

The Western Pre-K Program is **FREE** to all participants. It is funded by a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education.

PRE-K WILL:

- Provide a monthly calendar and newsletter to update you on classroom curriculum and events.
- Update you about your child's progress through Parent-Teacher conferences & contacts.
- Provide Family Nights.
- Present lending library books for your child to borrow.
- Refer you to local resources.
- Prepare your child for Kindergarten.
- Provide Parent Education/Parent Lending Library and Take Home Kits for you to access.

ATTENDANCE

In Pre-K regular attendance is required. Notify the Western Junior High Office every day your child is absent 432-8324.

If a child misses 3 classes for reasons other than those listed below, or the reason is unknown, the parent will be called and a note will go home. Children who will be leaving early or will be picked up by someone other than the child's guardian needs to bring a signed note from their parent/guardian or phone the school. The Pre-K teacher will not release children unless this procedure is followed. The Pre-K staff will also need to see an adult's identification to verify they are who they say they are. **Pre-K puts safety first!**

Excused Absences:

- illness or injury -religious holiday -medical or dental appointment
- death in the family -unavoidable accident or emergency

*Doctor excuses are required within 5 days for absences to be excused.

Unexcused Absences:

- lack of ride to school
- missing the school bus
- oversleeping
- personal business

Tardiness

Pre-K students are expected to be at school by the start time. The teacher will provide each parent with a classroom schedule. If a child is tardy 5 times and it is unexcused this equals 1 unexcused absence.

After 3 unexcused absences the parents, teacher, and coordinator will develop a plan to ensure absences and tardies are no longer an issue

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

During the first 30 days of Pre-K the staff will focus on appropriate classroom behavior, rules, respect, and manners. After 30 days if a child displays aggressive/defiant behavior toward other students or staff the following actions will be taken:

*1st offense: call to parent/note home

*2nd offense: call to parent/note home and behavioral chart developed and implemented with parent signature.

*3rd offense: Parent will be required to meet with staff and develop a behavioral plan.

Parents must work with us as a team to ensure their child's behavior is progressing in an appropriate fashion.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In case of bad weather, school closings will be announced by 6:30 a.m. using the School Reach electronic system. If inclement weather or another emergency occurs during the day information will be relayed as soon as possible using the Skylert contact system. Please listen to local news media stations to be advised of school closings or early dismissals. This information will also be available on the district's website, www.westerncusd12.org

ILLNESS

The Western Pre-K Program will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding illness. Children with the following conditions should not attend Pre-K:

- fever (100 degrees or higher)
- vomiting or diarrhea
- any contagious illness, such as, strep throat, pink eye or respiratory infection
- any undiagnosed skin rash

If a child becomes ill at school the teacher will contact the parents and the child cannot return until they are free of the above symptoms for 24 hours.

DROP OFF PROCEDURE/VISITORS

Families who are bringing their preschoolers to school are required to bring them to the Pre-K classroom. All visitors, including parents and siblings, are required to enter through the main door of the building, sign in and obtain a visitor's pass. All visitors must return to the main office and sign out before leaving the school.

TRANSPORTATION

Pre-K provides busing for all children who live in the district or has child care within the district. If a child attends Western Pre-K, but lives out of our district no busing will be provided. The Pre-K families will receive a transportation letter in the mail. Pre-K children are seated in the front of the bus and wear seat belts. Pre-K children will be supervised at all times. The children will not be allowed to get off of the bus until a Pre-K staff member gets them off. When the children have to switch buses this procedure will also apply. **Children will only receive busing to a consistent location. If a child's schedule changes during the course of the week, parents will be responsible for transporting on that day.** When the children are bused home an adult must be visible to the bus driver or the Pre-K student will be returned to school and the family will have to pick them up. For busing questions or to cancel busing due to an absence contact: Jeremy Walston, Transportation Coordinator at 217-577-5011.

LIFE SKILLS/MANNERS

Early Childhood is the time to instill good manners and life skills within your child's development. Please work with your child so they can use a spoon and fork correctly. We also ask that you enforce the use of proper manners. These are skills that we will build on in Pre-K, so they need to be in place.

DRESS CODE

In Pre-K, the way children learn is through hands-on activities. It is important that your child wears clothing that allows him/her to participate in these learning adventures. Children need to wear comfortable clothes that will handle their busy, messy day. Clothes need to fit properly avoiding exposure of inappropriate areas of the body, such as, their bottoms and stomachs. We also encourage self-help skills, so outfits like overalls, jumpers, & onesies are not appropriate. If a dress or skirt is worn, a pair of shorts needs to be under the skirt or dress, so the child can take part in activities. The children will be increasing their large muscle development in Pre-K, so **tennis shoes are the best shoes** to send your preschooler in. The children will be going outside as long as the temperature allows. Please send your child in the appropriate clothes, so they can participate. The required temperature for children to be outdoors while enrolled in a Pre-K Program is between 25 and 90 degrees taking into consideration the wind chill.

HEALTH

Children are not enrolled in Pre-K unless **all of the required health screenings are completed.** The required screenings are: physical (less than one year old & on an Illinois form), current immunization record, & lead screening. The child must also have a copy of their social security card, certified birth certificate, & Medicaid card if applicable. Re-enrolled children are not required to obtain new health screenings.

The Pre-K staff will follow up on health issues as needed. A vision and hearing screening will be completed on each Pre-K student by the school health nurse. A dental exam is recommended. Pre-K children who require medication at school

will need a signed consent form from their guardian/doctor. Parents are required to discuss this with the Pre-K teacher.

Pre-K will follow the school policy regarding head lice.

- parents are required to notify the Pre-K teacher if they suspect their child has head lice

- Pre-K will provide written instructions to parents regarding treatment and the specific policy of the district

- children cannot attend class if they have live lice

- when the child returns it must be with a parent/guardian and their head must be checked by staff before returning to class

TOILET TRAINING

Children are encouraged to be toilet trained prior to Pre-K. The Pre-K program understands that early childhood involves children not only learning academics, but also life skills, such as, going potty. Pre-K will provide parent education and support to assist parents as they train their child.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are encouraged in the Pre-K Classroom. The policy of Pre-K is that no siblings are allowed in the classroom during class time due to safety issues. The volunteer will be required to fill out a Western Volunteer form, sign in at the office and receive a visitor's pass. The parent will also need to sign the Parent Volunteer Sheet in the Pre-K Classroom to document their involvement in Pre-K.

SNACKS

Due to health concerns and scheduling, treats and snacks for any occasion must be arranged in advance with the Pre-K teacher. All treats and snacks must be store bought and prepackaged. No homemade treats are allowed at school. We strongly encourage you to select a treat or snack with nutritional value.

INTERNET

The Pre-K program focuses on the use of technology in the classroom. The staff uses internet sites to teach the children specific skills. It is our policy that the parent signs the Technology Release form at registration. This form explains that the children will have access to the internet, but only with the teacher's direction.

DISCIPLINE

Pre-K believes in positive reinforcement when teaching children to follow rules. Our program reviews rules on a daily basis and explains them to the children. If a child fails to follow a rule the teacher will have them sit in the "Thinking Chair". The chair will allow the child to think about their choice and make a better decision. Children who sit in the thinking chair only do so for 3 – 5 minutes. We give them 1 minute for each year of their age (a 3 year old would sit for 3 minutes and a 5 year old would sit for 5 minutes). The teacher discusses the issue with the child before they get up and assists them in making an appropriate plan. Pre-K also provides a Behavioral Chart form. If a problem continues the teacher will send home a chart on a daily basis to keep the parent informed and increase communication, so the issue can be resolved. Please review the Behavioral Expectation section for specific procedures.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Pre-K age children who have been identified as having a special need will receive the recommended services. The teacher or coordinator will attend the child's staffing. Pre-K works with Four Rivers Special Education Co-op to meet the needs of children who fall into this category. Four Rivers will provide Pre-K with a Special Education Inclusion Teacher and the Western School District Speech Pathologist will provide speech services to the Pre-K child. The Western Pre-K Staff will work as a team with these professionals.

Please sign and date the Handbook sign off form. If we do not receive this form after 5 days it is implied consent is in place.

**I HAVE READ THE WESTERN PRE-K
HANDBOOK AND UNDERSTAND THE
POLICIES.**

PARENT SIGNATURE:

CHILD'S NAME:

DATE:

***please return this form to your child's teacher.**