are selected randomly. Results of the lottery shall be certified by a notary public.

The lottery software will fill randomly all available seats allowed by the enrollment cap and create a waiting list. As space becomes available, applicants will be called from the waiting list beginning with applicants with the lowest number assignment.

Siblings of currently enrolled students at Frontier Schools will receive a preference at the time of the admission lottery. An application is still required and must be submitted before the deadline. "Sibling" shall mean a biological or legally adopted brother or sister residing in the same household as the applicant. Cousins, nieces, nephews and unrelated children sharing an address with the applicant are not siblings. Sibling enrollment is dependent on available space and does not guarantee enrollment of each listed sibling.

Children of the Frontier Schools' employees are not exempt from lottery requirements.

If a student applies to the program outside of the designated application period, the student will be placed on a waiting list in the order of the date in which the application is received.

D. Enrollment Documents

Two proofs of residency

Student's current immunization record

Student's verification of birth (Birth Certificate)

Parent/guardian photo ID (Proof of guardianship, if required)

Enrollment form and any other form given by the school

Proof of household income:

Two current pay stubs

Current TANF award letter

Current SSI verification

Unemployment letter

Current 1040A tax form with W-2's, (employer letter on company letterhead, notarized letter from employer)

Child support letter

E. Immunization Records

Frontier Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program follows State Immunization Laws and will comply with any changes as they occur. Immunizations must be current in order for your child to remain in school. If your child has any immunizations after enrollment, you must share current immunization records with the school.

Missouri Statute 210.003 requires that, *"No child shall be permitted to enroll in or attend any public, private or parochial day care center or preschool unless such child has been adequately immunized against vaccine preventable childhood illnesses specified by the Department of Health."* The school shall also notify the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in or attending the program, upon request, of whether there are children currently enrolled in or attending the program for whom an immunization exemption has been filed.

Failure to comply with the above Missouri immunization laws will result in children being held out of attendance and could result in termination of services. Check with your local health department for information on free immunizations.

F. Removal of Students Ineligible to Attend

The superintendent or designee will investigate any information LEA receives indicating that a student is not a resident of the charter district or not otherwise entitled to attend the district in accordance with law or this policy. If the superintendent or designee determines after the investigation that the student is not a resident of the district and is not otherwise entitled to enroll in and attend LEA in accordance with law and the LEA's policy, the district will notify the student's parents/guardians, ask them to withdraw the student by a specific date, and offer the parents/guardians a hearing. If the parents/guardians do not request a hearing by the specified

deadline and do not withdraw the student, Frontier Schools will formally remove the student from its rolls and notify the parents/guardians that the student may no longer attend school in the district.

G. Admission Process for Kindergarten of Returning Pre-Kindergarten Program Students

Returning students (students who currently attend Frontier Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program and intend to start the Kindergarten next school year) are exempt from the lottery if they notify the LEA of their intent to return for the next school year by the deadline established by the LEA for Kindergarten.

IV. ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

A. The Importance of Daily Attendance

The Pre-Kindergarten school year can be the most productive learning year in a child's life. It is a time of vast brain development. The brains of Pre-Kindergarten students are working to create organization through consistency. It is essential that routines and limits for Pre-Kindergarten children be established and are adhered to. That is why the consistency of regular attendance is so important.

Children are born ready to learn. They cultivate 85 percent of their intellect, personality and skills by age 5. Research shows that the long-term effects of early education on a child's social and emotional development may be the most important outcome of a high-quality Pre-Kindergarten education. Unless children attend the Pre-Kindergarten program on a regular basis, they are not likely to benefit fully from all the enriching experiences and learning opportunities.

Make sure your child receives all the benefits that Frontier Schools' high-quality Pre-Kindergarten program has to offer, such as:

- Language and literacy skills
- Letter recognition and writing skills
- Math and Science concepts
- Social Emotional skills
- Cognitive development
- Enthusiasm for lifelong learning
- Strong home to school connection

B. What can I do to ensure my child attends daily?

- Make a commitment to have your child attend school every day, on time.
- If your child is reluctant to come to preschool, be sure to communicate this to the teacher. Together, you can make plans to address the concerns of your child.
- Make sure your child has a daily predictable routine, including a routine for bedtime and waking up in the morning.
- Be sure to allow enough time for the routines so you and your child do not feel rushed.
- Have your child get a good night's rest to make sure he/she has enough energy to participate in classroom activities.

- When talking with your child, be positive about school and the teaching staff. Cultivate your child’s interest in discovering new things and his or her love of learning.
- Remember, by bringing your child to school every day, you are helping to ensure that he or she will live up to their full potential and become a successful lifelong learner.

C. Attendance Requirement

Students may be excused for temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the Principal or Assistant Principal. Parents must provide a written explanation for their student’s absence to be considered as an excused absence. Parent excuse notes may not exceed 5 days within a school year. The excuse will be filed in the attendance office and become part of the student’s record.

Examined on a case-by-case basis; 10 days of unexcused absence in a semester that are not communicated with the school, will result in immediate withdrawal from school.

V. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

A. General Information & Procedures

To function properly, education must provide an equal learning opportunity for all students by recognizing, valuing, and addressing the individual needs of every student. In addition to the regular curriculum, principles and practices of good citizenship must also be taught and modeled by school staff. This includes an appreciation for the rights of others. Frontier Schools is committed to helping every student fulfill his or her intellectual, social, physical, and emotional potential. To foster an orderly and distraction-free environment, Frontier Schools has established this Student Code of Conduct (“the Code”). The Code outlines prohibited behaviors and consequences for such behavior. Frontier Schools has the responsibility and authority to enforce the Code, question students, counsel them, and assign discipline when appropriate.

The Code does not define all types and aspects of student behavior. The Board of Directors and the Superintendent may establish written policies, rules, and regulations of general application governing student conduct in all schools. In addition, each Principal, within his or her own school, may establish certain rules and regulations not inconsistent with those established by the Board and the Superintendent.

All the Student Code of Conduct policies and procedures in the Frontier Schools Parent and Students Handbook for K-12 program is applicable for the Pre-Kindergarten program as well. Please visit school web site to download a copy of the handbook for K-12 program.

VI. PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM DISCIPLINE POLICY

Frontier Schools discipline policy is established to promote student development of autonomy, self-regulation, self-respect, and respect for others and their property.

1) Discipline Principles

- a) Frontier schools Pre-Kindergarten discipline policies reinforce Dr. Dan Gartrell’s (2004) seven principles for developmentally appropriate guidance:

- 1) **Principle One:** The teacher uses guidance in order to teach children democratic life skills.
- 2) **Principle Two:** The teacher regards classroom conflicts as mistaken behavior and uses conflicts as teaching opportunities.
- 3) **Principle Three:** The teacher builds and maintains an encouraging classroom in which all children feel welcome as fully participating members.
- 4) **Principle Four:** The teacher implements developmentally appropriate practice to prevent institution-caused mistaken behavior.
- 5) **Principle Five:** The teacher seeks to understand the reasons for child's behavior.
- 6) **Principle Six:** The teacher relies on comprehensive guidance when children show serious mistaken behavior.
- 7) **Principle Seven:** The teacher functions as a professional rather than a technician and learns even while he/she teaches.

b) Preventative

- 1) Teachers will explicitly teach and review school-wide expectations using positive language that promotes the encouraged behaviors.
- 2) Teachers will teach and review social and emotional skills required to be a contributing member of the classroom community.
- 3) Teachers will use clear, consistent, and supportive guidance.

c) Classroom Challenges

- 1) I am respectful. (I treat others the way I want to be treated.)
- 2) I am responsible. (I do what is right all by myself.)
- 3) I am safe. (I follow safety procedures.)
- 4) I am smart. (I participate and try my best.)

d) Classroom Rules

- 1) It is never okay to be disruptive or hurtful.
- 2) It is always okay to be helpful and kind.

e) Teacher Guidance Practices

- a. **Distraction:** The teacher provides a distraction to attract the attention of the child.
- b. **Redirection:** The teacher suggests a desirable alternative that allows the child to move from a problematic action to a positive one.
- c. **Positive Language:** The teacher uses language that promotes the desired behaviors while helping to establish a caring relationship between teacher and child.
- d. **Body Placement:** The teacher will place themselves near the child when giving directions or resolving conflict in order to increase the child's ability to focus their attention on what is being said.
- e. **Provide Acceptable Choices:** The teacher will provide acceptable choices when possible and accept the child's choice.
- f. **Encourage, Support, and Model Negotiation Skills:** The teacher will utilize conflict as an opportunity to teach problem solving and necessary conflict resolution skills/behaviors.
- g. **Consider Child's Development:** The teacher will consider the developmental level, maturity, and experience in their expectations and interactions with children.

- h. **Use “I” Messages/Avoid “You” Messages:** The teacher avoids authoritarian insistence on obedience and provides the child with an objective explanation of the problem before asking for the child’s ideas for resolving the problem.

2) Major Infractions (Unsafe or hurtful behaviors.)

- a) Recovery Corner
 - 1) When a child is unable or unready to begin the behavior resolution process, they may be asked to take some time out in the recovery corner.
- b) The recovery corner is a safe place where the child can deescalate.
- c) The recovery corner is an environment for problem solving rather than punishment.
- d) The teacher will process with the student once they are physically and emotionally ready/able.
- e) Teacher processing promotes positive/desired behaviors, problem solving, and conflict resolution.

3) Recurring Infractions

- a) **Parent Call-** The child’s parent may be called to communicate the problematic behavior and seek parental support in promoting desired behaviors.
- b) **Parent Conference/Behavior Plan-** If a problematic behavior persists after other interventions have failed, the parent will be called to attend a conference for the development of an individualized behavior plan.

VII. PARENT INVOLVEMENT & OTHER IMPORTANT NOTICES

A. General Information & Procedures

A student’s education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school, a partnership that thrives on communication. Your involvement in this partnership may include:

1. Encouraging your student to put a high priority on education and working with your student on a daily basis to make the most of the educational opportunities the school provides.
2. Becoming familiar with all of your student’s school activities and academic programs, including special programs, offered in the school. Discuss with the teacher or Principal any questions you may have about the options and opportunities available to your student.
3. Monitoring your student’s academic progress and contact teachers as needed.
4. Attending scheduled conferences and requesting additional conferences as needed.
5. Becoming a school volunteer or participating in campus parent organizations.

All the “Especially for Parents” (section 5), “Important Notices” (section 6), dress code (section 1) policies and procedures in the Frontier Schools Parent and Students Handbook for K-12 program are applicable for the Pre-Kindergarten program as well. Please visit school web site to download a copy of the handbook for K-12 program.

B. Disenrollment Policy

Frontier Schools reserves the right to dis-enroll any Pre-Kindergarten child, at any time, when we believe disenrollment is in the best interest of the child and/or the program. Our first priority is to provide quality care and early education for all children enrolled in our program but on rare occasions there may be a need to dis-enroll a child.