



McDowell County Universal Pre-K Program

Family Handbook

The McDowell County Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program is committed to providing a learning environment through play by inspiring, guiding, and teaching our children while serving their families and the community.



Dear Family,

We would like to take a moment to welcome you and your child to the **MCS Universal Pre-K Program!**

You and your child are about to embark on an exciting journey filled with **play**, **creativity**, and **imagination!**

There is strong evidence showing young children who participate in a high-quality Pre-K program enter school more ready to learn than their peers who did not attend Pre-K. Our staff will strive to meet the needs of *all* children. Children will be encouraged to **explore** their environment and think **creatively** each and every day! Teachers will guide and enhance this process through a variety of materials and **hands-on** activities. We are committed to providing a **stimulating child-centered** environment, which is **clean**, **healthy**, and **safe** for all children. In our classrooms, you will find our **discovery** and **interest** areas are arranged to offer **exploration**, **play**, and **success** at different ranges of developmental levels.

We are proud of the collaboration agreement between both McDowell County Schools and Coalfield CAP Head Start. We have combined efforts and created one single program – the **McDowell County Universal Pre-K Program**. We are happy to welcome you and your family.

We invite you to be **engaged** in the learning process. Talk with your child's teacher and ask how you can help support learning this school year. We invite you to come and share your talents with the children, read a story, join in at a learning area, or work with a small group of children. There are tons of ways you can become a partner of learning this school year.

We want you to know we value your input. Please contact your Pre-K staff or our office with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Amanda Fragile Peyton, McDowell County Schools Assistant of Federal Programs
(304)436-8441
afragile@k12.wv.us

Ida Wilson, Coalfield CAP Head Start McDowell Manager
(304)656-7076
iwilson@coalfieldcap.org

#BOE+HEADSTART=ONEPROGRAM



ONE PROGRAM...MCDOWELL COUNTY UNIVERSAL PRE-K PROGRAM

McDowell County Schools and Coalfield CAP Head Start have committed to fully collaborate as **one single program** striving to provide high quality early education for our young children. Together as one program, we have dedicated staff that will create purposeful and productive play experiences to help children grow in all areas of development. In order to accomplish program goals, funding from both entities are blended to cover operational costs including but not limited to transportation, use of facilities, meals, salaries, classroom supplies, professional development, and more.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goal of the McDowell County Universal Pre-K Program is to provide developmentally appropriate activities and learning experiences that help prepare young children for school. For a child to be school ready, it means they are socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively prepared for success in Kindergarten.

Our program is designed to help youngsters become more independent and self-confident. The structure and curriculum allows children to develop good habits and daily routines. All instruction found in our program is child-centered. This means activities are based on the interests and skill-levels of each child. Child-centered instruction allows the teachers to facilitate learning in a safe environment that fosters innovation, exploration, and collaboration with other children and adults.

Families will be provided with information and resources throughout the year to assist in transitioning your child into Kindergarten. You are invited to become involved in what your child is learning in Pre-K. Come to the classroom and experience Pre-K! Your participation contributes to your child's success in school for years to come. Together as a team, we will ensure you and your child are ready to begin the journey for your child to be college and career ready!

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

All McDowell County Universal Pre-K classrooms utilize the Creative Curriculum which is aligned to the West Virginia Early Learning Standards and Head Start Performance Standards. The Creative Curriculum is a scientifically research-based program created to enhance physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and language development.

Children learn in each interest area through play. Play is how children naturally learn and is as vital to a child's development as is eating and sleeping. Play stimulates brain growth in children at the most critical time in their development.






When children are playing, they are not only learning fundamental concepts that are the basis for later academic learning, but they're also learning social skills. Building with blocks, for example, is a math experience that helps them develop concepts of shape, size, length and location. In the art area, when they're mixing colors, they're learning eye-hand coordination and exercising their imagination and creativity.

Even if children are outside bouncing a ball, children are learning! They're learning to count, learning about shapes and colors. They're realizing that their bodies are developing, and most importantly, that they are showing learning concepts. Through pretend or fantasy play children are able to set up and resolve emotional conflicts (i.e. share mom with a new baby.) Play gives children the opportunity to try out many different roles and develop their social skills. Play therapy offers children a safe, natural and non-intrusive method of recovering from stresses during life events.

Play is the language of children. It is their most natural activity. Through play children express themselves, explore their world and learn. We as adults find ways of playing throughout our lives whether it is through art, sewing, cooking, building projects, dancing, kayaking or rollerblading. Play is an activity that benefits all of us and contributes to our overall sense of well-being.

INTEREST / PLAY AREAS AND OBJECTIVES

	<p style="text-align: center;">DRAMATIC PLAY AREA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores drama through actions and language • Demonstrates knowledge about self • Shows basic understanding of people and how they live • Explores change related to familiar people and places • Uses appropriate conversational language and communication skills • Uses social rules of language • Thinks symbolically
	<p style="text-align: center;">BLOCK AREA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remembers and connects experiences • Recognizes and recalls • Makes connections • Establishes and sustains positive relationships • Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
	<p style="text-align: center;">DISCOVERY CENTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses scientific inquiry skills • Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things • Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment • Compares and measures • Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks • Demonstrates the knowledge of physical properties
	<p style="text-align: center;">MUSIC AND MOVEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores musical concepts and expression • Explores dance and movement concepts • Follows directions • Notices and discriminates rhyme and alliteration • Notices and discriminates smaller units of sound • Listens to understand complex language
	<p style="text-align: center;">TOYS AND GAMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination • Follows directions • Forms relationships • Responds to emotional cues • Interacts with peers and makes friends • Engages in conversation • Uses appropriate conversation and communication skills
	<p style="text-align: center;">COOKING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses fingers and hands • Follows directions • Comprehends language • Uses number concept and operations • Counts • Quantifies • Connects numerals with quantities • Compares and measures

	<p style="text-align: center;">LIBRARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses • Uses print concepts • Uses and appreciates books • Uses emergent reading skills • Retells stories • Interacting read-alouds and book conversations • Responds to text
	<p style="text-align: center;">OUTSIDE PLAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacts with peers • Makes friends and interacts with peers • Thinks symbolically • Engages in sociodramatic play • Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills • Demonstrates balancing and traveling skills
	<p style="text-align: center;">COMPUTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks • Counts • Uses number concepts and operations • Demonstrates emergent writing skills • Writes to convey meaning • Identifies and names letters • Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
	<p style="text-align: center;">CREATIVE ART</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores the visual arts • Demonstrates knowledge about self • Understands spatial relationships • Compares and measures • Writes name • Writes to convey meaning • Uses writing and drawing tools • Demonstrates knowledge of patterns • Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
	<p style="text-align: center;">SENSORY SAND AND WATER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compares and measures • Demonstrates knowledge of physical properties of objects and materials • Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge • Counts • Follows limits and expectations • Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination

#PLAYMATTERSINPRE-K

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

- Children may enter Universal PreK in McDowell County through two options: Universal Pre-K (serving four years old and children 3 years old with IEPs) or the three-year old program (serving children 3 years old without IEPs).
- In order to be eligible for the McDowell County Universal Pre-K Program, the child must be 4 years **old on or before June 30th** of each school year.
- Those children, who will not be 4 on or before June 30th, may make application for the three-year-old program.
- Any three-year-old child with an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) is eligible for Pre-K.
- The child must have an **original official birth certificate** from the Division of Vital Statistics Bureau in the state which he/she was born. The certificate may not be a copy or a certificate issued by the hospital.
- Health Check Program Preventive **Health Check form** verified by a physician. *(All physicians have the form. The form must be completed in its entirety. Please make sure the screenings for vision, hearing, and dentals are completed.)*
- **Oral Health Examination** completed and signed/dated by a dentist prior to the first day of attendance or within the first 45 days.
- A complete enrollment application with all of the above required supporting documents must be submitted before a child can be eligible for enrollment. Children are rostered according to a prescribed priority listing identified and approved through the County CORE Team.
- To make an appointment for a registration appointment, please call (304)656-7076.

Please note children are rostered into classrooms by the Universal Pre-K Core Team in August. School principals and classroom teachers do not create and/or make changes to classroom rosters. Classroom rosters will be shared with families during the Orientation Kick-Off Party scheduled before school starts. If you would like more information concerning rostering and single-point of entry, please contact Kathy Strong, Family Services Manager at (304)656-7076.

SCHOOL ENTRY IMMUNIZATION ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All children entering school in West Virginia for the first time in Pre-Kindergarten must show proof of the following immunizations:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| • Hepatitis A (2 doses) | • Hepatitis B (3 doses) |
| • DTaP (4 doses) | • Varicella (1 dose or history of disease) |
| • Polio (3 doses) | • Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (1 dose) |
| • Hib (4 doses) | • PCV (4 doses) |

*Visit <http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/oeps/immunization/requirements/Documents/prek.pdf> for more information about provisional enrollment and other details about the above immunization requirements.

West Virginia State Law requires that each child have **at least one dose of each of the required immunizations** before they may enter the classroom. If your child does not have one dose of each, you must get those from your Health Care Provider. If you need assistance in getting this arranged, please let the Office of Headstart know at (304)656-7076.

§18-2-5c BIRTH CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

(a) No pupil shall be admitted for the first time to any public school in this state unless the person enrolling the pupil presents a copy of the pupil's original birth record certified by the state registrar of vital statistics confirming the pupil's identity, age, and state file number of the original birth record. If a certified copy of the pupil's birth record cannot be obtained, the person so enrolling the pupil shall submit an affidavit explaining the inability to produce a certified copy of the birth record: Provided, that if any person submitting such affidavit is in U.S. military service and is in transit due to military orders, a three-week extension shall be granted to such person for providing the birth records.

(b) Upon the failure of any person enrolling a pupil to furnish a certified copy of the pupil's birth record in conformance with subsection (a) above, the principal of the school in which the pupil is being enrolled or his designee shall immediately notify the

local law-enforcement agency. The notice to the local law-enforcement agency shall include copies of the submitted proof of the pupil's identity and age and the affidavit explaining the inability to produce a certified copy of the birth record.

(c) Within fourteen days after enrolling a transferred pupil, the principal of the school in which the pupil has been enrolled or his designee shall request that the principal or his designee of the school in which the pupil was previously enrolled transfer a certified copy of the pupil's birth record.

(d) Principals and their designees shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability in connection with any notice to a local law-enforcement agency of a pupil lacking a birth certificate or failure to give such notice as required by this section.

To obtain an original WV official birth certificate contact:

Vital Records Office

350 Capitol Street, Room 155

Charleston WV 25301

(304)-558-2931

*If your child was born in a state other than WV, the school nurse will have addresses and contact information to obtain an official birth record.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Good health and safety are essential to student learning. The administration of medication to students during the school day should be discouraged unless absolutely necessary for the student's health. Trained school personnel will give medications to children. The site must administer medication, as ordered by the doctor, not as the parent requests. Medication forms are available in the office of each site. No medications may be sent to the site with a child including over the counter medication and cough drops. Parents may come to the site to administer medicine directly to their child. All unused medication will be discarded at the end of the year if arrangements are not made to collect the unused medication. The first dose of all medication should be administered to your child at your home in the event there is an allergic reaction. Asthma inhalers and other immediate medications may be carried by the student or located in the classroom if written in the order by the physician and if the child has been deemed independent by an assessment completed by the school nurse. Medications must be in their original prescription container clearly labeled as prescribed by the physician including over the counter medications.

POLICY 11-012 With respect to student administration of medication, the McDowell County Board of Education shall comply with, and hereby incorporates in its entirety, the requirements of State Board of Education Policy 2422.8 (Medication Administration), as amended.

HEAD LICE AND NITS

In cooperation with the McDowell County Health Department, and in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses, it has been determined that "*no nit*" policies are ineffective in controlling outbreaks of head lice. Therefore, students found to have nits will no longer be excluded from the classroom. Students with infestations of live lice will be sent home and must be treated before returning to the classroom. Family Development Partners and the School Nurses would be happy to help educate families on how to prevent and/or treat for head lice.

HEALTHY HABITS IN THE CLASSROOM

Healthy habits are established in the classroom with daily tooth brushing and an emphasis on hand-washing and other habits to prevent the spread of illness.

Family style meals with balanced, nutritious meals give each child the opportunity to learn about healthy eating habits with support from their peers.

We use the classroom and our outdoor learning environments for teaching children healthy habits centered on safety.

Children will be observed by staff daily for any changes that may indicate injury, infestation, fever or illness. Staff will record any observed changes and will notify the family.

Classrooms will not have more than 20 children with no less than two adults at all times.

Due to allergies and potential dangers, classrooms shall not have any animals as classroom pets without written parent permission and prior approval from the CORE TEAM.

We encourage parents to become involved in the Health Advisory Committee, so you can assist with developing policies and procedures that foster a healthy environment for all children.

REST TIME

An opportunity for children to rest is allotted each day for students. The rest area is set to reduce distraction and disturbances from other activities. Appropriate sleeping equipment (mats or cots) will be provided by the program. Children are not permitted to sleep in the floor, in a sleeping bag, or on linens without mats or cots. If a child elects to not rest, quiet activities will be provided for your child.

PRE-K SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICES

Special Education and related services are provided by West Virginia county school systems in accordance with federal and state guidelines to eligible children age three to five. Children are determined eligible through a multidisciplinary evaluation process. Once eligible, an individualized education plan is developed with goals and services needed to meet your child's educational needs.

Criteria for special needs eligibility: The child must have a delay in two or more of the following areas:

- Cognition;
- Physical development including gross motor and/or fine motor skills;
- Communication;
- Social/Emotional/Affective Development; and/or
- Self-help skills

For more information in regard to Special Education Services, please contact Dr. Kristy East, Special Education Director at (304)436-8441

NUTRITION

All children enrolled in the Pre-K Program will be served two daily meals (breakfast and lunch) as well as one evening snack. The meal program is designed to emphasize good nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and learning about food origins. Children are encouraged by the classroom staff to try a variety of new foods, as well as customary foods prepared in new ways. Menus are posted to the MCS website and sent home with children as well. Menus can also be found on the MCS app. All meals are served in a family style setting to allow modeling good habits. Children are taught how to serve their own food (i.e., open milk, etc.) with minimal adult assistance. We ask parents to refrain from sending in packed lunches for children. Your child will quickly begin to enjoy trying new foods while engaged in family style meals. You will see your child making more nutritious choices while avoiding processed and sugary foods. The fact all children have the same meal also will help your child's friends to be healthy as well. Meals are provided at no cost for families through Community Eligibility Provision.



#ATTENDANCEINPRE-KMATTERS

MEAL GUIDANCE FOR FAMILIES

Dear Family,

The McDowell Universal Pre-K Program serves family style meals daily for breakfast, lunch and snack. Classroom staff eat sitting at the tables with children. Family style meals in our Pre-K Program makes mealtime a fun and learning experience. The meals help children learn social skills, such as how to serve themselves, take turns, and develop the use of manners which will carry over into every meal for years to come.

All healthy meals are served according to the WV Child Nutrition Guidelines at each site. Monthly menus for all school sites can be located on the McDowell County Schools webpage <http://boe.mcdo.k12.wv.us/> or by downloading the MCS App. The off-site center (Cove) menus are posted in each classroom and are also sent home with each child.

We highly recommend all Pre-K students each the breakfast, lunch, and snack served in the schools. We ask parents *refrain* from sending in packed lunches with your child. This will help for all children in the classroom to try new foods, develop healthy eating habits, and enjoy a family style meal together.

As always if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.
Sincerely,

Mr. Aaron Lester, McDowell County Schools Nutrition Director
(304) 436-8441

Here are just a few ways family style meals benefit your child:

- Meaningful conversations improve **vocabulary development**.
- Children will see that everyone's plates look the same and just might try some **new foods including healthy fruits and vegetables**, especially if a friend or teacher is eating it, too!
- **Table manners** are learned through passing items around the table, portioning the food items, and showing gratitude to others to name a few.
- **Patience** is strengthened as children wait their turn for meal parts or add to the on-going conversation.
- Serving bowls are placed on the table and children are encouraged, with the help of an adult when necessary, to **portion** out their own food.
- **Proper uses of utensils** are learned through daily use such as spoons, forks, ladles, and more.



TRANSPORTATION

Dear Family,

The McDowell Universal Pre-K Program offers transportation, when possible for families. Your child's **safety** is our **priority** each and every day. We need your help in partnering with our program to keep all children safe. Please ensure you understand our transportation procedures and review the procedures with your child. Should you have any questions in regards to transportation please feel free to contact us. Be sure to watch the video at the end of the handbook on bus safety and color the picture with your child!

Sincerely,

Adam Grygiel, McDowell County Schools Transportation Director
304-436-8441

Larry Perkins, Coalfield CAP Head Start Transportation Director
304-656-7076

- The parent or the designated adult (*listed on the emergency contact form*) is to be with the child at the bus stop both in the morning to put the child on the bus and in the evening to get the child off of the bus.
- It is important for the staff to know whether or not your child is coming to school. If your child is going to be absent, please call the site no later than 8:30am to let the teacher know your child will not be in school that day.
- If there is a change in pick-up or delivery of your child, written notice must be given to the driver/teacher one day in advance.
- Repeated problems with drop-off times or pick-up times may result in a conference with the teacher and/or administrator.
- For safety, no toys, open food or drink, animals, weapons, or glass containers are allowed on the bus.
- We ask you to consider not sending a book bag to school with your child. Each year dozens of children are injured with book bag related accidents involving buses. Federal regulations require that baggage and other items must be properly stored and secured while children are on the bus. It is extremely difficult to secure backpacks, etc. on the school bus.
- If you bring your child to the school in the morning, you must walk your child into the school/site no earlier than the time posted for each school.

After you review these important procedures along with the video linked at the end of this handbook with your child, present your child with the bus safety certificate. We encourage you to proudly display the certificate in your home. Review the procedures with your child after each holiday break in the school year to keep the information fresh in their minds.

BUS SAFETY PROCEDURES

SAFETY AT THE BUS STOP

- Children should be dressed and ready for the bus to arrive. Drivers are not permitted to come to the door.
- If a child misses the bus, it is the parent's responsibility to bring the child to the site. *Attendance every day is vital to your child being ready for Kindergarten.*
- While waiting on the bus to arrive, stay safely away from the roadway.
- Stay back from the roadway curb as the school bus approaches.
- Wait until the bus stops completely and the door opens before moving close to the bus.

ENTERING THE BUS

- Keep one hand free to use on the handrail.
- Take one step at a time.
- Take your seat in the front of the bus in the designated area for Pre-K students only.
- Sit quietly in your seat until you arrive at your site.

SAFETY WHILE RIDING THE BUS

- Talk quietly to your PreK friends who are seated next to you.
- Don't throw anything in or out of the bus.
- Remain in your seat at all times.
- Keep your body inside the windows.
- Never touch any of the driver's equipment in the bus.
- All children on a Head Start or Special Needs bus will wear a safety harness.
- There will always be two adults on a Head Start or Special Needs bus.

SAFETY FOR EXITING THE BUS

- Get off only at your stop.
- Do not get out of your seat until the bus completely stops.
- If you drop anything near or under the bus, let it stay there. Your family member can get it when it is safe after the bus leaves if there is no traffic.
- Use the handrail and take one step at a time.
- Move away from the bus as you get off.
- Always cross the road in front of the bus when you are with your parent. Never cross the road alone.
- Each evening the Head Start drivers will ask parents to sign-off on a chart that your child is back in your care.
- If the parent or the designated adult (*listed on the emergency contact form*) is not at the bus stop to retrieve the child and the parent cannot be reached, the child will be taken back to the classroom site. At this point, it is the parent's responsibility to see that the child is picked up and taken home. If this is a chronic problem, the school principal or director will meet with the family to create a back-up plan. If the plan is not followed, the Department of Health and Human Services will be notified and/or transportation will be eliminated.

EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS Field trips allow for children to extend on learning taking place in the classroom. All field trips will be educational in manner and will be connected to WV Early Learning Standards and Head Start Framework. We encourage parents to actively participate on field trips. You will always be provided information regarding each field trip in a timely manner including specific information about the learning outcomes, location, supervising staff, and any special information about the trip.



ATTENDANCE MATTERS IN PRE-K

WV Policy 2525: Enrollment in an approved participating WV Pre-K Program is voluntary; however, once the child is enrolled, attendance must follow WV Code 18-8-1 which allows the program administrator, teacher, and parent/guardian to pursue disenrollment of the child if they concur that requiring further attendance for that school year is not in the best interest of the child.

Enrollment in the WV Pre- K Program is voluntary. However, once a child is enrolled, McDowell County Schools Attendance Policy and the Coalfield Community Action Partnership, Inc. Head Start Attendance Policy apply.

- When a child enters the Universal Pre-K Program, the family agrees to ensure their child/children are in attendance every day possible. It is understood however, circumstances do arise when there is sickness, family emergencies, etc.
- Parents must send a written excuse for each absence. The excuse must include the reasons the child was absent. The parent must sign and date the excuse.
- Each classroom teacher or assistant teacher will contact any parent who has not called the school/site within one hour of the program start time to ensure the child's well-being. The staff will encourage daily attendance and determine if any arrangements can be made to get the child to school on time daily.
- If a child has two or more unexcused absences, the Family Developmental Partner and/or the classroom teacher shall contact the parent to request a parent conference to discuss the importance of attendance and implement a plan for the child to attend every day possible.
- School Messenger automatic calling system will call each home of any child who is absent from school.
- Each school celebrates the importance of attendance. We even have a mascot – Ready Freddy! It is vital for you to send your child to school every day. Your child can easily get behind in Pre-K – because we are learning every day!

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The McDowell County Universal Pre-K Program follows the McDowell County Schools delay/cancellation procedures regarding child attendance. Information is shared with families through news media, automated calling system, MCS Facebook and MCS twitter @SchoolsMcdowell.



#SCHOOLREADINESS

CLOTHING

Your child will participate in a variety of experiences designed to enhance his/her social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development. These experiences may include painting, pasting, outdoor play and more! Here are a few suggestions:

- Dress your child in comfortable play clothes that allow the child to move in easily.
- Be sure to send your child in appropriate clothing for the weather each day.
- Send your child in sturdy shoes with non-slip soles. Flip-flops are not safe for our little ones. We dance, run, and play every day!
- Children will go outdoors to play providing it is not raining or is extremely cold. In cold weather, the time spent outside is adjusted to temperature. When we are outdoors, we are learning! Each day, weather permitting, we take our classroom outdoors for sixty minutes. Please refrain from asking that your child stay inside, as we do not have the staff to stay in with one child. Cold weather does not cause disease and outdoor play is an important aspect of our curriculum.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

For the safety of all children, please do not allow your child to bring toys or other items from home as this causes confusion for the other children and also the toys may be damaged. We have children in our program that have a variety of food allergies. Therefore, we ask that you not send in food for your child. Breakfast, lunch and snacks are provided for all children and are carefully planned based on allergies in the classroom. Please ensure you do not send clothing or other items to school in plastic grocery bags as they are a choking hazard. This is also true for balloons and Styrofoam material, as well.

SCHOOL PARTIES FOR STUDENTS

Few holiday parties are held during the year. Children thrive on routines at this age. Parties can be disruptive; therefore, we work to make any party as low key as possible. Parents are invited to participate in all special events. Information will be sent home throughout the year as these occur. Please refrain from sending in food to the events to protect the children with allergies and to ensure we are following USDA health and nutritional guidelines MCS POLICY 11-020-1.

It is the general consensus that two (2) parties a year should be sufficient to have on school time. These would take up approximately one (1) hour of instructional time each. Other parties may be considered, but these would be over and above the school hours. Even though the parties themselves would only take up one (1) hour of instructional time, most of the preparation, etc., should be done in the cafeteria or gym to prevent disturbing any of the classes.

CHILD GUIDANCE

Our classroom environments, schedules, and activities are designed to capture the interest and stimulate the enthusiasm of young children. Our teachers instruct the children on how to use the materials, classroom equipment and what the expectations are in the classroom. They also teach children the social skills needed to have successful interactions with all adults and children. Occasionally, young children forget the expectations and test limits; this is developmentally appropriate. This process helps them to learn and respect limits and develop the social skills needed to be successful for the rest of their life. Our staff will maintain communication with families about behavior plans and strategies that are being used as needed:

The strategies that our staffs use to help children learn respect are as follows:

- Redirection to an appropriate activity
- Removal from the learning area / classroom
- Positive reinforcement
- Problem solving with the child
- Routines
- Developing behavior plans
- Giving choices within limits
- Teaching children how to calm themselves

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Teachers will send home newsletters to keep you informed of learning milestones and the exciting learning taking place in the classroom. You are always welcome to visit the classroom. Please refrain from communicating with your child's classroom staff using forms of social media including but not limited to Facebook. This is to protect the safety of all children. Parent meetings are held throughout the year to share important information and learning. The topics are parent generated and cover a wide variety of topics. We encourage you to participate in as many as you can. You are also invited to become a member of the Policy Council which meets monthly to improve our program. All parents and community members are encouraged to attend the monthly Family Advisory Council Meetings where strategies and tips are shared each month on parenting, life skills, and more! Each child is assigned a Family Developmental Partner (FDP) that will act as your liaison and assist with individual and child needs throughout the year. We encourage you to build a solid relationship with your FDP as they can be a tremendous resource for you and your child.

CONFERENCES AND HOME VISITS

Parent conferences and home visits are held throughout the year to discuss your child's progress and are informal in nature. These opportunities offer you time to participate in the decision making about your child's education. Our staff will work to find times that are convenient for you and your family. If you have concerns at any time in regards to your child or the program itself, you are encouraged to talk with your child's teacher. Your concerns, input, and questions are always welcome.

In addition to parent conferences, your Family Developmental Partners will conduct home visits to connect with parents in order to discuss goals you may have individually, or for your family. Parents are valued and are continually engaged in the preschool experience.

VOLUNTEERING

All parents are encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom. All parents who volunteer are required to complete the required annual Volunteer Training course and complete a criminal background check. A background check is also required for all volunteers. The cost of the finger print scan will be paid for all parents. For more information, contact the Office of Title I at 304-436-8441 We would love to have you volunteer in our schools and classrooms!

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

All Universal Pre-K staff members are required by West Virginia State law to report any suspected or identified child abuse to the Department of Health and Human Services.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In the event of a medical emergency, please know staff has been trained at each site. A staff person will stay with your child at all times and administer first aid as necessary. Staff will seek medical assistance from 1) emergency medical providers (911), 2) hospital emergency room or clinic, and/or 3) poison control. Staff will contact the parent/guardian as listed on the child's emergency medical form.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TRANSITIONING TO PRE-K

- Establish bedtime and wake-up/morning routines.
- It is recommended children in Pre-K need 10-12 hours of sleep to be well rested and ready to learn.
- Introduce your child to nutritious meals. These healthy meals are vital to brain and physical development.
- Attend the MCS Family Advisory Council Meeting each month to become more involved!
- Please begin to label your child's clothing and belongings.
- Create early learning opportunities for your child at home.
- Visit the site your child will attend and tour the facility including the playground!
- Discuss school activities, friends, and new experiences with your child. By doing this, you will encourage learning and your child will look forward to the transition.
- Visit www.readyfreddy.org to listen to the songs and read together the interactive book Ready Freddy has created for all of his Pre-K friends.
- Read to your child every day. Reading materials are available at your local public library, school libraries, and online using the online Follett Shelf link at <http://boe.mcdo.k12.wv.us>.
- Register your child for free books mailed to your home by visiting Dolly Parton's Imagination Library <http://www.imaginationlibrary.com/>



#FAMILIESAREPARTNERSINLEARNING

UNIVERSAL PRE-K PROGRAM SITE INFORMATION

Bradshaw Elementary School Principal – Mrs. Nikki Hall	(304) 967-7700
Fall River Elementary School Principal – Mrs. Lori Howington	(304)656-7665
laeger Elementary School Principal – Mrs. Sheena Ashby	(304) 938-2217
Kimball Elementary School Principal – Mr. Brad Hardy	(304)585-7570
Southside K-8 School Principal – Mr. Gary Estep	(304) 875-2283
Welch Elementary School Principal – Mrs. Sara Diaz	(304) 436-4645
War Cove Center	(304) 875-3677

All sites are open Monday through Thursday.

A copy of the Universal Pre-K calendar can be found on the MCS Pre-K website at

<https://boe.mcdo.k12.wv.us/page/universal-pre-k>

Please note Universal PreK Calendar is different than MCS K-12 Calendar.

All MCS policies can be found online or in the MCS school calendar/parent handbook.

NOTIFICATION OF PARENT RIGHTS AND DIRECTORY INFORMATION

McDowell County Schools may disclose, without written parental consent, certain categories of personally identifiable information designated as “directory information.” Directory information is defined as information contained in an educational record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes a student’s name, address, grade level, email address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in classroom activities and officially recognized school activities and sports (including photographs and/or videos), weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received (including photographs and/or videos), the most recent school attended, and other similar information. Releases include, but are not limited to, local/state/national media such as written press, broadcasting and Internet.

Additionally, McDowell County Schools forwards education records, including electronic transcripts, to other agencies or institutions that have requested records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, without prior consent of the parents or eligible students.

A parent or eligible student (18 years of age or older) who does not want such information to be disclosed, should request in writing, by August 31st of each school year that such information is to be withheld.

PARENTS RIGHT TO REVIEW RECORDS

McDowell County Schools, in accordance with FERPA and Policy 4350 guidelines, provides annual notification of parents’ rights to inspect and review their own child’s education records. Parents wishing to inspect their child’s education record will have to submit a written request using a request form available at schools or online.

For any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us at (304)656-7076.

BUS SAFETY



Watch this important bus safety video with your child

<https://youtu.be/4SrLBcM991E>

- Arrive early at least 5 minutes. Rushing increases our chances of getting hurt.
- Stay back from the road or curb while waiting – at least 6 feet which is around 3 giant steps.
- Board safely and make eye contact with the driver. When the bus arrives, make eye contact with the bus driver and wait for them to let you know it's safe to approach the bus.
- If you have to walk in front of the bus to get on, be sure to stay 10 feet away so the bus driver can see you. Ten feet is like 5 giant steps.
- If you drop something near the bus, don't pick it up! Tell the bus driver.
- Don't move until the bus is stopped. When you get on or off the bus, wait until it's fully stopped, and the doors are opened. Don't stand up before then.
- Use handrail and secure loose items. Secure loose items so you don't get caught in the bus doors. Loose items could include book bag straps and drawstrings on your hood.
- Never walk behind the school bus! Buses are big, so it's hard for the driver to see all the way around them.
- Don't distract the driver. When you are on the bus: It's important not to distract the bus driver. Stay in your seat, keep your head, arms and belongings inside the bus windows, and talk quietly.
- Keep the aisle clear. Keep your belongings like your coat or bookbag out of the aisle. This allows the driver to see better behind the bus.
- If you have any questions or need help while on the bus – ask an adult.



Practice School Bus Safety

I, _____, will learn
(PRINT YOUR NAME)

and obey all the bus safety rules.

I will be considerate of the bus driver
and the other students.

(YOUR SIGNATURE)