



PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FAMILY HANDBOOK 2023-2024

Russellville Preschool Program Handbook Contents

Parent/Guardian Agreement Signature Page Copy -----	1
Annual District Calendar-----	2
Handbook General Information-----	3
Welcome	District Mission and Vision/RSD Board Information
Purpose of Handbook	Program Supervisor Contact Information
Regulations, Policies, Standards for the Preschool Program -----	4
Russellville School Board Policies	Arkansas Better Chance Regulations
Arkansas Child Care Licensure/Contact	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
Better Beginnings AR Quality System	AR Child Development Early Learning Standards
High Quality Voucher: CCDF Regulations	USDA and CACFP Nutrition Regulations
Family and School Partnership: Parent Engagement-----	5-6
Volunteering	Siblings and Other Children Visiting
Child Abuse Registry Check for Volunteers	More About Partnerships/Activities at Home
Adult Family Visitors	Communication
Center Phone Numbers	Email Format for School Staff and School Board
Preschool Program Information-----	7-15
Classrooms and Zones Served	Expectations/Parents' Involvement /Non-Custodial Parents
Staff Information	Corporal or Physical Punishment Prohibited
Cognitive Development of Preschoolers	Religious Instruction Prohibited
Literacy and Math Curriculum	Child Abuse Hot Line Number
Social and Emotional Development	Clothing for student safety
Positive Student Management	Reporting Student Performance
Parent Teacher Conferences	Transition to Kindergarten
<i>Kindergarten Readiness</i> Calendar	Hygiene Practices
Special Services for Students	School Calendar
Daily Schedule	Rest Time
Eligibility and Enrollment for Preschool Program-----	16-18
Application Process and Data Needed	Applications Date and Time Stamped
Zones	Requirements for Eligibility and Enrollment
Termination of Services	
Attendance Requirements-----	18-19
Absence/Tardy/Early Check Out/Security	
Information on School Policies and Procedures -----	20-28
Transportation	Meal Prices
Confidentiality/FERPA	Meals From Home Agreement/Fast Food Not Allowed
Weather Closing/Ice and Snow	Fire/Tornado/Nuclear Warnings
Bullying/Cyber bullying	Insult or Abuse of Teacher AR Law
Gun Free Schools Act	Lost and Found Information
Cell Phone Use in School Zones Prohibited	Non Discrimination Policy
Law Enforcement Interview of Students	Injury, Illness, Medical Conditions
Licensure Interview of Students	Head Lice, Nits, Scabies
Student Sexual Harassment Prohibited	School Nurse Contact Information Preschool
Lost or Damaged Books or Materials	Medication Administration at School
Student Internet Use Agreement	Student Use of Phones, Cell Phones, Toys from home
Healthy School Environment/Act 1220	School Insurance
Child Nutrition and Food Service	Grievance Procedures/Public Complaints

A copy of the current elementary handbook may be obtained on the RSD Website

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE PAGE

PARENT COPY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FAMILY HANDBOOK PARENT COPY

The Handbook is reviewed with all parents/guardians in a meeting prior to their child beginning preschool. Parental agreement to follow the policies and procedures of the Russellville School District and the Preschool Program is required in order for children to be enrolled. The original of this signature form is required to be on file prior to children attending.

I have reviewed the Russellville School District Preschool Family Handbook policies and procedures and agree to comply with *these (including hours of instruction, pick up time, attendance policies, meals, and payment schedules)* _____

I understand the requirement for all adults (over the age of 18) signing out students to be listed on my approved list and that additions must be in writing; I will inform each person that at any time, state-issued picture identification may be required and must be on hand. I will keep phone numbers and contacts updated to provide safety for my child. _____

I agree to work with my child's teacher in positive behavior management practices, and agree to participate in at least two parent/family engagement activities as an investment in my child's future. _____

I understand and agree that I will be responsible for payment for preschool services if my child has excessive absences. _____

I agree to attend parent conferences for my child at least three times this school year, and to attend if additional meetings are needed to meet individual needs. I understand that I can request parent meeting schedule accommodations for work or school needs. _____

I give my permission for my child to be photographed and/or otherwise recorded for the purposes of program research, publicity, web page/social media, educational activities and reporting. _____

I am aware that my child will receive a complete developmental screening and ongoing assessment including vision, hearing, speech/language, cognitive, fine and gross motor, social/emotional, height and weight. I give my permission for these routine screenings in collaboration with the Russellville School District. I am aware that if additional evaluation is needed, I may need to attend special meetings. _____

I have received the web link to the Kindergarten Readiness Checklist and know that I can request a printed copy
[Getting Ready for Kindergarten Calendar. Print Version -1.pdf](#) _____

I give my permission for my child to be transported for field trips on a school bus. (I am aware that I will receive a specific permission form)._____

I agree to hygiene practices and procedures in the program such as toileting, hand washing, teeth brushing, sun screen, lotion and lip balm application, and agree to instruction in development of individually age appropriate independence in these skills._____

I give my permission for my child to receive emergency medical care/transportation._____

I have completed the Internet User Agreement for my student. _____

I have received the information regarding requirements for non-religious instruction _____

I understand that multiple phone numbers and emergency contacts are needed for safety and have provided those. _____

I have provided all medical/ behavioral/ legal data I have for staff to meet my child's needs and to provide safety for my child and others. This includes all information I have on my child's special needs, any behavior problems, and custody information _____

Handbook link <https://www.rsdk12.net/o/district/browse/6601> (I am aware I may request a printed copy)

2023-2024 School Calendar

August 21	First Day of Class
September 4	No School – Labor Day Holiday
September 26-28	Parent Teacher Conferences (After School)
October 19	No School- Teacher Contract Day
October 20	Fall Break- No School
November 20-24	Thanksgiving Holidays – No Classes
Dec. 25-January 5	Christmas Holidays – No Classes
January 8	Classes Resume
January 15	No School
February 19	No School- Teacher Contract Day
February 20-22	Parent Teacher Conferences (After School)
March 18-22	No School – Spring Break
May 27	No School- Memorial Day Holiday
May 30	Last Day of School
June 3-7	Are designated make-up days for inclement weather (please save these tentative dates)

PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK GENERAL INFORMATION

WELCOME!

The staff of the Russellville School District Preschool Program welcomes you and your child to an exciting learning adventure! We are so pleased that you have chosen our program for your child, and we look forward to providing your family with the highest quality of early education. We highly value the beginning of a school partnership with your family, realizing that children learn both at home and at school.

PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK:

This handbook is intended to provide information about the operation of the Russellville School District Preschool Program, and may answer questions that families have about school and program policies, procedures, regulations, student management, curriculum guidelines, and the instructional program. Families are encouraged to read the handbook, and to refer to it if questions arise about procedures or requirements.

A parent or guardian for each child must sign and return an acknowledgement and agreement form in order for their child to attend the Russellville School District Preschool Program. A copy of the forms is on page 1.

RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION AND VISION:

Russellville School District Will Educate, Equip, and Empower Every Student, Every Day

RSD...achieving excellence together

RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD:

School Board members may be contacted through the School District Administrative Office, at 479-968-1306.

Holli Hall	Don Jacimore
Donna Hindsman	Georgeanne Rollans
Wesley White	Janet Winn
Jeremy Keaster, President	

If you have questions about any of the information in this handbook or about the preschool program in general, please talk to your child's teacher or the program supervisors:

Krista Geurian, Coordinator and Principal
krista.geurian@rsdk12.net
479-967-6025

Preschool Web Page:
[RSD Preschool Program Web Page](#)
Preschool Facebook Page:
[RSD Preschool Facebook Page](#)

RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT PRESCHOOL PROGRAM REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND STANDARDS:

The preschool program complies with the following regulations, policies, and standards:

- **Russellville School District School Board Policies:**
These policies are frequently referenced in the handbook. An entire copy of Board Policies may be located on the district web site: [Russellville SD Student Policies](#) The preschool family handbook is approved by the Russellville School Board annually.
- **Applicable Russellville District Elementary School Student Handbook policies:**
Applicable Elementary Handbook items are included within this handbook so that information is available to parents in one book. The full [RSD Elementary Handbook](#) may provide additional information. There may be more information or procedures based upon the specific location of your child's classroom, due to traffic flow, building entrance, and other items. These items are provided to parents as applicable.
- **The Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education Minimum Licensing Standards for Child Care Centers:** A copy of these standards is located in your child's classroom. The program receives periodic on site monitoring visits from a child care licensing specialist. **Compliance forms (DCC 521) are maintained at the school if you wish to view these.**

Arkansas Child Care Licensing Contact Information: 501-682-8590

A link to these standards [AR Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards for Centers](#)

- **Standards of Quality in Better Beginnings Arkansas:** The program is required to maintain an overall rating of Level 3. Arkansas Better Beginnings is an Arkansas Quality Rating and Improvement System for early education and care programs and youth development programs. Additional information is located in your child's classroom and may also be accessed at the following link: [AR Better Beginnings](#)
- **The Arkansas Department of Education Rules for the Arkansas Better Chance Program:** The Arkansas Better Chance Program/ Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABC/ABCSS) rules include student eligibility, curriculum, staff credentials, facility requirements, and the highest quality standards in early education. A copy of these rules is available in your child's classroom and may also be accessed at the following link: [Arkansas Better Chance Rules](#)
See also reference to the requirement of non-religious instruction during the program day on page 23.
- The Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and Early Education **Child Care Development Fund (CCDF, Quality Preschool Voucher Program)** rules and procedures. These are on file in the district preschool office.
- **The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS):** The program is required to maintain an overall rating of at least five on these quality standards. This quality rating is determined through periodic on site monitoring visits conducted through Arkansas State University Division of Childhood Services. A copy of these standards is available in your child's classroom.
- **The Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 Months:** Research based standards are in place to support and connect expected skills and learning from birth to age five. The document details guidelines for early educators in guiding the growth and development of children through a successful transition to a kindergarten curriculum. The Early Learning Standards are aligned with Kindergarten standards and include literacy, mathematics, arts, social studies, science, and social emotional skills.
A link to the standards: [Arkansas Early Learning Standards: Birth to 60 Months](#)
- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Nutrition Regulations <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp>

FAMILY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom. The program's "open door" policy means that parents are encouraged to participate in the program in any way that is comfortable. We believe that families and parents should choose the type and level of involvement that is meaningful for them and their student. For example, family members might enjoy volunteering time to read stories, coming to school for lunch, talking to the children about interests, helping teachers to make educational materials, accompanying a child's class on field trips, or being a part of the Advisory Committee.

Parents and others who volunteer in a classroom on a regular basis shall be required to complete a Child Abuse Registry checklist for the safety and security of all students.

This does not apply for occasional or periodic visits or for other volunteer activities.

Copies of registry forms are available in your child's classroom with instructions.

Some children may experience difficulty in adjusting to a new environment and in separating from their parents and caregivers. This is considered normal and is planned for in the curriculum and quality care program. For that reason, parents are encouraged to consult with their child's teacher or the program supervisors about their own child's adjustment prior to beginning visits or volunteer activities, and to cooperate with suggestions made regarding visiting or volunteering.

VISITORS

Visits by parents and other family members are welcome. Students enjoy the opportunity to show their classrooms and school work to special adults. Parents and other family members are encouraged to participate in the life of our school by volunteering in a classroom or for a special project.

Visitors to the school **must report to the school office** upon arrival and make the office staff aware of their reason for visiting. In order to ensure the safety of our students, the school must know of any adults in the building and their purpose for being there. For this reason, **all visitors must sign in and sign out through the security system used at that building.** A visitor badge must be worn by the visitor. The visitor's badge will let staff members know that the visitor has followed the proper check-in procedure. Visitors must sign out before leaving the building in the same way. In the interest of safety and in compliance with Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards, a school staff member may ask for proof of identity. For lunch visits, parent/child must remain on site and in designated area.

Parents/Guardians who wish to conference with a teacher should plan to schedule a time that coincides with the teacher's preparation time or at another time that is convenient for both the parent and the teacher. **Classroom instruction time must not be interrupted for un-scheduled parent/teacher conferences.** Parents/Guardians may schedule conferences through the preschool office or by email communication with a teacher

Preschool teachers may be available 12:00-1:00 p.m. and from 3:00 to 3:45 p.m. with prior notice.

Special arrangements may be made through the Preschool program supervisor if needed.

Calls made to classrooms will go through the school offices and will not be forwarded during instruction time.

Calls may also be made to the Preschool Program Office at 479-967-6025.

Center Valley Preschool: Center Valley Office 479-968-4540

Crawford Preschool: Crawford Office 479-968-4677

London Preschool: London Office 479-293-4241

Oakland Heights Preschool: Oakland Office 479-968-2084

Sequoyah Preschool: Sequoyah Office 479-968-2134

VISITS BY SIBLINGS OR OTHER CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT ENROLLED

Siblings or other family members of children in the program may visit briefly for a parent program or a school meal when accompanied and fully supervised by parents/guardians. Due to liability and child care licensure requirements, children who are not enrolled in the program may not stay for volunteer activities in the classrooms. Only enrolled and registered children may participate in classroom activities. There will be scheduled opportunities for all family members to visit the program throughout the school year. Preschool children and younger children **may not be on elementary playgrounds** during school hours or during early mornings before the bell rings.

MORE ABOUT FAMILY/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

All staff members recognize parents as their child's first and most important teacher. Effective partnerships with families include clear, honest, and two-way communication. Staff members are very interested to hear from you about things your child is doing at home and to work together with you to address any concerns you might have. While we know a lot about children, we are aware that you know a lot about your own child. Working together, we can ensure that your child's early learning experiences are successful and fun.

Parents agree to participate in three parent conferences annually, and are encouraged to invest in their student's success by participating in parental and family engagement activities at least quarterly.

A parent orientation is required prior to student attendance.

Your child's teacher will send home activities regularly which may assist parents and other family members in working with students to help encourage learning. Reading a short book (or part of a book) or completing a fun activity with your child at some point during the day can be an enjoyable way to connect with your child and their learning at school.

These activities are intended to be fun and informative for family members and are not mandatory in any way. Each family's structure and daily schedule may impact family members' participation from time to time. Please speak with your child's teacher or the director if you have questions about any activity, or if you would like additional extension activities.

Your child's teacher will communicate with you in a variety of ways, and it is helpful for you to let the teacher know how best to reach you and communicate with you on a daily basis. Parents will be asked to respond to program evaluation questions periodically to assist the program in ensuring quality. Each center team will ask a parent to participate in the Advisory Committee, which will meet periodically with the director to further ensure program quality.

COMMUNICATION

Frequent and timely communication between home and school is essential. Teachers as well as the office staff welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that may arise. Parents/Guardians should read notes and/or newsletters that are sent home from the school with students. Each type of communication includes valuable and current information. The Russellville School District schedules two days of parent/teacher conferences each semester. It is important for parents to attend these conferences. Conferences with the teacher may be scheduled for times in addition to the planned conference days. These conferences should be scheduled with the teacher and may take place before school, after school, or during the teacher's preparation time. Keeping the "lines of communication" open will help all children to have a successful and positive school experience.

Parents are reminded that it is required that address, phone, and other means of contacting parents be kept current by notifying the teacher or preschool office. Preschool parents/guardians agree to this as a condition of enrollment. At least two emergency contacts are required.

EMAIL FORMAT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES AND BOARD

An additional form of communication that is available to parents/guardians is through the e-mail system. Parents/guardians may contact teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Russellville School District by using the first and last name along with rsdk12.net.

Example: john.doe@rsdk12.net

RUSSELLVILLE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION

PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM/CENTER LOCATIONS PER RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT ATTENDANCE ZONES

Preschool Centers for 2022-2023 are located as follows: In the event that all student slots are filled in an attendance zone, students on the waiting list may fill slots in any attendance zone available on a first come, first served basis. All applications shall be date and time stamped at the time of receipt of completed application.

Location	# of classrooms	Attendance Zones Served	School Office Telephone
Center Valley	2	Center Valley	479-968-4540
Crawford	2	Crawford	479-968-4677
London	2	London	479-293-0023
Oakland	4	Oakland Dwight	479-968-2084
Sequoyah	2	Sequoyah	479-968-2134

STAFF INFORMATION:

All lead preschool teachers for Russellville School District have an Arkansas teacher's license which includes Preschool or Kindergarten. Teacher assistants have a minimum of 60 hours of college or have passed the Arkansas Paraprofessional Test. All assistants have either teaching licenses, an Associate's Degree equivalent, a Child Development Associate credential (CDA), and/or are working towards a teaching license or CDA. All staff receives professional development annually. All are members of the Arkansas Professional Development Registry (PDR).

MATERIALS BROUGHT FROM HOME

Students are not required to bring any learning materials for school. Families are asked to keep at least one full change of clothes including shoes for their child at school in case of messy spills or other mishaps. These should be labeled with the child's full name. Coats, jackets, and other items should also be labeled. Families having difficulty with providing this must let their child's teacher know so that alternate services may be provided. Students **may not bring backpacks or toys** from home except for occasional events which are arranged with the teacher. All school materials are provided. Families may be asked to save recyclable items such as paper towel tubes, buttons, etc., for school projects. Any necklaces, lanyards, etc. must be breakaway cord for choking prevention.

Bags, coats, or other items brought from home must be checked by parents daily to ensure that no dangerous materials have accidentally been placed there.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION CONTINUED

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT AND CURRICULUM

The vision of the Russellville School District is embedded in the practices of the preschool program:

Russellville School District Educates, Equips, and Empowers all students to be productive, contributing members of their school, their community, and their world. Every Child: Every Day

The Preschool Program is designed to encourage children's learning and development through carefully planned activities which promote exploration of science, language, math concepts, literacy/writing, art, music, movement, and drama. The program, like the K-12 program, is standards based and follows the **Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 Months**. The beginning structure for the implementation of the standards was the *Adventures in Learning* Curriculum through the Division of Child Care and Early Education. This curriculum has been customized for Russellville's program and is based upon the *AR Early Learning Standards*. The literacy curriculum and lessons are vertically aligned with the Elementary **Benchmark** curriculum, Launchpad Curriculum, and **Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum**. The math curriculum and lessons utilize the **Eureka Math** curriculum for preschool students. Science, social studies, social-emotional learning, movement and the arts are incorporated as well. [Research based resources in addition to *AR EL Standards*, *Eureka Math*, and *Benchmark*: National Association for the Education of Young Children's *Developmentally Appropriate Practices*, *ECERS Curriculum Extensions*, and Loving Guidance's *Conscious Discipline*] All elements of the preschool curriculum are directly aligned to the Russellville K-2 Curriculum.

Teachers in the preschool program facilitate children's learning in a variety of learning stations in the classroom and in outdoor learning environments. The classroom and outdoor environment are arranged to include materials which are organized to encourage learning as students work within these settings. The curriculum and standards are based upon extensive, long term research in early education. This research indicates that young children are active learners, creating knowledge and learning through their daily experiences with materials and people. Every child is an individual, with unique strengths, interests, personality, and approach to learning. Teachers and staff form strong, caring relationships with children and families, and draw upon those relationships to support children's learning and development.

For preschool students, this means that learning is most meaningful when it happens in the context of everyday experiences at home and in the classroom. For children who require special services, the most appropriate and impactful experiences occur when specialized services are integrated into classroom activities and routines. As active learners, preschool students are provided with choices in activities on a regular basis. A substantial portion of the school day is spent in a setting in which children choose among a variety of activities. The direct involvement of teachers in setting up activities and in interacting with students to encourage language development, math, and reasoning structures the environment and activities for students. The staff and supervisors will provide parents with information on an ongoing basis about how activities are planned and formatted to encourage learning and development. Students will have daily opportunities to develop literacy skills, including writing and computer literacy, which are appropriate to their age and development. They will have opportunities to explore complex mathematics and science concepts, and to appreciate and participate in physical activity as well as visual and performing arts. Please expect this information and ask any questions you may have as you observe your child's experiences and communication you receive. Students will be photographed or otherwise recorded to assist with assessment and with personalized program planning, research, and publicity (including RSD Web page and Facebook). Please speak with your child's teacher or the supervisor if you or your children have extenuating circumstances.

PROHIBITION ON RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION ANNUAL NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC/ABCSS) regulations, Section 23.04.5 require that parents be informed at least annually of the following prohibition of religious instruction during the school day: "To assure that no religious activity is paid or subsidized by public funds or occurs in any manner suggesting governmental endorsement of any religion or message:

ABC funds must be used exclusively to support allowable ABC program costs incurred to provide non-religious instruction and activities during the ABC day; and no religious activity may occur during the ABC day regardless of the source of funds used to support the activity." Note the reference to regulations (page 4) and the parent signature (page 1) regarding this notice.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION CONTINUED

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The preschool program promotes an atmosphere of mutual respect among staff, children, and families. This is important for all who interact with children. When staff recognizes and values the beliefs, customs, and traditions of each family, the child and family are best served. The basis of this learning is the **Conscious Discipline** approach. (<https://consciousdiscipline.com>) The following practices related to social and emotional development are in place:

- Students and families are reminded that the teachers and other staff are the safe keepers at school, and that children help in keeping school safe.
- Students receive direct instruction in learning personal care and safety: they have opportunities to develop independence by doing things for themselves and to learn to ask for help when needed.
- Students are helped and encouraged to make choices and to see the result of their choices. Students may be allowed to make mistakes as long as they are safe. For success in later schooling, it is important that students learn to make good choices on their own.
- Students are helped to learn to talk and to listen by engaging in ongoing, frequent conversations with other children and adults. This requires a lot of practice in talking and listening (taking turns) so that true communication may occur. Student learning in literacy supports the idea that what people say may also be written and read. Student learning in math and science supports concepts of collecting data and predicting.
- When there are conflicts, students are assisted in resolving them and in developing positive social skills.
- Students have opportunities to choose alone time as well as group activities. There are designated “cozy” or “quiet time” areas in each classroom that allow students to work alone for a time if they would like to.
- Students who have difficulty joining in group activities or in being safe with others receive direct instruction in developing these skills.
- Social and emotional development is fostered in a positive manner through children’s participation in learning activities which are designed to be inclusive and developmentally appropriate for the age and maturity level of the children.
- The development of tolerance for others and a respect for diversity are important skills in our society and contribute to success in later education. Students have multiple opportunities to practice these skills.
- Students learn school based routines and competencies which help to ensure readiness for the next level of education in the school setting.
- For many children, especially those who have not been in preschool or child care settings previously, the environment may feel noisy or overwhelming at times. For that reason, all classrooms are zoned so that noisier areas, such as the building block center, are separated from quieter areas such as the library/reading nook or the writing and computer center.
- The emphasis of the social-emotional curriculum is to assist students in learning skills to prepare them for success. Early intervention when there is difficulty means that the emphasis is upon teaching and not upon excluding children when problems arise.

HYGIENE PRACTICES:

Students are assisted in developing self-care skills in toileting and washing hands. They may help in serving meals or snacks. The preschool program practices universal precautions, which means that staff are recommended to wear gloves when helping students and in assisting with cleanup of spills and accidents as appropriate. Students will be assisted in washing hands frequently to help them develop healthy habits. They may gain experience in applying sun screen, lotion or lip balm if needed. Let the teacher know of allergies or intolerances. (See permission and signature form on Page 1 of the handbook)

Preschool staff will ensure the highest quality of personal care for all students. Parents agree to provide all information for safety and to cooperate with independent toileting skills implementation if their student is not fully independent upon school entrance.

STUDENT CLOTHING FOR SAFETY:

Students are involved in multiple hands on learning activities daily. These activities may be messy. Aprons are provided to help prevent clothing from becoming stained. It is important that students be dressed in sturdy clothing that, for the most part, they can manage independently. A complete change of clothes (including shoes) is needed on hand at all times in case of a mishap. **For outdoor safety, students may not wear open toe shoes such as “flip-flops” to school.** Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothing appropriate for climbing, riding tricycles, and running. Any necklaces, lanyards, etc. must be breakaway cord for choking prevention. Jackets, coats, and sweaters may be very necessary at times. Please let us know if you have difficulty with providing any of this and we will gladly and privately help locate assistance.

POSITIVE STUDENT MANAGEMENT:

In order to assure a climate conducive to learning for all students, behavior expectations are a necessary part of a system for schooling. The school and school district strive to maintain expectations, which are consistent and clearly-stated. When students choose to disregard an expectation, they know there will be a response from an adult in charge. For any disciplinary infraction, consequences may range from a minimum of reprimand to the maximum of expulsion. Responses to disciplinary infractions may include a range of disciplinary action from a conference with the child to expulsion from school. The intent of the preschool program is to prevent exclusion or expulsion from school by intervening early and providing strong support if students have difficulty with behavioral expectations.

Appropriate behavior is fostered by helping children learn to control (regulate) their own behavior and emotions and work out their conflicts. This is different than only relying on adults to manage their behavior. Positive management of students places emphasis on preventing problems by attending to the room arrangement, having age-appropriate expectations, providing interactive activities for play and learning, and active adult monitoring and supervision. Students are taught to use words and to be direct about their needs. (example: “I don’t like it when you take my puzzle. Ask me when you want something”) Teachers support this by supervising and assisting when words are hard to remember.

Students are taught very specific and simple concepts, or ideas, about behavior, so that they are easy to remember:

- We use walking feet indoors in our classroom and school.
- We use “indoor” or “small” voices indoors and “outdoor” or “big” voices outdoors.
- We use kind words and safe, helping hands at school and at home.
- We all help keep each other safe.
- We help our learning environment by working together.
- We take care of our school materials.
- We are a school family.

Notice that all of these expectations are worded in a positive manner. It is easier for children to remember what to do when expectations are worded in this manner.

Parents agree to work with preschool staff in positive management of students and to provide all information for safety. A parent interview is conducted to assist with providing appropriate and individualized services to students.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION CONTINUED

POSITIVE STUDENT MANAGEMENT CONTINUED

You may hear your child talk about skills which promote the ability to regulate emotional responses to stressful situations. Children will have opportunities to choose one of the soft/cozy areas in the classroom if they need a chance to relax. There are also “safe places” in each classroom with calming activities for children who are sad or upset. These are not punitive or punishing areas in any way, and are available in each classroom. You will receive information about these practices at your orientation meeting and throughout the year as students learn about their school family and how they contribute to the success and safety of everyone.

If there are very challenging behaviors, parents will be informed and will be included in planning for teaching appropriate behavior at school. Teaching staff shall respond to all challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that:

- provides safety for all children
- is calm and respectful
- provides the child with skill building for acceptable behavior.

Parents are expected to participate in the development of an individual program if needed. In extreme circumstances, this participation may be required as a condition of their child's continued attendance. Staff will provide observations to identify events, activities, interactions and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behavior. The preschool program will emphasize teaching skills and will avoid exclusion whenever possible and safe.

It is essential that parents provide all relevant behavioral and legal information regarding their child's previous performance and current needs in order for a safe and appropriate program to be available for all students. See signature page on page 1 for this assurance. This is also included in the application.

CORPORAL OR PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT PROHIBITED IN PRESCHOOL

Please note that the preschool program philosophy as well as Arkansas Child Care Licensure standards prohibits any form of physical punishment for three and four year old students. **According to Arkansas Child Care Licensure regulations, parents/guardians shall not inflict physical punishment in the classroom or on school grounds (including the parking lot).** A parent's/guardian's failure to adhere to this regulation requires a witnessing staff member to report to the Arkansas Child Maltreatment Hotline:

Please speak with your child's teacher or the program supervisors for further clarification if needed.

Arkansas Child Abuse
and
Maltreatment Hotline
1-800-482-5964

Additional Information, AR Hotline: There may be other instances in which staff members, as mandated reporters, are required to complete a report to the hot line. In most of these instances, staff members are not allowed to inform parents or guardians for student safety.

Law Enforcement Interview Of A Student

Act 613 of the 2011 Arkansas General Assembly states that a principal is prohibited from notifying the parent, guardian, custodian, or person standing *in loco parentis* if the official investigation by legal authority dealing with suspected child maltreatment, and the parent, guardian, etc. is named as an alleged offender. The investigator shall provide the school with written documentation that notification is prohibited.

page 11

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION CONTINUED

REPORTING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Students in the preschool program will receive a screening within 45 days of enrollment, and will also have progressed assessed according to the **Work Sampling** System. Each student will have progress documented through the online *Work Sampling* program and through a portfolio of student work documentation. A copy of the portfolio will be provided to parents annually. Parents will receive information at least twice annually in parent/teacher meetings.

Staff members are committed to providing on-going information and opportunities for parents to communicate and gain information about how and what their student is doing in school. In addition to regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences, the following activities will be implemented each school year by elementary buildings:

- provide family kits to all parents that include important information on becoming involved in the school, parenting tips, community resources, opportunities for communication with teachers, and a calendar of events;
- provide newsletters and/or information about upcoming events and how parents can be involved;
- develop Parent Nights that will help parents better understand how they can help their child at home;
- establish a Parent Involvement Committee to assist the school in meeting the needs of parents and increase parent involvement.

The K-5 grading policies are available at your child's elementary school when students transition to kindergarten or before if families need that information. Please contact the building principal if you have questions.

K-5 PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES AND PRESCHOOL CONFERENCES

Act 603 of the 2003 Arkansas General Assembly requires that each school schedule no fewer than two (2) parent-teacher conferences to occur during the school year. The conference times, if spent wisely, can be very valuable to the overall educational progress of your child. Conferences for grades PK-5 will be conducted on **September 26-28, 2023 and February 20-22, 2024**. Some parents/guardians are hesitant about participating in conferences, but teachers can be more effective with their students if they can share their understandings of the student directly with the parent/guardian. **Preschool conferences will be scheduled at the same time as K-4 conferences, with an additional conference at the end of the school year. Preschool teachers may schedule over several different days to accommodate interpreters and other family needs. Parent/guardian participation in parent conferences is required.**

OTHER CONFERENCES WITH TEACHERS AND DAILY CONTACT

It is not necessary to wait for the regular conference time if a parent/guardian has a special concern. Additional conferences are encouraged and can be arranged at any time during the school year. Please make arrangements through the classroom teacher. (However, **please do not ask to see a teacher while he/she is instructing class.**) Conferences can be scheduled during a teacher's planning time or after school. Teachers will schedule the conference as soon as possible after communication from the parents/guardians.

Preschool teachers are available daily during student check in and check out times, but may not be able to have a private conversation at these times. If arriving late or early to drop off or pick up children, please do not disrupt class time. Please do not call school from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. unless an emergency arises.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION CONTINUED

TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

Each child in the Russellville School District has a cumulative folder that follows him/her from kindergarten through the 12th Grade. The cumulative folder includes important information such as copies a student's birth certificate, Social Security card, immunization record, report cards, testing papers, etc. [Elementary handbook]

When children reach kindergarten age another transition begins in preparing for this stage of school. Families are provided information about registering for public school and helping a child to be "ready" for school. The class may visit Kindergarten classroom. Classroom discussions and activities may focus on "big school" expectations. The child's portfolio is given to the family at this transition time, and parents will be assisted in registering for kindergarten.

The preschool program will transfer records for the permanent cumulative folder.

Parents will still be required to physically register their child for kindergarten.

PARENTS WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF OR A LINK TO THE ARKANSAS *KINDERGARTEN READINESS CALENDAR* NO LATER THAN THE FIRST PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE ANNUALLY, OR UPON ENROLLMENT. The link is:

[Arkansas Kindergarten Readiness Checklist](#)

[Arkansas Kindergarten Readiness Calendar](#)

Documentation is included on page 1 of the handbook annually.

SPECIAL SERVICES:

The Russellville School District Preschool Program is an inclusive early education program, which means that the program serves children with and without disabilities in the context of a developmentally focused education program.

Special services for preschool students are provided through Russellville School District or Arch Ford Cooperative depending on the district of residence. The preschool staff will assist in obtaining screening, assessment, and services through this program which is provided free of charge to eligible students.

Specialists work closely and collaboratively with classroom staff and agree to use an integrated model of service delivery (working primarily in the classroom rather than in a separate "therapy room" or other segregated environment).

Regular meetings with individual classroom teams and parents, teachers, therapists, and School age representatives provide opportunities for assessing progress and plan for children's success.

Families and individuals interested in knowing more about the services for children with disabilities are encouraged to speak to their child's teacher or the program supervisor.

Families who wish to use other service providers shall sign a release with the preschool program and shall access these services outside of school hours, including alternative mental health/behavioral services.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The preschool program follows the Russellville School District calendar, with the exception of transitioning students in to preschool services over two days in August in order to make school entry an easy process for families and children who may not have been away from home before.

A copy of the school calendar is provided to all families on page 2 and is available on the district web site.

[Russellville School District 2023-2024 Calendar](#)

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION CONTINUED

CONTACT BY NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

If there is any question concerning the legal custody of the student, the custodial parent shall present documentation to the principal or the principal's designee establishing the parent's custody of the student. It shall be the responsibility of the custodial parent to make any court ordered "no contact" or other restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent known to the principal by presenting a copy of a file-marked court order. Without such a court order on file, the school will release the child to either of his/her parents. Non-custodial parents who file with the principal a date-stamped copy of current court orders granting visitation may eat lunch, volunteer in their child's classroom, or otherwise have contact with their child during school hours with the prior approval of the school's principal. Such contact is subject to the limitations outlined in [Policy 6.5.1R](#), and any other policies that may apply.

Arkansas law provides that, in order to avoid continuing child custody controversies from involving school personnel and to avoid disruptions to the educational atmosphere in the District's schools, the transfer of a child between his/her custodial parent and non-custodial parent, when both parents are present, shall not take place on the school's property on normal school days during normal hours of school operation. The custodial or non-custodial parent may send to/drop off the student at school to be sent to/picked up by the other parent on predetermined days in accordance with any court order provided by the custodial parent or by a signed agreement between both the custodial and non-custodial parents that was witnessed by the student's building principal.¹ Unless a valid no-contact order has been filed with the student's principal or the principal's designee, district employees shall not become involved in disputes concerning whether or not that parent was supposed to pick up the student on any given day. **CHILD CARE LICENSURE REQUIRES THAT A DESIGNATED ADULT, PARENT, OR GUARDIAN SIGN EACH STUDENT IN AND OUT DAILY. UNKNOWN ADULTS ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A PICTURE ID AND TO BE LISTED ON THE CHILD'S APPROVED PICK UP LIST. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.** Changes to the list must be made in writing and may not be called in to the school office. For assistance, contact preschool supervisors at 479-967-6025.

The picture ID will be needed at times, even if the individual has picked up students previously. This may be in the case of a substitute or a staff member unfamiliar with the individual. Cooperation is expected for safety.

CONTACT BY LAW ENFORCEMENT, SOCIAL SERVICES, OR BY COURT ORDER

State Law requires that Department of Human Services employees, local law enforcement, or agents of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, may interview students without a court order for the purpose of investigating suspected child abuse. In instances where the interviewers deem it necessary, they may exercise a "72-hour hold" without first obtaining a court order. Except as provided below, other questioning of students by non-school personnel shall be granted only with a court order directing such questioning, with permission of the parents of a student (or the student if above eighteen [18] years of age), or in response to a subpoena or arrest warrant.

If the District makes a report to any law enforcement agency concerning student misconduct or if access to a student is granted to a law enforcement agency due to a court order, the principal or the principal's designee shall make a good faith effort to contact the student's parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control by court order, or person acting in loco parentis identified on student enrollment forms. The principal or the principal's designee shall not attempt to make such contact if presented documentation by the investigator that notification is prohibited because a parent, guardian, custodian, or person standing in loco parentis is named as an alleged offender of the suspected child maltreatment. This exception applies only to interview requests made by a law enforcement officer, an investigator of the Crimes Against Children Division of the Department of Arkansas State Police, or an investigator or employee of the Department of Human Services.

In instances other than those related to cases of suspected child abuse, principals must release a student to either a police officer who presents a subpoena for the student, or a warrant for arrest, or to an agent of state social services or an agent of a court with jurisdiction over a child with a court order signed by a judge. Upon release of the student, the principal or designee shall give the student's parent, legal guardian, or other person having lawful control by court order, or person acting in loco parentis notice that the student has been taken into custody by law enforcement personnel or a state's social services agency. If the principal or designee is unable to reach the parent, he or she shall make a reasonable, good faith effort to get a message to the parent to call the principal or designee, and leave both a day and an after-hours telephone number.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION CONTINUED:

Contact by Professional Licensure Standards Board Investigators

Investigators for the Professional Licensure Standards Board may meet with students during the school day to carry out the investigation of an ethics complaint.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The basic schedule for the preschool program follows. The schedule may vary slightly at your child's specific school location. The schedule is adjusted when weather is very hot. A schedule is posted in each classroom.

Children will be encouraged to go to the restroom during indoor learning station time. Small groups will meet with teachers facilitating learning and language. Learning Stations will be included in outdoor activities as well.

REST/NAP TIME

Students are provided with one hour minimum of rest time daily and are not required to sleep. Students who do not sleep will be provided with quiet activities after a maximum of fifteen minutes. Cots with sheets and blankets are provided. Sheets and blankets are washed at least weekly and more often if needed.

Child care licensure requires a minimum of one hour rest time daily.

Some children may need more or less time than this to sleep and this is planned for. An early bedtime and wake up time is beneficial due to the schedule.

Sample Russellville School District Preschool Schedule

Times will vary by center.

8:00 Arrival/Morning Greetings/ Wash Hands
8:15 Breakfast and Conversation in the classroom
8:35-9:50 Work Station Learning (encourage restroom trips)
9:50-9:55 Clean Up
9:55-10:00 Transition to Outdoors
10:00-11:00 Outdoor Work Station Learning (Gross Motor Skills)
11:00-11:05 Transition to Classroom
11:05-11:15 Wash Hands, Prepare for lunch
11:15-11:35 Lunch and Conversation
11:35-11:45 To cots individually, following restroom trips
11:45-12:45 Story or Soft Music: Relax and Rest 60 minutes
12:45-2:15 Work Station Learning (small group instruction included)
2:15-2:30 Snack
2:30-3:00 Work Station Learning, School Family Meeting and Dismissal

Children are **age eligible** for the Russellville School District preschool program if they are three or four years old by August 1 of each school year (**AUGUST 1, 2023**), and have a documented address within Russellville School District K-4 attendance zones. (See classroom/center locations in previous section) If slots remain with no school district waiting list, additional attendance zones will be considered.

Funding is available on a first come, first served basis for children who qualify through Arkansas Better Chance/Arkansas Better Chance for School Success. The eligibility requirements for ABC/ABCSS may be accessed through the Arkansas Division of Elementary and Secondary Education web site:

<https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/learning-services/arkansas-better-chance-program-abc>

The rules may be accessed at this link:

https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Files/20201201161454_ade_257_Arkansas_Better_Chance_October_2012.pdf

Families shall provide documentation of all eligibility pursuant to current program requirements. There are multiple eligibility factors, including

- Family income at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Level (chart available by family size)
- Documented factors such as a disability, Limited English Proficiency, and family issues (full list available)
- Income eligibility may be waived as allowed by regulations (full information available)

Additional slots, if available, shall fall under the sliding fee schedule per Arkansas Better Chance Program, or through the Child Care Development Fund special high quality preschool voucher program, or the Russellville School District Preschool Program Sliding Fee Scale.

ENROLLMENT IN RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Applications for enrollment shall be accepted on an ongoing basis.

Applications are processed on a first come, first served basis according to attendance zone.

Fall enrollment applications may be obtained through the program supervisor's office.

Spring applications may be obtained through classroom locations as well as the supervisor's office. All completed applications are required to be returned to the program supervisor's office for processing. Needed copies may be made at no cost at this location, and a notary and interpreter are available with notice.

Russellville School District

Preschool Program Supervisor Information

Krista Geurian, Principal and Coordinator

Russellville School District

Gardner Building

1000 South Arkansas

Krista.geurian@rsdk12.net

479-967-6025

ENROLLMENT IN RUSSELLVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Student applications are processed for eligibility as they are received, and are stamped with date and time of receipt of a completed application. A completed application shall consist of the following:

- Completed application form packet with all required signatures
- Birth certificate or hospital record for applying student
- Social Security Number of applying student
- Documented family income and verified additional eligibility if applicable
- Immunization record of applying student
- Insurance Information for applying student
- Completed AR Department of Health Authorization to Disclose or Release Health Information
- Completed Child Care Food Program Enrollment form for applying student at time of attendance
- Completed National School Lunch Act Enrollment form for applying student at time of attendance
- Completed Medical Information Form
- Completed Home Language Survey Form
- Completed Agricultural Questionnaire Form
- Completed Homeless Survey Form
- Documentation of Well Child Screening from Primary Care Physician and current immunizations at time of attendance

Once a student has been designated as eligible, the parent/guardian will be notified of an available spot in a classroom or of placement on a waiting list.

According to state law, the name indicated on a child's birth certificate must be used on the child's cumulative folder unless the school is provided with legal papers indicating a name change and/or a new birth certificate indicating the name change.

School age enrollment requirements shall be considered as meeting listed preschool requirements as follows:

1. The parent, guardian, or other responsible person shall furnish the child's Social Security number, or if they request, the district will assign the child a nine (9) digit number designated by the department of education. (Student Social Security numbers are not made available to the public.)
2. The parent, guardian, or other responsible person shall provide the district with one (1) of the following documents indicating the child's age:
 - a. a birth certificate
 - b. a statement by the local registrar or a county recorder certifying the child's date of birth
 - c. an attested baptismal certificate
 - d. a passport
 - e. an affidavit of the date and place of birth by the child's parent or guardian
 - f. United States military identification
 - g. previous school records.
3. The parent, guardian, or other responsible person shall indicate on school registration forms whether the child has been expelled from school in any other school district or is a party to an expulsion proceeding.

The Board of Education reserves the right, after a hearing before the Board, not to allow any person who has been expelled from another district to enroll as a student until the time of the person's expulsion has expired. [from Elementary Handbook]

page 17

REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS TO ATTEND

In order for an eligible student to begin to attend, documentation of

- completed annual physical (within 12 months of enrollment)
- completed emergency contact and pickup list for enrolling student
- for students with incomplete immunizations, an appointment card for immunizations is required
- completed orientation meeting with handbook signature(s)
- completed technology/internet user agreement

In the event that two applications have identical completion stamps, receipt of this additional information shall determine which student is placed.

A parent/guardian orientation meeting shall be documented prior to student attendance.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES:

Students may be terminated from services

- due to lack of attendance (Please see attendance section) after attempts to contact
- if required immunizations become out of date (see immunization policy) after attempts to contact
- if annual physical become out of date per ABC regulations after attempts to contact
- if documentation of student information remains delinquent with no documentation of compliance
- if parents repeatedly fail to pick children up on time (please see schedule) after conferencing
- if other extreme circumstances preclude services per regulations after conferencing

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS Russellville School District Policy 4.7

Preschool Day is 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Absences

RSD Policy Number 4.7

Link to policy: [RSD Policy Number 4.7\(link will be updated once on website\)](#)

Education is more than the grades students receive in their courses. Important as that is, students' regular attendance at school, whether in person or digitally, is essential to their social and cultural development and helps prepare them to accept responsibilities they will face as an adult. Interactions with other students and participation in the instruction within the classroom enrich the learning environment and promote a continuity of instruction which results in higher student achievement.

Excused Absences

Excused absences are those where the student was on official school business or when the absence was due to one of the following reasons:

1. The student's illness or when attendance could jeopardize the health of other students. A maximum of six (6) such days are allowed per semester unless the condition(s) causing such absences is of a chronic or recurring nature, is medically documented, and approved by the principal.
2. Death or serious illness in their immediate family;
3. Observance of recognized holidays observed by the student's faith;
4. Attendance at an appointment with a government agency;
5. Attendance at a medical appointment;
6. Exceptional circumstances with prior approval of the principal;
7. Participation in an FFA, FHA, or 4-H sanctioned activity;
8. Participation in the election poll workers program for high school students.
9. Absences granted to allow a student to visit his/her parent or legal guardian who is a member of the military and been called to active duty, is on leave from active duty, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The number of additional excused absences shall be at the discretion of the superintendent or designee.

page 18

10. Absences granted, at the Superintendent's discretion, to seventeen (17) year-old students who join the Arkansas National Guard while in eleventh grade to complete basic combat training between grades eleven (11) and (12).
11. Absences for students excluded from school by the Arkansas Department of Health during a disease outbreak because the student has an immunization waiver or whose immunizations are not up to date.

Students who serve as pages for a member of the General Assembly shall be considered on instructional assignment and shall not be considered absent from school for the day the student is serving as a page.

In order for the absence to be considered excused, the student must:

- a. Bring a written statement to the principal or designee upon the student's return to school from the student's parent or legal guardian stating the reason for the student's absence; or
- a. If the student is attending the District's courses digitally, upload a written statement from the student's parent or legal guardian stating the reason for the student's absence through the District's digital course management platform for review by the principal or designee.

A written statement presented or uploaded for an absence having occurred more than five (5) school days prior to its presentation or upload will not be accepted.

Unexcused Absences

Absences that are not defined above; do not have an accompanying note from the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis; or have an accompanying note that is not presented or uploaded within the timeline required by this policy shall be considered as unexcused absences. Students with six (6) unexcused absences in a course in a semester may not receive credit for that course. At the discretion of the principal after consultation with persons having knowledge of the circumstances of the unexcused absences, the student may be denied promotion or graduation. Excessive absences shall not be a reason for expulsion or dismissal of a student.

When a student has three (3) unexcused absences, his/her parents, legal guardians, persons with lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be notified⁷. Notification shall be by telephone by the end of the school day in which such absence occurred or by regular mail with a return address sent no later than the following school day.

Whenever a student exceeds six (6) unexcused absences in a semester, the District shall notify the prosecuting authority and the parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or persons standing in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty as prescribed by law.

It is the Arkansas General Assembly's intention that students having excessive absences be given assistance in obtaining credit for their courses. Therefore, at any time prior to when a student exceeds the number of unexcused absences permitted by this policy, the student, or his/her parent, legal guardian, person with lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis may petition the school or district's administration for special arrangements to address the student's unexcused absences. If formal arrangements are granted, they shall be formalized into a written agreement which will include the conditions of the agreement and the consequences for failing to fulfill the agreement's requirements. The agreement shall be signed by the student; the student's parent, legal guardian, person having lawful control of the student, or person standing in loco parentis; and the school or district administrator or designee.

Students who attend in-school suspension shall not be counted absent for those days.

Days missed due to out-of-school suspension or expulsion shall be unexcused absences.

The District shall notify the Department of Finance and Administration whenever a student fourteen (14) years of age or older is no longer in school. The Department of Finance and Administration is required to suspend the former student's operator's license unless he/she meets certain requirements specified in the statute.

Tardies and Early Check-outs

Tardiness and early checkouts cause a hardship on the student, the teacher, and other class members. Parents and/or guardians must accompany students to the office to check them in when arriving late. *Tardies will cause student ineligibility for a perfect attendance award.* Below are defined conditions that constitute a tardy and when a tardy becomes an absence:

- Students are considered tardy if they arrive after the instructional day begins or leave after 2:00 pm.
- Students who receive three (3) tardies will obtain a ½ day absence.
- Students who arrive or leave between the hours of 10:00 am and 2:00 pm will obtain a ½ day absence.

Any student leaving school before dismissal must be checked-out by an adult through the office. Any adult, other than the custodial parent, must be listed on the child's registration form. Anyone picking up a child from school should be prepared to show a photo ID. This is for the safety of all our students.

Arrival after 11:00 a.m. requires the prior permission of the preschool supervisor due to the disruption of the learning environment. The supervisor will work cooperatively with parents who have extenuating circumstances occasionally.

ABUSE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE

Russellville School District Policy Number 3.17 Effective: 7/1/2013

Link to Policy: [Russellville School District Policy Number 3.17](#)

School districts are required to report to the Department of Education any prosecutions of individuals who insult or abuse teachers. Abuse of a public school employee constitutes the following:

1. It is unlawful, during regular school hours, and in a place where a public school employee is required to be in the course of his or her duties, for any a person to address a public school employee using language which, in its common acceptance, is calculated to:
 - a. Cause a breach of the peace;
 - b. Materially and substantially interfere with the operation of the school; or
 - c. Arouse the person to whom it is addressed to anger, to the extent likely to cause imminent retaliation
2. A person who violates this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction be liable for a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500). *Legal Reference: Arkansas Code Ann. 6-17-106*

BEHAVIOR/ITEMS NOT PERMITTED

All Russellville School District Students shall comply with rules and regulations found in this handbook. Students are to obey reasonable instructions, submit to the teacher, school and Board of Education authorities on school property or at school-sponsored off-campus activities. The following behaviors/items are not permitted and results in disciplinary action.

- a. Food and drink are not allowed in the hallways or classrooms (except for water).
- c. Students are not allowed to sell or trade personal items at school. Student prohibited items may include, but not limited to: games, cards, skateboards/roller blades, dice, yoyos, knives, water guns, cigarette lighters, fireworks.
- d. Throwing of rocks or other objects on campus is prohibited.
- e. No laser lights are allowed. (*Act 1408 of 1999 prohibits possession of laser pointers by students.*)
- f. Elementary Schools adheres to a "hands off" policy. Students are to keep their hands to themselves. Playing around may cause serious fights and injury. The "hands off" policy includes the use of feet, throwing of objects or any type of physical contact.
- g. Cameras and use of cell phones are not allowed at school unless approved through administration.

Bullying

Link to Policy: [RSD Policy 4.43R](#)

Students in the Russellville School District have the right to receive a public education in an environment reasonably free from substantial intimidation, harassment, or harm or threat of harm by another student. Respect for the dignity of others is a cornerstone of civil society.

Bullying means the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against another student or public school employee by a written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that may address an attribute of the other student, public school employee, or person with whom the other student or public school employee is associated.

Examples of bullying may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following

- cyberbullying;
- sarcastic "compliments" about another student's personal appearance;
- pointed questions intended to embarrass or humiliate;
- mocking, taunting or belittling;
- non-verbal threats and/or intimidation such as "fronting" or "chesting" a person;

page 20

-
- demeaning humor relating to a student's race, gender, ethnicity or personal characteristics;
- blackmail, extortion, demands for protection, money, or other involuntary donations or loans;

- blocking access to school property or facilities;
- deliberate physical contact or injury to person or property;
- stealing or hiding books or belongings; and
- threats of harm to student(s), possessions, or others.

Rude = Inadvertently saying or doing something that hurts someone else.

Mean = Purposefully saying or doing something to hurt someone once (or maybe twice).

Bullying = Intentionally aggressive behavior, repeated over time, that involves an imbalance of power.

Students found in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, consideration may be given to other violations of the student handbook that may have simultaneously occurred.

Student Behavioral Intervention and Restraint

RSD Policy [4.60](#)

It is the duty of the Russellville School District to ensure the safety of all students and personnel, this includes the use of safe, effective, evidence-based strategies to support students displaying challenging behaviors. It is the responsibility of each school district in Arkansas to ensure that every student is safe and protected from being unnecessarily or inappropriately restrained.

CRIME OF SECOND DEGREE BATTERY AS IT RELATES TO SCHOOL EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS

Act 207 of 1997 redefined the crime of second-degree battery as it relates to school employees and others. This act states, "A person commits battery in the second degree if with the purpose of causing physical injury to another person, he causes serious physical injury to any person." In relation to causing injury to school employees, this act states, "A person commits battery in the second degree if he intentionally or knowingly without legal justification causes physical injury to one he knows to be a teacher or other school employee while acting in the course of employment." This law also defines the crime of second degree battery to include intentionally and knowingly without legal justification causing injury to one who is twelve (12) years of age or younger. Battery in the second degree is a Class D felony.

GUN FREE SCHOOL ACT

In accordance with the School Act of 1994, students are not permitted to bring weapons to school. It also "requires expulsion for students for a period of not less than one year for possession of any firearm or other weapon prohibited upon school campus by law however, the superintendent shall have discretion to modify such expulsion requirements for a student on a case-by-case basis."

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Russellville School District Policy Number 4.18 Effective: 5/19/2015

Students and staff require a safe and orderly learning environment that is conducive to high student achievement. Certain student behaviors unacceptable in such an environment and are hereby prohibited by the Board. Prohibited behaviors: Link to policy: [RSD Policy 4.18](#)

PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS

Russellville School District Policy Number 4.13 Effective: 7/1/2015

Family Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA)

Link to full policy: [Policy 4.13](#)

Except when a court order regarding a student has been presented to the district to the contrary, all students' education records are available for inspection and copying by the parent of his/her student who is under the age of eighteen (18). At the age of eighteen (18), the right to inspect and copy a student's records transfers to the student. A student's parent or the student, if over the age of 18, requesting to review the student's education records will be allowed to do so within no more than forty five (45) days of the request. The district forwards education records, including disciplinary records, to schools that have requested them and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

The district shall receive written permission before releasing education records to any agency or individual not authorized by law to receive and/or view the education records without prior parental permission. The District shall maintain a record of requests by such agencies or individuals for access to, and each disclosure of, personally identifiable information (hereinafter "PII") from the education records of each student. Disclosure of education records is authorized by law to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

A student's name and photograph will only be displayed on the district or school's web page(s) after receiving the written permission from the student's parent or student if over the age of 18.

The form for objecting to making directory information available is located in the front of the preschool handbook and must be completed and signed by the parent or age-eligible student and filed with the building principal's office no later than ten (10) school days after the beginning of each school year or the date the student is enrolled for school. Failure to file an objection by that time is considered a specific grant of permission. The district is required to continue to honor any signed-opt out form for any student no longer in attendance at the district.

page 21

The right to opt out of the disclosure of directory information under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) does not prevent the District from disclosing or requiring a student to disclose the student's name, identifier, or institutional email address in a class in which the student is enrolled.

Parents and students over the age of 18 who believe the district has failed to comply with the requirements for the lawful release of student records may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education at
Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is not provided for preschool students except for field trips.

Field trip transportation permission is included in the agreement/acknowledgement on page 1.

All students will be transported in this instance only in school buses or by the student's own parent.

WEATHER CLOSING:

School closing notification may be accessed through the school office and may be available to specific email, telephone, and text messaging as parents prefer.

In the early morning hours during inclement weather, local radio stations will broadcast announcements of any school closings. In addition, worsening weather conditions may force the early dismissal of schools. If this should happen, local radio stations will also broadcast this information. **In the event that school will be cancelled or dismissed early, the Russellville School District will also contact all parents/guardians by RSD Notification System with a phone message, text, and/or email.**

We encourage parents to have a back-up plan in the event that the school closes early; or if leaving work to pick up your child could be a problem.

CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE IN A SCHOOL ZONE

Act 37 of the 2011 Arkansas General Assembly prohibits the use of cell phones when passing a school zone or school building during school hours when children are present and outside the building.

Drivers will be reminded of this law when necessary.

STUDENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Link to Policy: [4.27 Student Sexual Harassment](#)

Sexual harassment, as with other forms of discrimination, is prohibited according to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which protects the adolescent at work, and Title IX of 1972, which protects students from sex discrimination at school. The Supreme Court has mandated that schools provide a safe environment for students. The Russellville School District is committed to the eradication of sexual harassment in the school. Such harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated. Offenders will be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion.

Sexual harassment consists of verbal or physical sexual conduct that disrupts the right to an equal education by interfering with the student's psychological, social, and physical well-being. If students feel they have been sexually harassed by anyone, the following steps should be taken without fear of retaliation:

- Inform a teacher, counselor, or administrator. (The Child Abuse Hotline **will be called** in all cases of alleged sexual assault)
- Write a detailed account of the incident including the date, time, place and witness (es) if any.

Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, consideration may be given to other violations of the student handbook which may have simultaneously occurred.

LOST OR DAMAGED BOOKS/MATERIALS

TEXTBOOKS: Textbooks are provided by the school at no charge to the students. A lost or damaged textbook will have to be replaced by the student at a price determined by the replacement cost.

page 22

LIBRARY BOOKS: Students assume responsibility for any materials checked out of the library. Any book, lost or damaged, will be paid for at the replacement cost.

LITERACY MATERIALS: Students assume responsibility for any literacy books sent home. A lost or damaged literacy book will have to be replaced by the student at a price determined by the replacement cost.

PARKING/SCHOOL DROP OFF PROCEDURES:

RSD PRESCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

EACH PRESCHOOL CENTER WILL PROVIDE PARENTS WITH DIRECTIONS FOR PARKING DURING DROP OFF AND PICK UP TIMES. **PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO COMPLY WITH THESE DIRECTIONS FOR STUDENT SAFETY.** Please report any problems to the Preschool Office (479) 967-6025

AR law prohibits minor children being left unsupervised in a vehicle. All children must be supervised at all times.

INTERNET USER AGREEMENT

All parents will receive an internet user agreement to be signed for each student enrolled.

HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

WELLNESS POLICY 5.29R

The Russellville School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Russellville School District that:

The district policy ensures compliance with AR Act 1220 and the federal National Schools Lunch Act.

Full policy link: [RSD Wellness Policy 5.29 R for Students](#)

Procedures for Preschool Meals

Preschool students are served breakfast, lunch, and a snack daily. (Please see schedule on page 15) Families are strongly encouraged to use the child nutrition food service program rather than sending meals. Preschool students may not bring in fast food, carbonated beverages or flavored milk. Standards for components are per Arkansas Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers, and Arkansas Department of Health regulations on food temperature. Food is not considered served if left unopened, so all minimally-required components must be opened. *Note: fluid milk or replacement by physician approved alternate are required components for preschool aged students at breakfast and lunch.* These requirements change at grade K.

Preschool Parents sending meals shall have a written agreement regarding requirements:

- Food for preschoolers is not considered served if left unopened: all minimally-required components must be opened at the time of meal service;
Staff will work with parents in complying with requirements for a day or two to assist as necessary
- Refrigeration is not available, so foods requiring refrigeration must be sent with appropriate cold packs for safe food service. [health department]
- If two meals are sent (eg. breakfast and lunch) , they will be packaged separately for ease of service
- Parents agree make efforts to repackage commercial items and agree not to send or bring in fast food items
- Parents agree to limit "dessert" items
- The meal pattern requires vegetables as well as fruits
- Food is required to be served on/in individual plates, bowls, or other dishes that can be sanitized or discarded
- Staff will check meal components at the time of meal service
 - Notice is not possible if components are missing and a tray has to be provided.
 - Children will not be singled out as meals brought from home are checked
 - Parents requiring additional assistance may meet with the teacher after school

Parents will receive a copy of Child Care Licensing Appendix C: USDA Child Care Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool Children. Parents may request agreement form from classroom teacher or program supervisors.

Link : [Preschool Meal Pattern Requirements](#)

page 23

CHILD NUTRITION/FOOD SERVICE INFORMATION

Meal Purchases:

- Breakfast prices: undetermined as of date of handbook
- Lunch Prices for Full Paid Prior Year: \$2.90/day or \$14.50/week (subject to increase)

- Lunch Prices for Reduced Prior Year: \$0.40/day or \$2.00/week (subject to increase)
- Milk Prices for all Students Prior Year: \$.50 each or \$2.50/week (subject to increase)

Parents are highly encouraged to pay ahead for several meals at a time as this increases the efficiency of cafeteria operations, decreases stress on parents, and decreases the chance of students losing their money. Checks are to be made payable to the Russellville School District. Please put your child (ren)'s name(s) on the memo line of your check. One check can be sent to a cafeteria to be divided among more than one child in that school. Please note your instructions on the memo line of your check. Children going to school in different buildings will need separate checks. We also encourage all parents to utilize our online payment system. Meals may be paid for with check or cash at the school or the Administration building. Online payments can be made with a debit card or credit card. Also, balances may be viewed on family.titan.k12.com at any time with no cost. This system is in place for the use of parents so that they may be better informed of their child's meal consumption and monetary balance available. Visit the RSD homepage at <https://www.rsd.k12.net/o/district> and click on the student tab, click pay for school lunches, and then click on the [Titan Family Portal link](#). You must have your child's student ID number to utilize the payment site. Your school's office should have this information for you. **(Call the preschool office) Call the child nutrition office at 479-498-8836 if you have problems with forms or with the site.**

LUNCH VISITORS

Please let your child's teacher know at drop off if you plan to eat lunch with your child that day, and if you plan to purchase a lunch for yourself when you arrive at the cafeteria. Parents will need to sign in at the school office with their ID and receive a visitor's badge before going to the preschool classroom to sign their child out from the preschool classroom. Preschool students need to be signed out of the classroom between 11:10-11:15. Once the child is signed out, parents will accompany their child to the designated area in the cafeteria to have lunch with their child. The Preschool teacher will give the parent the child's lunch tray. Following lunch, the parent will accompany the child back to the preschool classroom and sign them back into the preschool classroom. Students need to be back to the preschool classroom by 11:45. Parents will then check out through the school office and return their visitor badge.

FIRE/TORNADO/NUCLEAR WARNINGS

Each elementary school has monthly fire drills. Teachers are in charge of the class assisted by student helpers. Each class has an escape route to a safe area. The building is usually cleared within 30-40 seconds.

Tornado drills are also conducted during the months of October, November, January and February. During tornado drills, students are directed to a safe area within the building. If a tornado is approaching, parents/guardians are asked TO REFRAIN FROM COMING TO SCHOOL TO PICK UP HIS/HER CHILD. Extra activity in the office area during inclement weather distracts adults from seeing to the safety of children. Children are much safer in the school storm shelters designated as "safe rooms" than riding in a car during a tornado. **Preschool students shall practice tornado drills monthly as well as fire drills per child care licensure requirements.** In the event of a nuclear disaster, schools will be among the first to be notified. School personnel will follow the procedure as outlined by the Arkansas Department of Health, Nuclear Planning, and Response Program and Entergy Operations, Inc. Bus and automobiles will evacuate all students and teachers. London students will be evacuated to Hector and all the other elementary students will be evacuated to the Morrilton High School. Parents should not attempt to pick up children at school because traffic would impede and delay a speedy evacuation of all students.

INSULT OR ABUSE OF TEACHER A.C.A. 6-17-106

- Any person who shall abuse or insult a public school teacher while that teacher is performing normal and regular or assigned school responsibilities shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction be liable for a fine of not less than one hundred dollars (\$100) nor more than one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500).
- Each school district shall report to the Department of Education any prosecutions within the school districts under this section.
History. Acts 1979, No.125, § 1; A.S. A. 1947, § 80-1905.1; Acts 1987, No. 741, §1.

page 24

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Russellville School District is committed to implementing and monitoring all Civil Rights Acts and Regulations. We do not discriminate against any individual based upon that individual's veteran status, race, sex, national origin, age, or handicapping conditions.

Homeless Students

Russellville School District Policy Number 4.40R Effective: 7/1/2016

The Russellville School District will afford the same services and educational opportunities to homeless children as are afforded to non-homeless children. Link to policy information: [Homeless Students Policy 4.40](#)

ILLNESS OR INJURY/MEDICAL CONDITIONS

The Russellville School District has an assigned nurse for each elementary building. If your child has a medical condition, it is important that a conference is scheduled with the school nurse and the classroom teacher. (Parents/Guardians should not assume that the school is aware of their child's medical condition.)

If your child is ill, please do not send him/her to school.

The student must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school without the aid of over the counter medications.

Please see AR Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers for additional conditions which require a student to be excluded from school temporarily. [AR Child Care Licensing Minimum Standards for Centers](#)

Preschool students have at least one hour of physical activity daily, usually outdoors. Physical activity is part of many classroom activities as well. Due to adult: student ratio requirements in preschool, students who are not able to go outdoors may require special arrangements for attendance on those days. Please check with your child's teacher in advance so that they may assist you in making possible arrangements.

Immunization Records

Russellville School District Policy Number 4.57R Effective: 7/21/20

full policy link [Immunization Requirements for School Attendance](#)

General Requirements

Unless otherwise provided by law or this policy, no student shall be admitted to attend classes in the District who has not been age appropriately immunized against:

Pre-Kindergarten

- DTap – five (5) doses with one (1) dose on/after the 4th birthday.
- Polio – four (4) doses with one (1) dose on/after the 4th birthday.
- Hib – three (3) doses with the last dose on/after the 1st birthday.
- Hepatitis B – three (3) doses.
- MMR – one (1) dose.
- Varicella – one (1) dose.
- Pneumococcal – three (3) doses with the last dose on/after the 1st birthday.
- Hepatitis A – two (2) doses with 1 dose on/after the 1st birthday.

The District administration has the responsibility to evaluate the immunization status of District students. The only types of proof of immunization the District will accept are immunization records provided by a:

- A. Licensed physician;
- B. Health department;
- C. Military service documentation with physician's signature; or
- D. Official record from another educational institution in Arkansas that includes either A, B, or C.

The proof of immunization must include the vaccine type and dates of vaccine administration. Documents stating "up-to-date", "complete", "adequate", and the like will not be accepted as proof of immunization. No self or parental history of varicella disease will be accepted. Valid proof of immunization and of immunity based on serological testing shall be entered into the student's record. A medical professional's (MD, APN, DO, or PA) documented history of disease may be accepted in lieu of receiving the varicella vaccine.

In order to continue attending classes in the District, the student must have submitted:

- 1) Proof of immunization showing the student to be fully age appropriately vaccinated;
- 2) Written documentation by a public health nurse or private physician of proof the student is in process of being age appropriately immunized, which includes a schedule of the student's next immunization;

page 25

- 3) A copy of a letter from ADH indicating immunity based on serologic testing; and/or
- 4) A copy of the letter from ADH exempting the student from the immunization requirements for the current school year, or a copy of the application for an exemption for the current school year if the exemption letter has not yet arrived.
- 5) The parent must provide a copy of the immunization exemption every school year and must be on file with the school nurse.

Students whose immunization records or serology results are lost or unavailable are required to receive all age appropriate vaccinations or submit number 4 above.

Temporary Admittance

RSD PRESCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

Preschool students admitted on a temporary basis may be admitted for a maximum of thirty (30) calendar days if a written plan is in place.
The preschool program supervisor shall make the final determination on temporary admittance.

Exclusion From School

In the event of an outbreak, students who are not fully age appropriately immunized, are in process, or are exempt from the immunization requirements may be required to be excluded from school in order to protect the student as determined by Arkansas Department of Health.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES/PARASITES Policy # 4.34

Russellville School District Policy Number 4.34 Effective: 5/16/2017

Students with communicable diseases or with human host parasites that are transmittable in a school environment shall demonstrate respect for other students by not attending school while they are capable of transmitting their condition to others. Students whom the school nurse determines are unwell or unfit for school attendance or who are believed to have a communicable disease or condition will be required to be picked up by their parent or guardian. **Preschool parents agree to immediately pick up a student when informed of illness.**

[Communicable Diseases and Parasites Policy 4.34 RSD](#)

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

Russellville School District Policy Number 4.35R Effective 6/15/21

Prior to the administration of any medication to any student under the age of eighteen (18), written parental consent is required. The consent form shall include authorization to administer the medication and relieve the Board and its employees of civil liability for damages or injuries resulting from the administration of medication to students in accordance with this policy. All signed medication consent forms are to be maintained by the school nurse. Parent permission form shall include an assurance that the requested medication has been given at least once with no adverse reaction prior to school administration of medication.

[RSD Medication Administration Policy](#)

School Nurses also maintain copies of these forms:

School Nurse Center Valley: 479-968-4540

School Nurse Crawford: 479-968-4677

School Nurse London: 479-293-4241

School Nurse Oakland Heights: 479-968-2084

School Nurse Sequoyah 479-968-2134

Please speak with your child's teacher, the preschool program supervisor, and/or your school nurse in advance if medication at school is needed. This will ensure that all requirements are met for each student.

The nurse has some general epinephrine available. If the family does not provide it, the only alternative is a 911 call.

page 26

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS (GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE) Policy 6.7.1R

[LINK to Policy 6.7 RSD Complaints](#)

It is a goal of the Board and the District to be responsive to the community it serves and to continuously improve the educational program offered in its schools. The Board or the District welcomes constructive criticism when it is offered with the intent of improving the quality of the system's educational program or the delivery of the District's services.

The Board formulates and adopts policies to achieve the District's vision and elects a Superintendent to implement its policies. The administrative functions of the District are delegated to the Superintendent, who is responsible for the effective administration and supervision of the District. Individuals with complaints concerning personnel, curriculum, discipline (including specific discipline policies), coaching, or the day to day management of the schools need to address those complaints according to the following sequence:

1. Teacher, coach, or other staff member against whom the complaint is directed
2. Principal
3. Superintendent

TELEPHONE USE

Our telephone is a business phone. *Preschool students shall not have access to telephones including cell phones but parents will be called as appropriate by adult staff. STAFF HAS ACCESS TO TELEPHONES THROUGHOUT THE DAY FOR EMERGENCIES.*

TOYS, GAMES, AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Toys, games, electronic devices, or any object that distracts from the educational process may not be brought on the school premises. These items will be confiscated.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

School insurance is available for purchase to all students. Please contact the school office if you are interested in this insurance. Purchase of this program is optional. Please do not send the money to school. Send directly to the insurance company. Claim forms are available in the school office. **(DOES APPLY TO PRESCHOOL STUDENTS)**

The preschool program has made every effort to include predictable circumstances in the family handbook information. The program administrators in collaboration with district administration may make additional decisions to ensure individual and group safety.