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Welcome to Ankeny Preschool!

Rationale for Integrating Young Children of Various Ages and Stages of Development

The Ankeny Community Schools Preschool Program is a fully integrated, multi-age program. There are many reasons to provide opportunities for children of various ages and stages of development to play, learn, and interact with each other. Through positive interactions with children of various skill levels, children become sensitive to the needs of others and learn to appreciate individual differences at an early age. In integrated settings, all children have the opportunity to form friendships with a wide variety of peers.

Preschool curriculum is specifically designed and delivered to allow children of a wide ability range to access learning at their current level in order to grow forward.

Mission

The mission of Ankeny Preschool, a partnership of school staff, parents and community, is to prepare students to be lifelong learners who can become successful, productive, future citizens. This will be accomplished by recognizing the value of each individual and promoting academic and personal growth in a challenging and caring environment.

PreK-5th Grade School 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.
• Memorable and enjoyable activities foster learning.
• School, home and community cooperation facilitates and reinforces learning.

Goals for children:

• Children will show competence 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 child learn school readiness skills.
• Families will advocate for their children.

Eligibility

Children who are four years of age prior to September 15 of the current school year are eligible to attend for free through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Grant. Children who qualify for an IEP (Individual Education Plan) for Special Education services with goals beyond speech only IEP’s are eligible at the date of their third birthday.

Students who are five years of age prior to September 15 of the current school year are not eligible for preschool programming but are eligible for the kindergarten program. Ankeny Schools is the recipient of an Early Childhood Iowa Grant through United Way. This grant provides a limited number of scholarships for children who are three-years-old prior to September 15 of the current school year and qualify based on financial need.

Locations and Hours

Multi-Age Three- and Four-Year-Old Program Session Times - Programming is offered four days a week. Classes are held on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday for 2.5 hours per session for a total of 10 hours of instruction per week. Students do not attend class on Wednesday. This provides a
structured time for parent meetings, and teacher professional learning. Session times vary depending on the building the preschool classroom is located in.

Preschool classrooms are located at Ashland Ridge, Crocker, Northeast, and Terrace elementary schools.

Fee and Scholarship Information

Four-year-old students attend free under Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program funds. A limited number of scholarships are available for children who will be three-years-old on or before September 15, 2019. These scholarships are awarded based upon criteria outlined by Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) Grant criteria, which includes federal poverty guidelines. The Ankeny preschool program only enrolls three-year-olds who qualify for financial assistance. There is no tuition-based preschool for three-year-olds.

To learn more about financial assistance, please contact Rochelle Dunsbergen, Preschool Program Secretary at 515-289-8945, or Amy Kolln, Preschool Coordinator at 515-289-8946.

General Information

Health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted to show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Health records shall be provided to the school nurse on or before the student’s first day of preschool.

The recommended class size is 18-20 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. Each classroom generally begins the year with one certified teacher and two associates per classroom.

Inclusion

The preschool program provides 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 members are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families. The preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

Who Works in the Preschool

Preschool Coordinator - The preschool coordinator collaborates with building principals and support staff to ensure Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS) are met. The coordinator holds advanced degrees in Early Childhood Education and Educational Leadership.

Preschool Secretary - The preschool secretary supports families of preschoolers during the application and registration process along with other administrative assistant duties.

Teacher - Each preschool classroom is facilitated by a full time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holds an Early Childhood Education and Special Education Unified Endorsement.

Teacher Associates - A teacher associate in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher associate must have specialized training in early childhood education, pursuant to the IQPPS guidelines.

School Nurse - The preschool will have the assistance of the school nurse. The current nurse is a certified RN, and is recertified every three years. She 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 consultation when necessary.

Support Staff - Heartland Area Education Agency (AEA) 11 support 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 Learning Opportunities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning opportunities. Learning is both formal and informal.

Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with
talking, group activities with solitary time, indoors with outdoors, quiet play with noisy play. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of experiences every day:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large &amp; Small Group Activities</th>
<th>Self-Directed Play</th>
<th>Snack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Center Activities:</td>
<td>Story Time</td>
<td>Computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art, Science, Writing Table, Games, Book Center, Blocks &amp; Wheel toys, Pretend play</td>
<td>Outdoor Learning</td>
<td>Individual Learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Curriculum

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. It is a process by which learners obtain knowledge and understanding, while developing life skills. It 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 lifestyles open to women, as well as men, in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, marital status, socioeconomic status, or abilities/disabilities. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society.

The preschool program uses Creative Curriculum, a research and evidence-based comprehensive curriculum designed for three- and four-year-olds. It addresses all areas of early learning: language and literacy, math, science, physical skills and social skills. It is rooted on project-based learning familiar and meaningful to young children such as Homes and Families, Animals, Five Senses, Transportation and the Farm. It 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.

Child Assessment

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:

1. Teaching Strategies GOLD. It records student progress in all developmental areas at the beginning, middle and end of the year.
2. Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child’s progress during daily activities.
3. Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data and child work samples collected on an ongoing basis.
4. 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:

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

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during parent teacher conferences in the fall and spring. The preschool teacher will communicate monthly regarding children’s activities. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time.

If, through observation and GOLD assessment, 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:

1. The teacher requests assistance from the Area Education Agency (AEA) team 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 AEA team is available and functional for all students and teachers in the building.
2. A formal request made to Heartland AEA for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing.

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

If a child is determined to need 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**

Ankeny Preschool implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Periodically, we will receive verification visits to confirm we are meeting these standards. 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**

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

1. All safety plugs and electric outlets covered heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. in working order.
2. All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children’s reach and stored properly.
3. Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
4. Supplies checked - first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
5. Daily monitoring of environment - spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to head custodian.

6. 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.)

**Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS)**

Ankeny Community School District has always strived to promote a positive and safe learning environment for our students. In order for our growing district to maintain this expectation, we have adopted PBIS in all of our elementary buildings which includes preschool classrooms. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is a set of procedures that positively acknowledges students for demonstrating appropriate expected behaviors. The expectations are the same in each elementary building. Students are taught these expectations and are reinforced and/or rewarded for using them throughout the school year.

- **Respect**
  - Listening to others
  - Following directions
  - Accepting differences

- **Safety**
  - Using line and body basics
  - Asking for help
  - Reporting your concerns
  - Following school procedures

- **Responsibility**
  - Completing work
  - Being prepared
  - Taking care of yourself and property
  - Making smart choices

We encourage parents, teachers, and students to take pride in their learning and choices. Please reinforce and encourage appropriate behaviors at home using these expectations.

**Child Guidance and Discipline**

Teaching staff will equitably use positive guidance, redirection and planning ahead to prevent problems. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child’s own ability to become self disciplined. Where the child understands words, discipline will be explained to
the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, and to use language to communicate needs.

**Challenging Behavior** - 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. When children have challenging behaviors teachers promote pro social behavior by:

1. Interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
2. Modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors.
3. Helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials.
4. Engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
5. Encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed.

Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly 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 becomes 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 if 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 the children or making threats or derogatory remarks.
2. Physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking or grabbing.
3. Any punishment that would humiliate, frighten or subject a child to neglect.
4. Withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

**Snacks/Foods and Nutrition**

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy 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.

Children are served a snack at a regularly scheduled time. Snacks will consist of either a fresh fruit, vegetable, grain or protein. A written snack menu is 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.

All food is prepared, served and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. **Due to the severity of food allergies we have in our preschool classrooms, we cannot allow any food to be brought into the classroom. We appreciate your cooperation in providing a safe and healthy environment for all children.** 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 an 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 hot dogs, 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.

Outdoor Learning

We 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. Sometimes we spend longer getting bundled up than we spend outside. We 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.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment. For example, tumbling mats may be offered for upper body activities or rolling across the mat.

In order to make sure that your child can play comfortably outside it is important to dress according to the weather. When it is cold outside children need a warm coat, mittens or gloves and a hat (labeled with your child’s name). For the warmer days dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days, dressing your child in layers is a practical idea.

There are shaded areas on the playground for children to be in and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun. It is expected that parents/guardians apply sunscreen and/or insect repellent before the preschool session. If medically necessary, written permission and sunscreen and/or insect repellent will be supplied by the parent for school personnel to apply.

Please note*** All preschool classes at Terrace Elementary access the Miracle League Playground in collaboration with Ankeny Parks and Rec. This is a public playground adjacent to Terrace Elementary school.

Clothing

Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes to school. While we encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, we can’t 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 asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an “accident” or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child’s name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Toilet Learning

Restroom facilities are available for the students as needed. Occasional accidents happen and are not a problem.

Toilet learning is an important time in a child’s development. For 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. 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:
   ○ Clothes that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
○ Staff 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. All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an “accident” or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your 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, we ask that you limit toys brought from home. If your child brings an “attachment” item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

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

Live animals will not be allowed in district facilities except under special circumstances and/or curricular purposes. The principal will have the discretion in these circumstances. Appropriate supervision of animals is required when animals are brought into district facilities.

The person bringing the animal must furnish transportation for the animal. Animals will not be allowed to travel to and from the student’s attendance center on district vehicles.

It is the responsibility of the principal to determine appropriate supervision of animals and the parameters of its stay in the classroom.

Service animals are not covered by this policy.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays may be celebrated with non-food items, such as pencils, erasers, stickers, bookmarks, etc. Birthday tokens are not an expectation or requirement; however, should a student elect to bring a non-food item there should be one provided for each student. Students with summer birthdays are welcome to choose a school day to celebrate.

Open Door Policy

Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in using the district security measures at the elementary school office. Visitors are asked not to bring babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt class sessions. Photo identification will be required for any unknown visitor to the classroom. All parents/guardians are asked to notify the preschool teacher 24 hours prior to a visit. Parents and/or visitors to the classroom are asked to keep visits to 30 minutes. Please do not expect a conference at this time as the teacher’s primary role is to provide instruction.

Arrival and Departure of Children

Arrival - Arrival times are supervised by school staff. When
arriving after the designated times, parents will check in at the office.

**Departure** – At the end of each session, the teaching staff will begin assisting students with dismissal; which includes packing bags and putting on seasonal outerwear. We ask for your assistance in picking up your child on time. This supports the teachers in their efforts to prepare for the next session and their lunch break schedule.

When bringing your child to school, we ask that you park your car in the parking lot and turn off the engine before entering the building. Please hold your child’s hand as you enter the building to decrease the possibility of an accident. Parents or legal guardians must either accompany children to the preschool’s designated arrival location 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 via the 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.

In the interest of students’ safety, parents/guardians/authorized individuals are requested to report directly to the office when picking up their child rather than going to the child’s classroom. Likewise, when a student returns to the building following an absence during the school day, the adult should stop in the office and sign the child in. When picking up your child from the school, please arrive at the specified dismissal location and on time.

If your child rides the school bus to school, teaching staff will go to each bus as it arrives to greet and assist the student off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each student to the bus and assist the student onto the bus.

When children have arrived, teaching staff will walk the children to the classroom where the preschool teacher 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**

For children who have special needs for transportation, the facility will use a plan based on a functional assessment of the child’s needs related to transportation that is filled out by the child’s physician. This plan will address special equipment, staffing and care in the vehicle during transport. Any 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. Ankeny Community School buses are used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip well in advance. Adult family members are asked to volunteer to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios. Since the field trips are arranged by the district as an extension of the instructional time any parent that wishes to attend or volunteer to chaperone must complete the background check form prior to the field trip. Forms are required to be processed at least two weeks in advance of the field trip. The district may deny participation in the field trip due to the results of a background check. Background checks will not be processed the day of the trip. Each child will be assigned to an adult for every part of the trip. Before every trip, the teaching staff will instruct children and all adults using the bus about the ten-foot danger zone around the vehicle where the driver cannot see.

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 frequently be counted while on a field trip. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult.

**Attendance**

Students who are enrolled for classes in the preschool buildings 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 your child and
others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. Please call the elementary office with the reason for an absence no later than 8:30 a.m. if your child is in the morning session and by 12:00 p.m. for the afternoon session.

**Ethics and Confidentiality**

Staff members follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. 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 we 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 negatively or positively. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child’s parent. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

Parents/Guardians are asked to direct any questions to the classroom teacher and not the classroom associates as the classroom teacher is ultimately responsible for each student’s preschool programming.

All teaching staff will receive training on ethics and confidentiality on the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s Code of Ethical Conduct as part of their orientation. Each staff person will sign a Statement of Commitment to document their willingness to hold close the values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood education and their obligations for confidentiality under FERPA.

**Preschool Advisory Committee**

The Ankeny Preschool has a preschool advisory committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets periodically to provide feedback on services that meet children and family needs. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services. Please let the preschool teacher know if you are interested in being part of the Preschool Advisory Committee.

**Grievance Policy**

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we want to encourage you to address your concern to your child’s teacher. If you have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, please contact the Preschool Coordinator Amy Kolln at 515-289-8946.

If you remain dissatisfied, you may contact the Director of Special Programs at 515-965-9600.

**FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

**General Information**

Ankeny Preschool encourages families to be very involved in their child’s education by observing their children during the day when possible and meeting with staff. Teachers and administrators use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication; and information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year. Program staff communicate with families on at least a monthly basis regarding children’s activities and developmental milestones, shared care-giving issues, and other information that affects the well-being of their children. Family teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters, as well as when either party requests.

Ankeny Preschool values the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. As the teacher learns from the families’ expertise regarding their child’s interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs, goals for your child’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.

Ankeny Preschool invites you to become involved in one or all of the following ways, and welcomes other ideas as well.

- Support your child’s daily transition to school by sharing information about your child’s interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child allows the teacher to
be more responsive to your child’s needs.

• Attend family meetings.
• Promptly return all forms, questionnaires, etc.
• Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the fall and spring semesters.
• Check your child’s backpack each day.
• Participate in field trip activities.
• Share some of your talents in your child’s class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken.
• Share any of your family’s cultural traditions, celebrations or customs.
• Read all the material sent home with your child.
• Come to play.
• 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.
• Serve on the Preschool Advisory Committee.

To ensure equity for all people, it is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, marital status, socioeconomic status, as well as individual abilities and/or disabilities in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI and Title XIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendment, Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Iowa Code Section 216.9.

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 child’s first preschool day in accordance with the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Statewide Voluntary Preschool Grant funding guidelines. This is an opportunity for the preschool teacher to get to know you, your child, and your family and for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet your child’s needs. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child’s interests, approaches to learning and developmental needs. You can help the teacher understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you’d like addressed. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator.

Family-Teacher Conferences

The preschool program will have formal family teacher conferences during the fall and spring. During the conference the teacher will share results of classroom assessments and samples of your child’s work. Together you can make a plan to continue to encourage your child’s growth and development.

Transitions

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 enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

Access to Buildings

Ankeny Preschool is committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow the guidelines required by the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.
Safety and security of students is one of Ankeny Community School District’s first priorities. Security experts have recommended limiting access to students during school hours as an important strategy in protecting students. For that reason, Ankeny schools will lock all exterior doors during school hours and buzz visitors into the building through a single secure point of access via use of a video phone doorbell system.

In an effort to both partner with parents in the safety of their children and minimize the inconvenience caused by this system, parents are asked to notify their school ahead of time of any visits or appointments in which they will be at school. This will expedite identification and help us to be ready to buzz you in when you arrive.

This notification could be in the form of:
- A phone call to the building office
- A note sent with your student

Upon entry, you will need to:
- Check in through the front office
- Provide a driver’s license for scanning in our Raptor system
- Receive a printed ID badge prior to proceeding.

This process is generally very quick and efficient, and helps us ensure we are not providing inappropriate access to your students.

Health and Immunization Certificates

Before entering 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.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both 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.

Immunizations

Iowa Immunization Law requires parents to vaccinate children against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, rubella, Hepatitis B, and varicella (chickenpox) as a condition of enrollment in any school in Iowa, including home school and dual enrolled students. Parents/guardians must submit an Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate of Immunization to the school nurse. It is the parent’s responsibility to see that this certificate of immunizations is completed and signed.

Students who have not provided a certificate with at least one set of all required immunizations to the school nurse will not be allowed to start on the first day of school. If a complete record of all immunizations required is not provided by the first day of school, the student will need an Iowa Department Public Health Provisional Certificate of Enrollment. This certificate will expire in 60 days, so you must have your child completely immunized during this time. Once the 60 days has expired, your child will be excluded from school until the immunizations are completed.

If you will not be able to provide a complete immunization record for your child, it is imperative that you contact your child’s school nurse on or before the first day of school.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

Two screenings are organized annually in the Ankeny Community Schools Preschool Program. The Heartland Area Education Agency staff completes hearing screenings annually for students in preschool through 5th grade. A vision screening is completed in collaboration with the Lion’s Club. Parents will be notified only if there is a concern regarding the results of the screenings. Please notify your school nurse if you do not want your child to participate in these screenings.

Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse’s office. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records; the child’s parent or legal guardian; and regulatory authorities, upon request.

Child Health and Safety Records will include:
- Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency;
• Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results;
• Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up to date by a specified method during the year;
• Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
• Instructions for any of the child’s special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes);
• Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support); and
• 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.

The staff will 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.
• 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.

Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If your 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 Fahrenheit (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.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their 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, please be sure that we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child’s pediatrician. In the meantime, we will provide the child a place to rest under the supervision of someone familiar with the child. 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 children and staff will not be exposed.

Reporting Communicable Diseases

Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period
of communicable disease occur.

Medication Policies and Procedures

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. Because administration of medication in the school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to provide medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Procedure: The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer’s container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the 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 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.

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.

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.

Child Protection Policies

The health and well being of every child in our care is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is our 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 execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

The program has written 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 and associates complete “Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult Abuse” at least every three 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. Staff who witness abuse by another staff member are obligated by policy to make a written report of the abuse including; the incident, other witnesses, date, time and signature. The report should be directed to the supervising teacher or building principal. 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 Ms. Josie Lewis at (515) 289-3966 as the Level I investigator.

Cleaning and Sanitization

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 daily.

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 of the QPPS manual.

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

Hand Washing Practices

Frequent hand washing is key to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers show 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 children 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 snacks and, preparing or serving food
- after playing in water that is shared by two or more people; and
- after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals.

Adults also wash their hands

- before and after feeding a child;
- 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.
First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is located in the preschool classroom. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from Healthy Child Care Iowa. The contents will be inspected monthly and missing or used items replaced immediately. 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

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.

Inclement Weather

Ankeny Preschool will be closed when Ankeny Community Schools are closed. In the event of a late start, there will be no morning preschool. If there is an early dismissal, there will be no afternoon preschool. Please refer to the district website www.ankenyschools.org for up-to-date communication with regard to preschool closings.

Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents

Ankeny Community School District has adopted an all-hazards emergency manual that includes a flip chart with specific instructions for teachers and school administrators that covers a variety of events. 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 your child receives a minor, non-life threatening injury during their time at preschool, our nurse 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. 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 checked for accuracy at conferences. We encourage families to keep contact information updated in Infinite Campus.

Parent’s Roles During Emergencies

Providing a safe place for students to learn and grow is one of the most important responsibilities of any school system. Along with school officials, teachers and staff, school families play a critical role in preventing and responding to school emergencies. This information is intended to provide parents and guardians with steps you can take before, during and after an emergency. It is the ABC’s of the parent’s role during emergencies.

A. Before

Prevention: The Role of Parents in Keeping Schools Safe - Parents and community members play an important role in keeping our schools safe. You can be our eyes and ears by reporting any issues, concerns or rumors related to safety to school or law enforcement officials. Reports may be made to either of two hotline numbers that are answered 24/7:

- Iowa Health Systems – (515) 244-1000
- Mercy Franklin Center – (515) 271-6111

You also can help by following all security measures when you visit one of our school buildings. All visitors must report to the office immediately upon their arrival to the building. Please bring your driver’s license when you visit in order to obtain a visitor’s badge. We will use our computerized check-in system and you will be given a name badge to wear.

Please regularly update emergency and contact telephone numbers and information with your school to ensure you receive information and updates during emergency situations. It is also important to update information on who can legally pick-up a child.

If your child is on medication, be sure the school has at least a two-day supply.

B. During

In a school emergency, the first instinct as a parent is to pick up the telephone and start calling their child or school and rush up to the school and get your children. The truth is, this only complicates matters from a safety and security standpoint. Parents too close to an incident often hinder the rescue attempts of the police and fire officials on the scene.

- The best action parents can take in an emergency is
to stay close to their phone and e-mail, and to monitor local radio and TV reports for regular updates and instructions.

- Do not report to your child’s school during emergency situations. Law enforcement officials will not allow entry to the school site during a lockdown or shelter-in-place.
- Avoid calling the school or the district during the emergency.

**Notification and Communication** - The school district is committed to providing parents and guardians with the latest and most accurate information available. In most cases the district will send a text or e-mail through the automated call-out system, Blackboard Connect. Parents are asked to also monitor official emergency information updates using the district’s website and local media.

Ensure the information you are using is official and comes directly from the Ankeny Community School District.

**School Emergency Response Protocols** - A school crisis can take a number of forms including an environmental event, such as a chemical spill or gas leak; a weather emergency, such as a tornado warning; or an intruder in or near the school. The nature of a school crisis dictates whether school officials will put in place a lockdown, shelter-in-place, evacuation, or any combination of two of these protocols, as a means to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff.

**When and Why are Students and Staff Asked to Lockdown, Shelter-in-Place or Evacuate?**

- **Lockdown** — A lockdown is normally in effect when there is a threat inside the school. Students and staff are removed from harm’s way by having them safely located inside secure classrooms or other areas inside the school to reduce the risk of being exposed to the source of potential harm. During lockdowns access to the building is prohibited.
- **Shelter-in-Place** — Shelter-in-place is instituted when the threat is outside the school. Students and staff are secured inside a classroom or other areas inside the school reducing the risk for exposure to inclement weather or other potential harm such as a gas release.
- **Evacuation** — Evacuations are typically conducted to remove students and staff from harms way by having them safely vacate the school and reassemble in a more secure location.

**If the school building is evacuated, how will I be able to locate my child?**

Parents will be directed to a specific location where they will be required to show proper identification that includes your photograph. At the reunification site, school administrators and police and fire officials account for students and provide aid to those who need it immediately. Students are released only to authorized individuals. If you are a non-custodial parent, you must be listed with your child’s emergency contact information as a guardian and show proper photograph identification.

**C. After**

Monitor your child’s behavior and let the school know if you think counseling or help is needed. Following a school crisis, specially trained school and crisis team members and social workers are available to provide counseling and outside referrals to students, staff members and others who may need it.

**Recovery plans** - Depending on the nature and amount of damage, school maybe moved to a different location. The district will inform parents of any changes.

**Protection from Hazards and Environmental Health**

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. 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**

Ankeny 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.
Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on school grounds. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Volunteers

Parents, friends, grandparents and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Ankeny Community Schools welcomes and appreciates our adult volunteers. We have a volunteer job description that defines the role and responsibilities of a volunteer. The purpose of the Ankeny Community Schools Volunteer Program is to provide greater educational services and learning opportunities for the youth in our community by providing volunteer assistance within our schools. Any parent or community member wishing to volunteer in the building, participate or chaperone a field trip or dance will be asked to complete the volunteer forms, which are available on the district website. Volunteers are subject to a criminal background check and the district reserves the right to restrict volunteers as a result of that check. It is not feasible to process a background check on the same day as the event. If there is any interest in volunteering during the year, please fill out the volunteer forms at the beginning of the year to assure prompt processing. 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.

Please contact the teacher, elementary principal, office secretary, or access the online volunteer handbook if you would like to be a school volunteer.

Water Bottles

Students are allowed to bring water bottles to the classroom during the day. Water is available in the building to fill bottles as necessary. Water bottles should be labeled and not shared. Using water bottles inappropriately may result in privileges being taken away.

General Information

The 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. 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 at least high school or GED, and in some instances, based on QPPS guidelines, a college degree, personal references and a current health assessment.

Health Assessment

The preschool program maintains current health information from documented health assessments for all paid preschool staff. A current health assessment (not more than one-year-old) is received by the program before an employee starts work, or before they have contact with children. Documented health assessments include:

- Capacities and limitations that may affect job performance

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 files within the Human Resources office.

Orientation

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; and
- Regulatory requirements.
Follow-up training expands on the initial orientations.

**Staffing Patterns and Schedule**

The preschool program is in compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our 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. Staff are provided space and time away from children during the day. Breaks are scheduled consistent with the collective bargaining agreement. In addition, staff may request temporary relief when they are unable to perform their duties.

**Staff Development Activities**

All teaching staff continuously strengthen their 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 are encouraged to participate in informal and formal ways in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities. They may join an early childhood group or organization, attend meetings, or share information with others both at and outside the program.

Teaching staff will be informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local empowerment areas, and the area education agency. Staff are 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**

All staff are evaluated the first year of employment and then once every three years by an appropriate supervisor or, in the case of the program administrator, by the superintendent/designee. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflections and feedback from supervisors, peers and families. From this, they develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.

**Asbestos Notification**

Asbestos has been an issue of concern for many years. The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA) was designed to determine the extent of asbestos concerns in the schools and to act as a guide in formulating asbestos management policies for the schools. The school district facilities have been inspected by a certified asbestos inspector as required by AHERA. The inspector located, sampled and determined the condition and hazard potential of all material in the school facilities suspected of containing asbestos. The inspection and laboratory analysis records form the basis of the asbestos management plan.

A certified management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for the school district facilities which includes: notification letters, training for employees, a set of procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos-containing materials, and plans for regular surveillance of the materials. A copy of the management plan is available for inspection in the office.

**Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Physical Confinement and Detention**

State law forbids schools employees from using corporal punishment against any student. See Board Policy #503.05. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. Additionally, school employees may use “reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain” to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property. Staff are trained annually on this law.

State law also places limits on school employees’ abilities to restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child’s parent.

If you have any questions about this state law, please contact your school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education’s website: [www.educateiowa.gov](http://www.educateiowa.gov).

**Equal Educational Opportunity**

The Ankeny Community School District does not discriminate in its education programs or educational activities on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, marital status, socioeconomic status, or abilities/disabilities in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI and Title XIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendment, Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Iowa Code Section 216.9. 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. The Affirmative
Action Coordinator is Josie Lewis, and can be reached at (515)
965-9600, josie.lewis@ankenschools.org. Inquiries may also
be directed in writing to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission,
Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA, 50319-0201,
(515) 281-4121, or the U.S. Department of Education, Office
for Civil Rights, Chicago Office, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite
1475, Chicago, IL 60661.

Free and Reduced Meals and Programs

If your total household income is within the limits set by the
federal government, you may be eligible for either free or
reduced-price school meals. If you qualify for free or reduced-
price meals, you may also be eligible for food assistance
benefits from the State of Iowa, Department of Human
Services (DHS).

If you need an application or information about free and
reduced food guidelines, please contact the building secretary at
(515) 965-9660.

For information about state food assistance benefits, contact
1-877-937-3663 (1-877-YES-FOOD), or apply online at www.
yesfood.iowa.gov.

Homeless Students

In accordance with 281 IAC Chapter 33, the Ankeny
Community School District is required to give written notice
to homeless children and families if the district is going to
deny access to their educational programs. Homeless children
and families may obtain free legal services by contacting:

Legal Aid Society of Polk County
1111 9th Street – Suite 230
Des Moines, Iowa  50314
(515) 243-1193

Legal Status of Student

If a student’s legal status, such as the student’s name or the
student’s custodial arrangement, should change during the
school year, the parent or guardian must notify the school
district. Please contact the district registrar to ensure that
the school district has a current student record.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct
of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing
purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right
to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey
that concerns one or more of the following protected areas
(“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in
whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of
Education:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s
parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or
student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning
behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have
close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with
lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or
parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine
program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of
funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening
required as a condition of attendance, administered by
the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the
immediate health and safety of a student, except for
hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical
exam or screening permitted or required under State law;
and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of
personal information obtained from students for
marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the
information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from
students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other
distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational
curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18
years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Ankeny Community School District will develop and adopt
policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these
rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy
in the administration of protected information surveys and
the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for
marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Ankeny
Community School District will directly notify parents of these
policies at least annually at the start of each school year and
after any substantive changes.

Ankeny Community School District will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or e-mail, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The district will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the district has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by the education department.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

School Improvement Advisory Council (SIAC)

Cooperation and communication among staff members, students, and community is a goal of the Ankeny Community Schools. For this purpose, the district has a School Improvement Advisory Council (SIAC) that is appointed by the Board of Education. SIAC is a liaison group which provides parents, community members, staff members, and students the ability to provide input into decision-making of the district. The word “advisory” is definitive; that is, to test ideas without final decision-making authority. Parents of each attendance center will be given an opportunity to apply for selection, prior to the end of the school year, for next year’s SIAC. The term of office for all SIAC members will be a commitment of at least one year.

Section 504 - Notice of Rights

Ankeny Community School District does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act is a non-discrimination statute barring discrimination on the basis of disability. It is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by the Act. The 1973 Rehabilitation Act requires the district to locate, evaluate, and determine if the student is a qualified individual requiring accommodation necessary to provide access to educational programs.

Parents are entitled to have the opportunity to review relevant educational records under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The requirements are described in the Board of Education Policy Manual that is available at the Central Administrative Office or on the district’s website (www.ankenyschools.org). Parents/guardians disagreeing with the decisions reached by district personnel regarding necessary accommodations for access to the educational program may request a hearing before an impartial hearing officer by notifying the district’s ADA/Section 504 Coordinator. The parent/guardian is entitled to participate in the hearing and to be represented by counsel.

The district’s designated ADA/Section 504 Coordinator is: Director of Special Programs; 306 S.W. School Street, Ankeny, IA 50023 (515) 965-9600.

Student Complaints

Student complaints and grievances regarding Board policy or administrative regulations and other matters should be addressed to the student’s teacher or other licensed employee, other than the administration, for resolution of the complaint. It is the goal of the board to resolve student complaints at the lowest organizational level.

If the complaint cannot be resolved by a licensed employee, the student may discuss the matter with the principal within 10 calendar days of the employee’s decision. If the matter cannot be resolved by the principal, the student may discuss it with the superintendent/designee within 10 calendar days after speaking with the principal.

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved by the superintendent/designee, the student may ask to have the matter placed on the Board agenda of a regularly scheduled Board meeting in compliance with Board policy.

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal
2. The right to contest placement of a controversial record in the student’s education records. Parents or eligible students may ask the Ankeny Community School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading or a violation of the student’s right to privacy. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a meeting with a district employee who is not directly interested in the outcome. Additional information regarding the meeting procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when they are notified of their right to the meeting.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. On exception with permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, faculty member, staff member, member of the Board of Directors, or others acting on their behalf who the superintendent has determined to have a legitimate educational interest in obtaining access to information in a student’s education records. This may include outsourced law enforcement and security units contracted with the school district. A legitimate educational interest exists when the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the district will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to inform the district that the parent or eligible student does not want the district’s designated directory information, as defined below, to be released to the public. To object to the designation and release of certain student records as directory information, the parent or eligible student must notify the principal in writing, prior to August 1 of each school year (or two weeks from the date of enrollment in the district if such enrollment occurs after August 1), of the information not wished to be released. This objection to the release of directory information must be renewed annually.

Examples of school or media publications include; but are not limited to:
- A playbill showing a student’s role in a drama production
- The annual yearbook

- Academic recognition lists
- Graduation programs
- Sports activity sheets such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members
- Newspaper articles or television news stories
- Podcasts or videos posted on the district website
- Athletic or activities team photos or class photos
- Website articles

Directory information means information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The Ankeny Community School District has designated the following student information as directory information:
- Student’s name
- Curriculum (major field of study)
- Section/Team
- Year in school
- Participation in recognized organizations, activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, awards and honors received
- The most recent educational institution attended by the student
- Photographs, audio recordings and video recordings of the student
- Date of attendance at the school district (general periods of time during which an individual attended or was enrolled in an educational agency or institution)
- Student work

Any information not designated by the district as directory information will be considered an educational record under FERPA and may not be released to the public without parental or eligible student consent.

Two federal laws require local school districts receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the school district that they do not want their student’s information disclosed to the military recruiters without their prior written consent. (1) If you do not want the district to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by August 1.

1. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district
to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy and Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605

2. The district may share information contained in a student’s record with officials of the juvenile justice system if such information will assist in their ability to serve the student.

These laws are: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7908), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110), the education bill, and 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by section 544, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation’s armed forces.

If your parents have no objections - If there are no objections to use of your information as defined above, no further action is necessary and you do not need to fill out the opt-out form.

If your parents object - If your parents object to use of information as defined above and you do not want directory information included in class lists, yearbooks, school programs, brochures, athletic programs, newspaper articles, and other publications such as noted above, please request and fill out the opt-out form. The form should be returned to school no later than August 1.

Student Media Interviews

During the course of the school year, students may be interviewed from time to time by newspaper, television, radio or other reporters in regard to projects, activities and other school events. This is considered a part of the district’s directory information consent policy, along with photos, video, and other media. If you object to your student being interviewed in this manner, please read and fill-out the district’s directory information opt-out form. To obtain a copy of this form, please contact your school’s main office.

Trademark

The Ankeny Hawk, Ankeny Centennial Jaguar and Ankeny “A” logo are trademarked logo/mascots of the Ankeny Community School District. All graphical representations of these mascots are owned by Ankeny Community School District. Use is reserved for school-related purposes. Use of these logos for the purpose of personal profit requires licensing for use through the school district. Use of the Hawk, Jaguar or “A” in other websites, print materials, and message boards without the express written permission of the Ankeny Community School District is prohibited. Failure to obtain this permission could and can result in offending person(s) being reported for infringement, and possible lawsuit. For more information regarding appropriate use of school logos, see Board Policy 1004.21 - Advertising and Promotion. When questions arise regarding the use of district logos, please direct them to the Communications Manager at 289-3950

Title IX

The Ankeny Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Josie Lewis, Chief Officer of Human Resources, 306 SW School St., Ankeny, IA 50023; 515-965-9600. For further information on notice of nondiscrimination, visit http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Water Testing

The Iowa Department of Public Health requires school districts to conduct water testing for lead-containing sediments. The Ankeny Community School District has completed the required testing of all district water dispensers including faucets and fountains. All water dispensers have been identified below 20 ppb (0.020 mg/liter) as required by law. Additional information regarding specific testing results may be obtained by contacting the Director of Construction at (515)965-9600.