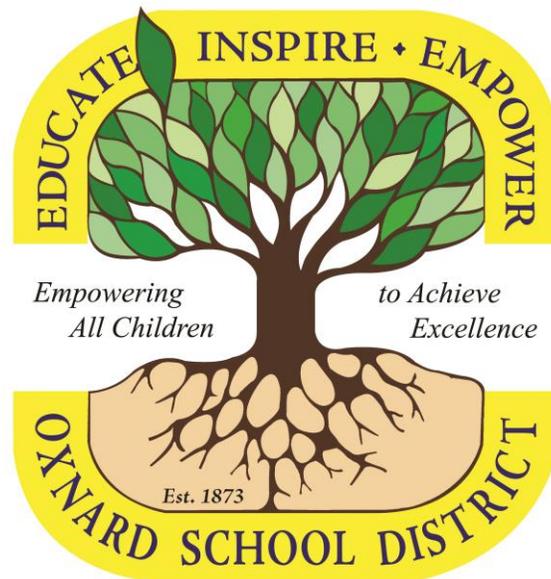


Oxnard School District Early Childhood Education

1051 South A Street, Oxnard, California 93030 (805) 385-1501 ext. 2322



Parent Handbook 2020-2021

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Welcome to Oxnard School District State Preschool!

We wish to welcome your family to our State Preschool Program. We have a unique program and we are looking forward to a rewarding partnership with your family. As an integral component of the Oxnard School District's educational program, combining quality care and a creative learning environment is a priority. Our staff is always pleased to work in cooperation with our school families.

Distant Learning

The Oxnard School District is currently operating at 100% Distant Learning. All instruction is taking place synchronously (live through Zoom) and asynchronously (home activities). Devices and connectivity will be distributed to preschool families for full access to synchronous and asynchronous instruction. When we return to in-classroom instruction, the district will notify parents of any priorities, limitations, and other CDE and public health regulations.

This handbook was developed to answer some of the questions you may have concerning the policies and procedures of our program. Please take time to read this handbook and keep it in a convenient place for quick reference. If at any time you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please feel free to share them with us.

Open Door Statement

The Oxnard School District Board of Trustees believes that it is important for parents/guardians and community members to take an active interest in the issues affecting district schools and students. Therefore, the Board encourages interested parents/guardians to participate in their student's educational program.

Non-Discrimination and Non-Sectarian Requirements

The Oxnard School District State Preschool Program operates in accordance to state guidelines, and is available to any child who is eligible, without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability.

No preschool educational program may include religious worship or instruction, nor use funds for the general support of any private or church-related school system.

Uniform Complain Procedures

Uniform complaint procedures shall be used to address any complaint alleging the district's failure to comply with state and/or federal laws related to educational activities. Uniform Complaint Procedures (*Board Policy 1312.3*), Sexual Harassment (*Board Policy 4119.11, 4219.11, 4319.11, and 5145.7*), and Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures (*Board Policy 1312.4*) can be found on the District's web page at www.oxnardsd.org.



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Philosophy and Goals

Preschool programs provide an enriched environment to benefit your child's intellectual, physical, emotional, social and cultural development. Increasingly, research shows that quality preschool programs reduce the need for remedial classes in subsequent grade levels. During their pre-kindergarten years, children develop characteristics that affect their lifelong ability to learn.

In preschool, there is a dual focus, Children, and their Parents. Children are provided with age and developmentally appropriate experiences, in literacy rich environments, by highly qualified personnel. We acknowledge that the family has the most influence on a child's learning potential. The participation of parents in Distant Learning activities provides for observation of their own child's behavior in a learning setting and allows for the reinforcement of learning at home. We expect implementing a combined focus will prepare students and families for the rigors of kindergarten and students step into kindergarten ready to learn.

Cultural Diversity/Gender Equity

We live in a diverse society, a society that includes people of many races, cultures, beliefs, and physical and mental characteristics. Teaching your child about diversity can help your child grow up to be open-minded, fair, respectful of others' rights and feelings, and aware of people's similarities and differences. Your child will be better prepared for life in a rapidly changing world, a world in which people of different cultures, backgrounds, and religions will learn, work and live together, and nations will be more closely linked by communication, technology, and trade. Even young children notice differences in gender, skin color, physical abilities, and begin to form opinions. Healthy self-esteem allows children to accept others. Feeling good about yourself and your background is not the same as feeling superior to others.

Nutrition

During in-classroom instruction, preschools are required to include nutrition in their programs; the minimum requirement is a snack, which includes two basic food groups. Once we return to classroom instruction, all students in our program will be provided breakfast or lunch at no cost to families. Oxnard School Preschool programs must adhere to all regulations regarding access to nutrition program, food handling and preparation; this includes parents completing a Child Nutrition form.

During Distant Learning, we encourage all parents to participate in the district meal distribution. This information is located on the Oxnard School District webpage:

<https://www.oxnardsd.org/Page/10947>



Eligibility for Preschool Services

Pursuant requirements, children are enrolled based on the legal requirements of the California Department of Education - State Preschool Program. The requirements for preschool programs are:

Age: Children must be 4 years old on or before December 1st. Three (3) year olds can be served after all 4 years are served.

Income: Family income must be at or below the ceilings approved for the current year.

- Gross monthly family income is verified with a statement of earnings (pay stubs), and completion of an *Employment Verification* form by the employer.
- Where income is received in cash, rather than by check, the amount is verified by a written statement from the employer *Employment Verification*, and completion of *Self Certification of Cash Income* form.
- Gross income must be verified for self-employed persons (*income tax returns for the previous year and business reports/ledgers, letter from source of income*).
- Family members who do not earn income, must sign *Self Certification of Zero Income*.

Admissions Priorities

More children may meet the eligibility requirements than can be served by the District. In the determination of which children should be enrolled, the following priority applies:

1. Children receiving services from Child Protective Services or children at risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited
2. Four-year-olds with lowest income
3. Three-year-olds with lowest income
4. Family is a public assistance recipient
5. Homelessness

Class lists are formed in July, prior to the opening date of the new school year. Each subsequent participant is drawn from the *State Preschool Waiting List* with priority for the child whose family has the lowest income, regardless of date of application. The Oxnard School District maintains a waiting list for the purposes of enrollment into the program pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 18106.

Confidentiality - Enrollment process requires completion of state and district documents. Information gathered through this process is kept confidentially. This information is not shared without the written consent of parents.

Notice of Action/Parent Request for Hearing

Approval and/or denial of preschool services shall be communicated to the applicant through a written statement referred to as a *Notice of Action*. The *Notice of Action* shall be mailed to parents within 30 calendar days from the date application was signed by parent. If parent disagrees with an action, the parent may file a request for a hearing within fourteen calendar days of the date the *Notice of Action* was received. Upon filing a request for a hearing, the intended action shall be suspended until the review process has been completed.

PRESCHOOL



Physical Examination Requirements for Students

Arrangements are made for parents to coordinate physical examinations, vision and hearing screening, and immunizations with local health clinics whenever possible. A current physical examination and evaluation, including age-appropriate immunizations, are required for each child prior to attendance in preschool. Each agency or district determines the specific amount of time to be allowed for completion of such examinations. Local medical advisers and county health agencies are consulted in establishing a reasonable time frame based on local circumstances. The physical examination should identify any special health problems or disabilities, which will require special attention or limit the child's activities. Any child who is a Medi-Cal recipient may receive a Medi-Cal physical examination during the summer months prior to preschool enrollment. The county's Child Health Disability Prevention (CHDP) Agency will fund the physical examination after the child is enrolled in the State Preschool Program and it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to keep the appointment.

Immunizations

Students must be immunized against certain communicable diseases. Students are prohibited from attending school unless immunization requirements are met for age and grade. The school district shall cooperate with local health officials in measures necessary for the prevention and control of communicable diseases in preschool and school aged children. The district may use any funds, property, or personnel and may permit any person licensed as a physician or registered nurse to administer an immunizing agent to any student whose parents have consented in writing.

Beginning January 1, 2016, parents of students in any school will no longer be allowed to submit a personal beliefs exemption to a currently required vaccine. A personal beliefs exemption on file at school prior to January 1, 2016 will continue to be valid until the student enters the next grade span at kindergarten (including transitional kindergarten) or 7th grade.

Students are not required to have immunizations if they attend a homebased private school or an independent study program and do not receive classroom-based instruction. However, parents must continue to provide immunizations records for these students to their schools. The immunization requirements do not prohibit students from accessing special education and related services required by their individualized education programs.

A student not fully immunized may be temporarily excluded from a school or other institution when that child has been exposed to a specified disease and whose documentary proof of immunization status does not show proof of immunizations against one of the communicable diseases described above.

State law requires students entering the preschool program must present a health record which shows immunization against diphtheria, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, Hepatitis B, tetanus, mumps, measles, and chicken pox.



Love them, Protect them, Immunize them!

Immunization Exemptions for Students

Exemption from immunization requirements is allowed when:

A child with a medical problem, which, according to the statement of a physician, prohibits the required immunizations, temporarily or permanently. However, if there is a good cause to believe that a child is suffering from a recognized contagious or infectious disease, the child shall be temporarily excluded from the program until the local health officer is satisfied that no infectious disease exists.

Volunteer Requirements – (Option if there are no limitations when we return to in-classroom instruction)

Parents who wish to volunteer in the classroom must complete the *Parent Volunteer* form found in the preschool registration packet. Other immediate family member may volunteer in place of the parent only if they are twenty-one (21) years old and complete the *Volunteer Registration* form. This form can be obtained by the enrollment staff.

All volunteers must provide the following:

- Cleared Tuberculosis test
- Fingerprint clearance – obtained through the district at no cost to families
- Measles, Pertussis, and Influenza immunizations (parents may opt out of Influenza by submitting a written statement)

When you volunteer in a classroom, you must come without other children. Due to State licensing regulations, siblings and/or other children are not allowed to in the preschool classroom. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and ask that you make other arrangements for the care of siblings/other children while you are volunteering. Please sign in at the school front office for a badge before proceeding to the preschool classroom.

Tuberculosis Clearance Requirements

Both paid and volunteer personnel, including parent and classroom volunteers, must have either a chest X-ray or a tuberculin test of intermediate strength, which is verified as negative. Documents verifying freedom from tuberculosis must be current (not to exceed four years), and records must be accessible for review by State personnel. When a tuberculin test result is positive, the test must be followed immediately by further testing. Persons with positive tuberculin and X-ray results must be excluded from the classroom until they have been referred to a physician and negative test results is verified by the physician. Tuberculosis tests can be performed at local health clinics.



Daily School Attendance Requirements

During in-classroom instruction, parents must sign-in and sign-out their child daily in the classroom using their full signature.

- Children will only be released to those authorized on the *Emergency Card* and are at least 18 years old.
- Parents **MUST** pick up their child on time. **After three (3) written warnings, a termination notice may be issued.**

Students are expected to attend school and on time daily, during in-classroom and during distant learning instruction. Teachers will be calling parents when students are absent to determine reason for absence. Regular attendance plays a key role in student achievement. Unexcused absences should not exceed 3 days per year. It is the responsibility of the parent to contact the teacher when their child is absent from school or child may be dropped from the program.

Excused Absences Include:

1. Illness/quarantine of child/parent
2. Family emergency (Serious illness of parent, funeral, immigration and other governmental appointments, sudden unforeseen circumstances)
3. Court ordered visitations are unlimited (must bring court order)
4. Best Interest Days (10 excused absences per year at the discretion of parents)
5. Inability to connect digitally (during distant learning)

If your child has a fever, vomiting, diarrhea or has had a fever in the last 24 hours, please keep him or her home.

Unexcused absences include:

1. Oversleeping
2. No transportation
3. Rain
4. Personal



Medication

Teachers cannot administer medication to children. Parents are to make arrangements with school office personnel to give medication to children during school hours; this requires doctor's orders. Parents will be provided with information about purchasing medical insurance for their children, if they wish to do so.

COVID 19 Regulations

Public Health officials stipulated specific COVID-19 related regulations for both staff and community. District employees are following these regulations. Once the Oxnard School District students return to in-classroom instruction, the Oxnard School District will inform parents of procedures and regulations to keep students and staff safe during the instructional day.

General Safety Rules

This is a partial list of classroom safety rules that we may ask parental help in enforcing with the children:

- Running is allowed outside on the grass areas only. Children should not run on the concrete portion of the play area, and should not run inside the classroom facility.
- Children using the slide must do so feet first.
- Balls are the only object allowed to be thrown. Children may not throw sand, toys, blocks, etc.
- “Indoor voices” must be used inside the classroom so that children can hear any instructions from teachers that may pertain to safety.

The Oxnard School District believes high expectations for student behavior, effective classroom management strategies and parent involvement can minimize the need for discipline. Staff shall use preventative measures and positive conflict resolution techniques whenever possible. If necessary, teachers will request conferences with parents to address student behavior and implementation of a behavior improvement plan.

Students possessing, exhibiting or threatening others with a weapon, dangerous instrument or imitation firearm are subject to suspension and/or expulsion in accordance with law, Board policy or administrative procedures.

Accidents, Injuries and Emergencies

We take precautions to provide a safe environment for your child. However, accidents do happen. Minor injuries will be taken care of at the preschool and an accident report will be sent home. In the event of a serious injury, parents will be notified immediately and action will be taken if necessary.

For this reason, it is extremely important that all of the information on your child’s emergency card is up-to-date at all times. In a medical emergency, 911 will be called.

Fire, Disaster & Lock Down Drills

The preschool will participate in fire, disaster and lock down drills. Parents will be informed of drills through the teacher notices.

Health and Safety Information

At Oxnard School District, safety is a priority. Your children are precious to us and we have implemented policies to make sure our school is a safe and healthy environment. Your child will be monitored from the time you drop them off until the moment you pick them up.



Description of Preschool Program

Preschool programs covered by this handbook are part-day educational programs for four-year-old children. The preschool facilities are licensed through State of California Community Licensing and are in good standing with the California Department of Education. Site Administrators, Teachers and Preschool Instructional Assistants hold required qualifications.

Classroom Environment

The classroom environment invites children to discover, create, explore, experiment, observe, discuss, and share. It is designed to meet age-appropriate needs of students.

Children's Program

The curriculum is child-centered and reflects the program goals and objectives. Materials and activities are age and developmentally appropriate, meets the child's individual needs, interests and desires; and capitalizes on the child's strengths. The activities are open-ended providing for experimentation, problem solving and discussion between the children.

Personnel

Site personnel appreciate and value each child in their program. They are nurturing, compassionate people who are active listeners and care about each child. They appreciate, are sensitive to, accept and value the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the children in their classrooms, and hold each child's family in high regard. Teachers and Instructional Assistants are provided professional development opportunities throughout the school year to extend their knowledge of high-quality instructional strategies.

Parent and Staff Partnership

Program personnel and parents acknowledge their joint responsibility for the education of the children and work together to establish partnerships based on mutual trust and respect. Parents and teachers work together on student conferences and parent workshops.

Administration

Administrators are knowledgeable about how children grow, develop and learn. They use this knowledge in designing a developmentally appropriate children's program.

Dress Code

All children should come to school in clothes suitable for many activities and play. They should wear comfortable shoes, Tennis shoes are recommended. No flip flops or open toed sandals as they can be dangerous and are not suitable for school. **Children in the preschool program are not required to wear school uniforms.**



Daily Activities Include (but not to be limited to):

1. Verbal communication and the effective use of language in all experiences
2. Problem-solving skill development and concept formation
3. Creative expression and aesthetic appreciation
4. Experience building knowledge in all curriculum areas
5. Perceptual training to develop discriminatory skills
6. Development of a healthy self-concept
7. Experience building knowledge of various cultures
8. Peer interaction as well as interaction with adults
9. Large-group, small-group and individual experiences
10. Body movement for both large and fine motor development
11. Practice of good health and safety habits
12. Nutrition education as well as a healthy meal

Program Length

All programs will follow the District school calendar.

- ◆ No child may participate in more than one preschool class session per day.
- ◆ The Oxnard School District State Preschool Program provides class sessions of at least 175 days, three hours per day.
- ◆ Parents must transport students to and from school.
- ◆ Children are enrolled for five days per week Monday through Friday.
- ◆ Morning Session runs 8:00am – 11:00am, Afternoon Session runs 11:05am – 2:05pm
- ◆ During Distant Learning, Oxnard School District State Preschool is providing 1 hour of synchronous (live through Zoom), and 45 minutes of home activities. This time is well above the requirement for preschool providers.

Evaluation of Children's Progress

Several methods are available to members of the instructional staff to encourage the systematic observation of children's behavior and the preparation of cumulative progress records. Informal evaluation of each child's development is a daily activity. Formal evaluation is completed twice per year. Teachers maintain a portfolio of individual student work. Individual progress is shared with parents during Parent/Teacher conferences.

Student Conduct

Students have the right to a safe and positive environment conducive to student learning. We believe high expectations, effective classroom management and parent involvement can minimize the need for discipline. Staff implement age appropriate strategies for correcting behavior; positive reinforcements, immediate feedback, and when needed initiate behavior consultations with parents.

Program Self Evaluation

Our preschool program adheres to State mandates by performing a yearly self-evaluation, and using findings to improve program quality. Key areas assessed are classroom environment, student growth and learning, and parent knowledge of child development. The evaluation report is presented to the Oxnard School District Board of Trustees for approval.

Parent Involvement

Parents are involved in preschool programs before school begins through an orientation meeting, and during the school year through parent-teacher conferences, classroom participation, parent education workshops, and other various activities like parent surveys. Coordination of school and community efforts, including close communication, further strengthens the services available to parents.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are part of home-school relationships. An important purpose of these conferences is to include parents in the shared responsibility for the education of their children. Conferences among all adults providing instruction are scheduled to share the goals of the program, observations of individual child behavior, as well as individual child progress. These conferences are held twice per year; in the fall and spring.

Parents in the Preschool Classroom

Evaluation studies indicate that children whose parents become involved in their education **make substantially greater gains** than do children whose parents do not participate. This is an optimal opportunity for parents to learn strategies to extend their child's learning experience at home.

Parents are highly encouraged to participate in their child's classroom. Other family members may volunteer in place of the parent IF they are at least 21 years old.

All volunteers must provide the following:

- Cleared Tuberculosis test
- Fingerprint clearance – obtained through the district at no cost to families
- Measles, Pertusis, and Influenza immunizations (parents may opt out of Influenza by submitting a written statement)



When parents come to the preschool, their participation may range from observation to assigned tasks such as preparing materials and yard activities depending on the program needs and the interest of the individual parent. Parents are also highly encouraged to attend all parent meetings and workshops scheduled throughout the school year.

Children who are not enrolled in the program may not come with the parent during volunteer days.

Cell phone use **is not permitted** during volunteer hours.



Parent Education Program

Parent education meetings are planned cooperatively with parents and are held regularly throughout the school year, the meetings:

1. Include topics suggested by the parents
2. Include discussions related to the preschool program goals
3. Give parents a better understanding of child growth and development
4. Provide parents with information related to parenting skills

Parents may identify mutual special interests aside from the matters of child rearing and education. Whenever possible, staff members encourage and even assist in planning classes according to the expressed needs of the group, such as nutrition and meal planning, dealing with tragedies, domestic violence prevention or on topics or needs expressed by parents.

Parent Advisory Committee

Parent Advisory Committee is made up of parents and staff. The meetings are held every trimester. The purpose of the Parent Advisory Committee is to guarantee the effective and significant participation of parents with participating children, support the collaboration between school and home, advice the district on issues related to services to families and children, empower the role of parents as active participants in the education of their children and to advocate their own educational needs.

Communication with Schools and Community

The preschool program for children and parents is a part of the total education effort of the community. As such, it is important for the preschool staff to be aware of how their program relates to the kindergarten, primary, and upper grades. Communication is established between preschool and the elementary schools which will be receiving the preschool program children in subsequent years. Activities are planned throughout the school year to ensure articulation between programs. Some of these activities might be cross-visitations by the preschool and kindergarten teaching staff, participation of preschoolers in the elementary school holiday festivals, and orientation sessions for parents held by kindergarten staff. Equally important is the need to promote a better understanding throughout the community of the goals, objectives, and activities of the preschool program. Such information is readily available to community members. The district provides information to parents to enable them to make maximum use of community services and resources.

Thank you for choosing Oxnard School District State Preschool as the early education program for your child and family!



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