

# NORTHRIDGE SCHOOLS

*Empowering all students to reach their fullest potential.*

## 2021-2022 Northridge Preschool Program



### **Viking Values:**

Trust, Leadership, Communication, Collaboration,  
Accountability, Integrity, Respect

Welcome to School Year 2021-22 at the Northridge Preschool Program and the Northridge Elementary School. We are pleased to have you as members of our school community! This Handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with many of the opportunities and responsibilities that are yours as a student or parent at Northridge Primary School. The staff and faculty of the Primary are committed to working together to provide the best opportunities for your child. The building reflects the support of the community to help achieve that goal. We trust you will share the pride that the community has in this facility and vow to keep it a great educational institution. We hope that your years at Northridge Primary School will be rewarding.

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## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

Northridge Local School District provides an equal educational opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the

School District's Compliance Officer:

Scott Schmidt  
Superintendent  
740-967-6631

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## **FOREWORD**

This Student Handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain District policies and procedures. Please take the time to become familiar with the important information contained in this Handbook and keep the Handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this Handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal. This Handbook replaces all prior handbooks and other written material on the same subjects. This Handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the District's policies and the School's rules as of 2020. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails. Copies of current District policies and administrative guidelines are available from the building principal and on the District's website.

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### **Important Phone Numbers**

Northridge Elementary School: 740-967-1401  
Preschool Special Education Coordinator, Renee Linn: 740-924-2691  
Special Education Director, Michelle McJessy: 740-966-3277  
Principal, Jill Beaver: 740-967-1401  
Transportation Department: 740-967-7533



**Northridge Local School District**  
6097 Johnstown-Utica Road  
Johnstown, OH 43031  
Phone: (740) 967-6631  
Fax: (740) 967-5022

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*Mr. Scott Schmidt, Superintendent*

*Mr. Britt Lewis, Treasurer/CFO*

Dear Preschool Families:

It is with great pleasure that we welcome your family to the Northridge Preschool Program. Believing that children learn best through play and with each other, we have planned an integrated program of exciting learning activities for this school year. Our preschool classes include preschool children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) as well as typically developing children. Through the formally planned activities and spontaneous play, children are able to learn, grow and develop together.

Our overall goal is to provide high quality education to our students in a safe, loving and a welcoming environment. This handbook is designed to help your child be a successful school community member. It includes information regarding the day to day operation of our program, our policies and procedures, as well as district policies and procedures. Our policies and procedures are in place for several reasons, including following the regulations set by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services that are particular to preschool centers. We ask that our families, community members, and any adult support our goals.

We welcome both you and your child to Northridge Elementary School and the Northridge Preschool Program and look forward to working with you throughout your child's school years.

Sincerely,

Renee Linn  
Preschool Special Education Coordinator  
Northridge Local Schools

Michelle McJessy  
Director, Special Education  
Northridge Local Schools

Jill Beaver  
Principal

Rebecca Brechbill  
Assistant Principal

Schott Schmidt  
Superintendent

Northridge Preschool Staff

## Philosophy

The Northridge School District believes that children benefit from a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum. The Northridge School District also believes a developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum is critical in addressing the special needs of young children as they acquire linkages to skills that lead to success in the school age curricula.

Each child is a unique individual who has diverse experiences, interests and capabilities that are the foundation for the child's continued growth. A safe, rich, child-centered environment nurtures children and provides them with opportunities to engage in meaningful learning experiences through social interaction as well as self-directed and teacher facilitated learning. Recognizing that learning occurs in many ways and through a variety of modalities, activities are designed to foster language development, problem solving and creativity.

A successful preschool experience for the child is enhanced through a partnership with the family. Meaningful communication between school staff and family supports the overall development of each child. By working together, the early childhood program strives to develop each child's skills which lead to independence and participation in the community.

### **Our Program Beliefs**

- We will develop a school environment that is welcoming, supportive, nurturing, and emotionally and physically safe for young children, families and staff.
- We will work collaboratively with parents, guardians and families to build trusting relationships.
- We will cooperate and engage professionally with one another to deepen our understanding of theory and practice, so that we can best support the young learners in our classrooms.
- We will value, respect and make decisions based on children's strengths, talents and areas for growth.
- We will create an educational program that is stimulating, developmentally appropriate and child-centered.
- We will demonstrate our belief that all students can learn and progress, be recognized and celebrated.

## **SECTION I: INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

### **Overview of the Preschool Program**

The Northridge Preschool Program is designed so that preschool children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) receive educational services in an environment with typically developing peers. We believe children are more alike than they are different and a child with a disability is a child first. The play-based preschool program focuses on providing educational opportunities for all preschool children which will enable them to grow, develop and learn from one another.

The program is in session four half-days per week and some Fridays. Mixed ages of 3-5 year olds attend the morning session and the afternoon session. All children attend school Monday-Thursday and some Fridays following the preschool calendar.

The program offers a range of services for children with disabilities. Related services for preschoolers with an IEP may include speech/language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and transportation. The program operates according to the Ohio Department of Education standards, federal mandates for the education of the disabled, and state licensure rules and regulations. Staff-to-child ratios are one teacher and one assistant for eight children with disabilities and up to eight typically-developing peers who serve as role models. Preschool teachers hold a license for the Early Education of the Handicapped issued by the Ohio Department of Education. Assistants hold an aide's permit also issued by the Department of Education. Unannounced site visits are conducted annually by the Ohio Department of Education. Licenses and inspection reports are posted in each classroom.

Northridge Preschool is an Early Childhood Education Program directed by the Northridge School district Board of Education. Part of the program funding is generated through an Early Childhood Education grant awarded by the Ohio Department of Education. Grant monies are received by Northridge to serve children and families in the Northridge School District. The remaining costs of the program are supported by the school district and a sliding tuition feed. Northridge is audited annually to assure funds are utilized appropriately.

### **Enrollment Process**

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides. There is no open enrollment for preschool students. New students under the age of 18 must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- A. an original birth certificate
- B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate)
- C. proof of residency
- D. all preschool registration forms

For enrollment information and appointments, contact Michelle McJessy at 740-966-3277.

## **Eligibility Criteria for Special Education Services**

**Children are identified based on the Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies serving Children with Disabilities.** To qualify as a child with special needs, each child must have a multi-factored evaluation. This evaluation includes four parts:

1. An interview with a person who knows about the child, including developmental, family, medical, and educational history
2. Observations of the child on two different occasions
3. Standardized norm-referenced testing that compares to children of similar age
4. Criterion-referenced testing that assesses skills mastered by the child

A child is eligible for special services if s/he is 3-5 years of age and has a documented delay in one or more areas of development, according to Rule 3301-51-01, OAC:

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Autism (ASD or AUT)          | 10. Orthopedic Impairment (OI)          |
| 2. Intellectual Disability (ID) | 11. Other Health Impairment (OHI)       |
| 3. Deaf-Blindness               | 12. Specific Learning Disability (SLD)  |
| 4. Deafness (SLI)               | 13. Speech or Language Impairment (SLI) |
| 5. Emotional Disturbance (ED)   | 14. Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)        |
| 6. Hearing Impairment (HI)      |   |
| 7. Visual Impairment (VI)       |   |
| 8. Developmental Delay (DD)     |   |
| 9. Multiple Disabilities (MD)   |   |

All children who have been identified with a disability will have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP will address specific goals for each child in his/her areas of delay along with placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and services for which the child is eligible. The IEP will be updated on an annual basis or more often as requested by a parent or staff member.

### **Services for Students Identified with a Disability (IEP)**

The Northridge Preschool Program provides a continuum of services for students identified with a disability. Families can choose which service model fits best for their child and the family. Students identified with a disability have the option to:

- Attend a private preschool using the Autism Scholarship (this private preschool is responsible for all special education services; the child must have an educational disability category of Autism and have a written IEP through Northridge)
- Receive itinerant services within the home, private preschool or daycare center provided by the Early Childhood Intervention Specialist. Services are provided according to the IEP and can include related services such as Speech and Occupational Therapy.

- Receive school based/center based services for 2 hours and 40 minutes a day, 5 days a week, however many weeks do include a day for professional development for staff. Depending on the IEP, all students who attend the Northridge Preschool Program for center-based services and receive related services will receive those services within the classroom setting. In these inclusion classrooms, half of the preschoolers have a disability and half of the students serve as peer role models.

### **Peer Models**

- Ideally peer models will be 4 years old, however, there will be exceptions for some 3 year olds (peer models can enroll up until April 30 during the school year)
- Must be potty trained
- Must provide own transportation to and from school
- There is an expectation that peer models will attend school regularly, and arrive and be picked up on time.

### **Tuition**

All children who are peer models will be charged tuition to attend preschool. Tuition is \$100.00 per month. (Please see your registration packet for the sliding scale fee). Students attend 9 months, August 30th is the first day and June 2nd the last day. Tuition is to be paid on a monthly basis and is due by the 5th of the month. Any tuition that is 30 days past due may result in termination. Unpaid tuition will remain on your child's school record until the balance is paid in full. Tuition questions should be redirected to Jaime Bingham at 740-967-6631 or Michelle McJessy at 740-966-3277. Checks should be made to: *Northridge Local School District*. The checks or cash can be given to the Primary School Secretary or checks can be mailed to the *District Office* at: 6097 Johnstown Road, OH 43031 Attn: Jamie Bingham. Please DO NOT give checks to the classroom teacher.

### **Preschool Curriculum**

Creative Curriculum is a State Approved Curriculum for all preschool students. It is comprehensive, research-based curriculum that promotes exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity and lifelong critical thinking skills. It includes developmentally appropriate goals for children within four main categories of interest: Social/Emotional, Physical, Cognitive and Language. It is aligned with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/Birth-Through-Pre-K-Learning-and-Development-Standards>

Gross motor play is an opportunity for students to exercise and develop their large motor skills. Each child must be provided with at least 20 minutes of gross motor play per day. This could include play on our outdoor equipment, inside in our motor room, or within the classroom. Please be sure your child wears proper footwear (no flip-flops) to ensure their safety during gross motor play.

Arrival and Dismissal  
School Hours

Session	School Day Starts	School Day Ends
A.M Session	8:45 a.m.	11:30 a.m.
P.M. Session	12:35 p.m.	3:20 p.m.



Transportation Procedures

Parents of preschoolers with an IEP need to contact both the school and Transportation if there is a change in your child's usual pick up and/or dismissal routine. For example, if you decide to drop off and/or pick up your child at school rather than have him/her ride the bus.

Parent Pick Up and Drop Off Procedures

Northridge Preschool parents must park in the parking lot and then walk to the preschool doors and drop-off child to an adult and pick-up child from an adult. **Arrival begins at 8:35 and ends promptly at 8:45 for the a.m. session. Arrival begins at 12:25 and promptly ends at 12:35 for the p.m. session. Dismissal times are 11:30 in the morning and 3:20 in the afternoon .** Promptness in dropping off and picking up children encourages them to develop good responsibility habits, is reassuring to them and assists the staff in maintaining a safe environment.

Before or after school child care for preschoolers is **not** available.

Classroom Assignment

When possible, Northridge would like to try to accommodate parent's preference of their child's attendance in an AM or PM class. If the Governor would place or continue restrictions, such as small class sizes due to COVID-19, this will not be possible for the 2021-2022 school year.

Transportation (for students with an IEP)

Bus Safety and Information:

1. Only students with an IEP will receive transportation provided by Northridge Local Schools. The only exceptions are peer models who can ride the same bus (one way)

with a sibling attending elementary school. Northridge buses will pick up and drop off students at the school. Students will be escorted to and from buses by preschool and/or primary staff.

2. Students who ride a bus may have accommodations determined per their IEP.
3. Please help the drivers stay on schedule by having your child ready when the bus arrives. If no one is in sight, or if your child isn't ready, the bus cannot wait, nor can it come back. You will need to transport your child to school that day. Parent/designee must accompany the child to the bus and assist on steps, if needed.
4. After school, when the child is returned home, an adult should be there at least one half (1/2) hour before the regular drop-off time. Time schedules may vary on the preschool routes. An adult must get the child off the bus.
5. If your child is going to be absent from school, please call the **Transportation Department** at **740-967-7533**. Please call before 6:30 a.m. for the morning classes and before 10:30 a.m. for the afternoon classes. When your child is able to return to school, you must call the Transportation Department to begin bus service again. **Reminder: you will still need to call the school office at 740-967-1401 to report your child's absence and reason for absence.**
6. If you move or your arrangements change permanently, please provide at least one week's notice to make route changes. If you have temporary changes, you will need to provide your own transportation during that time.
7. Help your child be safe outside the bus when waiting to get on. Do not go near the bus until it comes to a complete stop. When getting off, watch the bus driver for instructions.
8. To prevent choking emergencies, make sure your child is completely finished eating before getting on the bus. Food and drinks are not allowed on the bus.
9. Please talk with your child about good bus manners:
  - A. Stay in your seat.
  - B. Be nice to others on the bus.
  - C. Use a quiet voice on the bus.
  - D. Listen to what the driver tells you.
  - E. Be completely quiet at railroad crossings to help the driver listen for trains.
10. Be sure your child's book bag contains only items for school and that s/he will not get into it on the bus.
11. Do not give verbal messages to the bus driver to pass on to the teachers. Any message for the teachers should be put in writing and sent in your child's book bag.
12. Any authorized individual (individuals listed on your child's blue cards) meeting

your child at the bus stop is expected to escort your child off the bus, which includes assistance on the steps, if needed. **All individuals must be prepared to show photo ID. Note: Name on photo ID must match name on blue card.**

13. Northridge Local Schools will transport students to a babysitter as long as the location is within the school district. Parents are responsible for communicating this need to transportation and the preschool teacher. Transportation will not change a bus stop that is temporary (i.e. one week at one stop, the next week at another stop).

### **Bus and Transportation Office Expectations**

The bus driver will not release your child from the bus:

- Until an authorized individual is at the bus to receive the child. The bus driver will confirm that the person is an authorized individual and check the individual's photo ID for positive identification when necessary.
- If these expectations are not met, the driver will keep the child on the bus and report any problems via 2-way radio to the Transportation Department and they will attempt to contact the parent by telephone.
- If the Transportation Department is unable to make telephone contact, the bus driver will be instructed to take the child back to the Elementary Building at the end of the route. The Transportation Department or the school will continue to attempt to reach someone that is listed on the student's **blue card**.
- If the parent has not been contacted by 12:00 for AM kids and 4:00 PM for PM kids, Licking County Children's Services will be contacted and the child will be delivered to the 24-hour intake facility at 74 S. Second Street. Their telephone number is **740-670-8888**.

### **Early Childhood Licensing**

The most recent written compliance report for the Northridge Preschool is posted next to our program's current license in each preschool teacher's classroom. Please reference rule 3301-37-02(I) of the Preschool Program Licensing Rules. The Northridge Preschool Program is currently in compliance as of our last licensure inspection. Copies of the inspection report are available from the Office of Early Childhood Education (Central Region: 25 S. Front St., Mail Stop 305, Columbus, Ohio 43215; phone: 614-466-0224) upon request.

### **Complaint Procedure**

The Northridge preschool staff attempts to do everything possible to cooperate with families involved in the program, but if a concern arises please follow these steps:

1. Contact your child's teacher to discuss any concerns regarding the classroom activities.
2. Contact the Preschool Coordinator for Special Education, Renee Linn, at 740-924-2691 or Special Education Director, Michelle McJessy, at 740-966-3277 or building Principal, Jill Beaver, to discuss general concerns or concerns unresolved by

the teacher.

All complaints and reports concerning the operation of programs regulated by the Administrative Code and sections 3301.52 to 3301.59 of the Revised Code may be reported to the Department ombudsman or the Office of Early Childhood Education. (The Ohio Department of Education can be reached at: 614-995-1545). The Ombudsperson will provide you information and assist you in addressing your concerns. For parents of students with an IEP, please refer to "Guide to Parents Rights in Special Education" provided at your child's IEP meeting or go to the following website:

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Special-Education/Students-with-Disabilities/Physical-or-Mentally-Handicap/Whose-IDEA-Is-This-A-Parent-s-Guide-to-the-Individual/Whose-IDEA.pdf.aspx>.

### **Home Visits**

As part of the early childhood program for classes that are in session half-day, the teacher schedules periodic home visits with parents of students with an Individualized Education Program on a weekday that preschool is not in session. If a parent is unable to schedule a home visit during the school day, with parent permission, the teacher may visit daycares and meet with daycare providers regarding a child if the providers are located within the school district. The parent or guardian will need to sign a consent form for this to occur.

### **Communication Between Family and Staff: Family Engagement**

Believing that the home and school need to work together to meet the needs of the child, parent communication is extremely important. Communication from the school to parents occurs in a variety of ways. Listed below are a few of the more common means of communicating with parents:

- Every week communication is sent home with your child, via a folder, the Bloomz app, classroom newsletter or an email which may include information related to class activities. If you do not have access to a computer, you may request information be sent home in paper form in the child's backpack. If parents live in separate households, parents may request two copies of written communication be sent home.
- Behavior or comments relative to your child will only be communicated via your child's folder or email.
- Newsletters, calendars and other important information about class/ school activities are often attached in emails and/or posted on the school's website or classroom Facebook page. If requested, information can be sent home with your child.
- Telephone or face-to-face conferences can be scheduled upon request.
- For students with an IEP, teachers are available to make home visits on the day of the week students are not in class.

The preschool teacher welcomes communication from parents. Please feel free to send an email, notes or call the teacher at school and leave a message. If you would like a parent-teacher conference at any time, one can be arranged by speaking with the teacher.

If a child has Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), or speech goals on his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP), communication from the OT, speech pathologist, APE or PT can be sent home regularly.

### **Reporting Student Progress**

- Northridge School District has a preset schedule for fall and winter parent conferences for all children enrolled in the district. These dates are noted on the school calendar you received in the fall or upon enrollment. As the conference dates approach, your teacher will work with you to set up a time for you to meet.
- Families who have a child with an IEP will receive quarterly updates (progress reports four times a year) on their child's IEP goals from the teachers and all therapists that work with their child.
- All children, those with an IEP and typically developing students, will receive an overall written progress report related to the preschool curriculum called twice a year in November and May.
- Additional meetings may be scheduled to discuss the development of your child during the year if a member of the team, which includes parents, feels it is warranted.

### **Early Childhood Assessments**

The Ohio Department of Education requires that preschool children participate in the Early Learning Assessment (ELA). This is a formative assessment intended to measure student growth in the Early Learning Standards. The Assessment is completed through observation and most of the students have no idea they are participating in the assessment. The ELA is administered in the fall, winter, and spring with results reported to the Ohio Department of Education.

The Brigance Inventory of Early Development III is another assessment that helps us measure the growth of our students with an IEP and is administered one time a year prior to the annual review of the IEP.

Curriculum-based assessments created by Creative Curriculum, the curriculum used by the Northridge Preschool Program, are routinely used and results shared during conferences with the family in fall, spring, and other times throughout the year.

### **Parent-Family Involvement**

By working together, both the parents and the school are better able to understand the needs of the child. The school provides many opportunities for parents to participate in their child's school program both in the classroom and in the school. Please contact your child's teacher or our PTA to discuss what opportunities may be available that work for your family.

Classroom opportunities may include:

- Classroom observations
- Classroom volunteer
- Mystery Guest Reader

School opportunities include:

- Membership in the PTA
- School orientation
- Fall and spring parent conferences
- Spring Celebration
- Opportunities; such as, school picture days and PTA activities

### **Discipline Policy**

*Licensure Rule 3301-37-10 (Behavior Management/Discipline) requires that all early childhood centers include methods of discipline that apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted in the following plan. These rules have been implemented in our preschool behavior management/discipline philosophy and guidelines and are part of the building's "positive" intervention plan for all preschool students. All parents and staff members receive a copy of the discipline policy.*

### **Early Childhood Philosophy Regarding Discipline of Preschool Children**

The Northridge Local Schools District believes that children of preschool age are to be disciplined by using constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques at all times to foster positive self-esteem and to provide a safe environment for all children. The Preschool staff follows a general plan that is positive and proactive in preventing behavior problems.

**Preventive techniques** may include, but are not limited to:

- **Positive reinforcement** (increasing behavior by adding something to the environment that is perceived as positive to the child).
- **Positive phrasing** (telling a child what he/she can do instead of what he/she can't do; i.e., "We sit on the chair, not on the table.").
- **Reflective listening** (honoring and labeling a child's emotion; i.e., "It makes you sad when it is time to clean up.").
- **Modeling appropriate behavior** (modeling desired behavior; i.e., teacher helps a child calm down by demonstrating deep breathing or taking a break).
- **Emotional language curriculum** (teaching students to put words to their feelings, providing visuals and language to prevent meltdowns, frustrations, etc).

**Interventions** addressing a child's behavior may include, but are not limited to:

- **Planned ignoring** of undesired behavior (attending to child doing the correct thing; i.e., "Mary is sitting quietly.").
- **Verbal and nonverbal redirection** (redirecting a child to desired activity/teach alternative behavior).
- **Proximity control or touch control** (moving closer to a child who is having behavioral difficulty, touching his/her shoulder to redirect behavior).
- **Limiting choices** (limiting child's choices to 2, and following through).

- **Sensory strategies** (could include differentiated seating, belly breathing, fidgets, swings, weighted items, taking a break, etc).
- **Natural consequences** (temporarily losing a motivator; i.e., child intentionally throws toy, child loses privilege that moment to play with toy).

### **Methods of Behavior Management/Discipline of Preschool Children**

Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are used at all times and ensure the safety, physical, and emotional well-being of all individuals on the premises. They include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, problem talking with the child about the situation and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior. Although a preschool staff member is in charge of a child or group of preschool children and is responsible for their discipline, these discipline methods shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

- There shall not be cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking and/or biting.
- No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or a similar cubicle.
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep or for toileting accidents.
- Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate shame or frighten a child.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
- Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
- The early childhood staff shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

### **Student Roster**

A student roster, which includes each child's name, telephone number, and email address will be prepared annually by teachers and provided to parents upon request. Parents will be asked to sign a statement indicating whether they desire to have their child's name included on the roster.

## Withdrawing from the Northridge Preschool Program

There are many reasons why a student needs to withdraw from our program. This could be due to moving out of the district, lack of transportation for typical peers, a sudden illness or death in the family that impacts long-term childcare, etc.

If the family moves to another school district, even if it is in a different state, students on an IEP can continue to receive services through their IEP. It is important when enrolling your child you let the school district know that your child has an IEP.

- Parents are asked to contact the school office when a student is going to be withdrawn from school. Please notify the office several days in advance.
- Parents of typical peers need to follow the tuition agreement guidelines for tuition reimbursement due to the withdrawal of a student. A student who is withdrawing from the Northridge Preschool Program must notify the district office.

Once enrollment is verified in the new school, academic records will be sent to the new school they will be attending.

## Attendance

Although attendance is not required in a preschool program, we believe that if a preschool placement was determined to be the best placement for the child, the child will benefit most when attendance is regular. If/When your child is absent, please call both the **Transportation Department at 740-967-7533 before 6:30 a.m. for the morning classes and before 10:30 a.m. for the afternoon classes** (if your child is being transported) and the Elementary Building 740-967-1401 prior to the start of the school day and indicate the reason for the absence. If the school is not notified of your child's absence, we are required to call you each time s/he is absent. This is in compliance with The Missing Child Act and is used to assure your child's safety. Please help us by calling in when your child is going to be absent.

For all preschool children, regular attendance in preschool is imperative if the child is to make growth. It is important that your child arrives on time and departs at the end of the day in order to benefit from all aspects of the preschool day. Irregular attendance and/or late arrival or early departure prohibits your child from participating in the continuity of instruction. Regular attendance enables your child to gain maximum benefit from instruction. For student's with an IEP, attendance is crucial so that the teacher and/or any service providers can provide the proper minutes mandated on the IEP.

If you enroll your child as a typically developing peer, your child's attendance is also important so they continue to build on what they are learning and develop friendships. It is difficult to build on relationships with peers when attendance is inconsistent. Please plan to have your preschooler attend preschool each day that preschool class meets, arrive at the beginning of the school day and stay until the scheduled ending time.

## Transition

Throughout the year a focus of the early childhood program is to prepare children to transition between activities within a familiar environment. As children gain skills in transitioning between daily activities, opportunities are planned to acquaint children with unfamiliar environments. The long term goal is to prepare children to transition to school-age programs. If a student is 6 by August 1, transition to school-age programming is required. If a student is 5 by August 1, the student is eligible to transition. Your child's teacher will conference with you about the transition process so you can make an informed decision for your child.

## Medical Examination

The Ohio Department of Education requires that we maintain a Medical Diagnostic Evaluation Form, a Child's Medical Statement (immunization records) on file. These forms must be provided no later than 30 days after the date of enrollment in preschool. Please note: your child may not be due for a medical evaluation or dental screening during this time period; however, the forms still need to be completed by your child's physician/dentist based on the most current exam date. Throughout the year, these forms will expire on the exam date. We will notify you prior to that time indicating that new forms will be required. At the beginning of each preschool year, new forms will be sent home so that you may have them completed by your physician/dentist and returned to school. These forms and deadlines are mandated by the State. Your assistance in making sure your child's examinations are completed by the annual review date is appreciated.

## Emergency Medical Authorization and Information

State law requires all students to have an Emergency Medical Authorization information completed and submitted by a parent or guardian. This requirement must be in place in order for a student to attend school or participate in any activity off school grounds, including field trips, and other extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities. The purpose of this information is to provide all telephone numbers where parents and/or their designee may be reached in an emergency and to enable parents to authorize emergency treatment for children when parents cannot be reached.

As part of enrollment or prior to the start of school every year, you will be asked to make sure this information is accurate/updated in the office.

**• Two emergency contact persons other than mother and father, who are in the area, must be listed as well as the child's doctor, dentist and a preferred hospital. This is required for our preschool licensure.**

**IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE: The early childhood program must have on file an active working telephone number at all times for at least one parent.**

## Management of Communicable Disease

- A Communicable Disease Chart is posted at each site.
- The protocol for management of communicable disease at the Northridge Preschool Program will be based upon the Ohio Department of Health's guidelines and

recommendations.

- All early childhood staff receive state mandated training in communicable disease recognition including recognizing signs and symptoms of illness, proper hand washing techniques and disinfection procedures.
- Children identified with a communicable disease will be isolated from other children in an area with a cot in the nurse's or district administrator's office under the direct supervision of staff until a parent/guardian or authorized individual is able to pick the child up from school.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted by phone (phone numbers listed for your child online will be called) in the event that their child is exhibiting the following signs or symptoms of illness.

- Fever (100 degrees or over)
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty four hour period)
- Vomiting
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing that is undiagnosed
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Untreated infected skin patch(es)
- Unusually dark urine and/or or grey or white stool that is undiagnosed
- Stiff neck that is undiagnosed
- Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation
- Difficulty swallowing or extremely sore throat that is undiagnosed

• If there is a child in a classroom that has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, letters notifying of possible exposure will be sent to all parents/guardians of children in that classroom. Letters will be sent home in the child's communication folder in their book bag. This includes communicable diseases such as conjunctivitis, ringworm, impetigo, scabies, chicken pox, lice and strep throat.

• The following communicable diseases must also be reported to the school nurse/designee:

Encephalitis	Meningitis	Ringworm Hepatitis
Whooping Cough	Polio	Rubella (German Measles)
Scabies	Measles Mumps	Reyes' Syndrome
Infectious Mononucleosis		

### **When to Keep your Child at Home**

• **Children who have a communicable disease will be excluded from school until they have been without fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours without the use of medications which would treat those symptoms.**

• **In order for a child to return to school in the event of a communicable disease exhibiting as a rash, the rash must be gone or a note from a doctor stating that the child may return must be presented.**

● If a child is exhibiting signs of conjunctivitis (crusty eyes, red or swollen eyes), the symptoms must be gone or a note from a doctor stating that the child may return must be presented.

If your child has been given antibiotics for an infection, they need to be on the medication for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

**All children deserve a safe and healthy environment to learn!**

### **Bathrooms and Diapering**

Our students have access to the bathroom throughout their school day. Bathrooms are located in each preschool classroom. We realize all young children may have toileting accidents on occasion. Typically developing peers must be toilet trained in order to attend as a peer in the Northridge Preschool Program. If a peer has 3 or more accidents within a short time frame, the district administrator and teacher will address their concern with the parent/guardian to come up with a plan. If the peer continues to have accidents that are unrelated to a medical condition, the child may be withdrawn from the program and the parent/guardian may consider enrolling the child at a later date.

Students on an IEP cannot be prevented from coming to school if they are not toilet trained. The preschool staff will provide the student with assistance deemed appropriate and necessary. If the child is in diapers, staff will follow the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) diapering procedures to regularly change the child's diaper at least once per day (more if the diaper is soiled). All staff will be trained yearly on the ODJFS diapering procedures. Parents are responsible for providing the school with diapers and wipes.

We ask that ALL students be sent a change of clothes in a Ziploc bag with the child's name on it. If a child needs a change of clothes (whether it is due to a toileting or other accident), we will use the child's extra set of clothes first. If a child does not have an extra set, we do have some donated clothes that can be used.

### **Snacks**

A snack will be served each day in all classes. Parents are asked to provide a nutritional snack for their child. Snack is an important time at preschool! Not only do we learn how to nourish our bodies with healthy foods, we also learn many social skills, such as sharing, serving and cleaning up. In addition, children requesting items to eat and visiting with peers build upon communication skills. Small motor skills are also developed, like pouring, dipping, and using silverware. Since our families at preschool provide snack, we felt it was important to share with you a list of healthy items that make excellent snacks for preschool students. Please feel free to keep the list handy as you make your selection for your student.

#### **Healthy Snack Ideas for Parents:**

Apples  
Jello Cups  
Carrots  
Celery

Canned Fruit  
Pineapple  
Kettle Corn Plums  
Kiwi

Goldfish  
Applesauce cups  
Animal Crackers  
Bagels

Popcorn (microwave)  
Pretzels  
Oranges  
Blueberries or other berries  
Boiled Eggs

Cheese  
Bananas  
Cherries  
Cottage Cheese  
Crackers

Muffins  
Pudding  
Raisins  
Peaches

## **SECTION II: HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Safety and Security**

1. No child will be left unattended/unsupervised at any time.
2. Safety drills are conducted monthly throughout the year, which include, fire, tornado and lock down school safety. All procedures are posted in each room and reviewed with each child.
3. All preschool staff members are required by Ohio Law to report any real or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, including physical abuse, child neglect, sexual abuse, emotional neglect, or educational neglect. If a child comes to school with bruises, etc., that were not there the day before, the parent should send a note explaining such. Staff members are not allowed to make a determination if they suspect that any abuse has occurred. They are required to make a report to Children's Services who will investigate.
4. Any injured child shall be observed and/or given appropriate treatment. The teachers will file an incident report to be given to the parents and copied for the school file. In the event of a serious accident or injury the parent will be contacted as soon as possible.
5. The classroom teacher needs written instructions from a licensed physician or licensed dentist before any medication will be dispensed or procedure performed.
6. All medications sent to the school will be kept in a locked storage cabinet.
7. According to the Missing Child Act, staff members are required to call the home if a child is absent and no call-in has been given by the parent. Please call the school before class if your child will be absent from school that day.

### **Injury and Illness**

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If the injuries are minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the school's emergency procedures and attempt to make contact with the student's parent/guardian. Parents will be notified via phone call and a completed paper form if a child has a head injury (head bump, collision, etc).

A student who becomes ill during the day will go to the office. An appropriate adult in the office will determine whether the student should remain in school or go home. The school nurse needs to be aware of any health concerns that you may have about your

child so that his/her health and welfare are maintained at the highest level. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

All teachers and teaching assistants maintain an active First Aid designation as part of the licensure requirements.

### **Health Assessments and Screenings**

Vision and hearing screenings are conducted annually. Additional screenings may be done at the request of parents or staff. You will be notified of any results outside the normal range. If you have any questions regarding these screenings or do not wish to have your child participate, please contact the school nurse.

### **Early Dismissal**

No student may leave school prior to dismissal time without a parent or guardian either submitting a signed written request or coming to the School Office personally to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) or guardian without a written permission note signed by the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

### **Fire, Tornado, and Safety Drills**

Northridge Primary School and Preschool comply with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. The School conducts tornado drills during the tornado season following procedures prescribed by the State. The alarm system for tornadoes consists of a public address announcement. Teachers will provide specific instructions on how to proceed in the case of fire or tornado and will oversee the safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building in such cases.

Safety drills will be conducted at least once per school year. Teachers will provide specific instruction on the appropriate procedures to follow in situations where students must be secured in their building rather than evacuated. These situations can include a terrorist threat, a person in possession of a deadly weapon on school property, or other acts of violence.

### **Emergency Closing and Delays**

Emergency school closing because of snow, ice or other calamity is announced on Columbus area radio and television broadcasts either the night before or the day of the closure. Additionally, phone calls are made to parents through One Call and posted on the Northridge Schools website, Facebook page, and the Bloomz app. It should be assumed that schools are open unless announced otherwise.

**If there is a two (2) hour delay, AM sessions will be cancelled but PM sessions will occur on time. Please be sure to check the local news (NBC4, WSYX 6, WBNS 10) and social media for updates regarding school closings.**

Emergency early dismissal plans should be completed by parents/guardians. Please indicate who should be notified in an emergency early dismissal.

## Visitors

Visitors, particularly parents and guardians, are welcome at the school. Visitors must report to the office upon entering the school to sign in and obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without signing in shall be escorted to the administrative office. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school in order to schedule a mutually convenient meeting time. Students may not bring visitors to school without prior permission from the Principal.

### Classroom Visitations and Observations

If you are considering a classroom visit or observation, we request the following:

- We ask that you schedule an observation with the teacher prior to coming into the building.
- **Upon entering the building for any reason, please stop at the office to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge. We ask you to do this even when you are just bringing something to school for your child. For security reasons, we need to know who is in the building at all times. Thank you for your cooperation.**
- If you have scheduled an observation with your child's teacher, we ask you to keep these things in mind.
- Please jot down on a sheet of paper any questions you may have. You may schedule a conference or phone call with the teacher or the therapist to discuss your questions or concerns. Please remember that the teacher, assistant and therapist are there to work with the children and engaging them in conversation distracts from the attention the children need.
- It is important that anything observed in the classroom be kept confidential.
- The time spent observing in the classroom should be spent observing **your** child. It is sometimes tempting to observe and compare your child with the other children in the class. It may also be tempting to ask questions about other children's disabilities. Due to confidentiality, please understand that other children cannot be discussed with you.
- If your observation(s) become distracting to the students within the classroom, it is the principal's right to finish the observation and schedule a follow-up meeting with the parent if necessary.

### How Is Confidentiality Maintained?

Please be aware that specific information about other children in your child's class or in the school cannot be shared with others due to confidentiality. If you volunteer, visit the class or help with a celebration, etc., keep any observations regarding any child's behavior or functioning in the class or school confidential. If you are in the class on a regular basis, other parents may ask you questions about their child's school day. Please refer them back to the teacher.

You **must check** with your child's teacher prior to taking pictures or videos in the classroom. Some parents choose not to have their child's picture taken and only the teacher will know each parent's preference. Please be considerate of other parents and **do not** post their child's picture on social media without their permission. Confidentiality is a required component of our program and must be adhered to by everyone. Your sensitivity to this matter is appreciated.

### **Lost and Found**

The lost and found area located in the office. Students who have lost items should check there and may retrieve their items if they give a proper description. Unclaimed items will be given to charity or disposed of at the end of each semester.

### **Change of Family Information**

The school must be able to contact parents/guardians if there is an emergency involving a child.

- Please notify the office and your child's teacher immediately and update your information whenever there is a change in the student's and/or parent's telephone number, address, place of employment, marital status, child custody, e-mail address or other changes of which the school should be made aware.
- A change in address requires two new proofs of residency ex: electric or gas bill, lease or rental agreement, mortgage agreement) be submitted to the school office.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Ohio law obligates school officials to report suspected child abuse or neglect to Children's Services. The school does not investigate such cases and makes no other decisions in this regard. All referrals are confidential.

### **Child Custody**

Parents are obligated to provide the school with up-to-date information regarding child custody. Copies of any court orders, explaining or limiting custody, must be on file in the school office. A court official must sign such orders. The school will be directed by this document rather than the wishes of one parent or the other.

### **Immunizations**

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law, including but not limited to poliomyelitis, measles, diphtheria, rubella, pertussis, tetanus, and mumps, or have an authorized exemption from State immunization requirements. For the safety of all students, the school administrator may remove a student from school or establish a deadline for meeting State requirements if a student does not have the necessary immunizations or authorized exemption. In the event of a chicken pox epidemic, the Superintendent may temporarily deny admission to a student otherwise exempted from

the chicken pox immunization requirement. Any questions about immunizations or exemptions should be directed to the nurses employed by the District.

### **Prescribed Medications**

The administration of medication at school is addressed, in detail, in Ohio law and Board of Education policy. All medication to be administered at school will be secured, supervised, and administered by a designated person. Medication must be sent to school in the manufacturer's container or the one in which it was prescribed. Medication must be delivered to the Principal's office immediately if it is to be administered at school.

A student may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or a dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms before exercise to prevent the onset of asthmatic symptoms, at school or at any activity, event, or program sponsored by in which the student's school is a participant if the appropriate form is completed and on file in the office. A student who is authorized to possess and use a metered dose or dry powder inhaler may not transfer possession of any inhaler or other medication to any other student.

In the case of epinephrine auto-injectors ("epi pens"), in addition to written permission and submission of proper forms, the parent or student must provide a backup dose to the school Nurse.

### **Non-Prescribed (Over-the-Counter) Medications**

No staff member will dispense non-prescribed, over-the-counter (OTC) medication to *Licensure Rule 3301-37-10 (Behavior Management/Discipline) requires that all early childhood centers include methods of discipline that apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted in the following plan. These rules have been implemented in our preschool behavior management/discipline philosophy and guidelines and are part of the building's "positive" intervention plan for all preschool students. All parents and staff members receive a copy of the discipline policy.*

### **Student Dress**

Students will do many different things during the school day, including gross motor play in the gym or outside. During the winter season, please send your child to school in a warm jacket, hat, and mittens if the weather is cold or snowy. Please dress your child in clothes you and they feel comfortable getting dirty due to art and sensory activities.

It is highly recommended for students to not wear the following shoes at school as they are not safe for our various preschool activities: flip flops, clogs/crocs, large snow boots, sandals without a back. If your child needs to wear boots to school due to the weather, please send another pair of shoes for your child to wear at school to prevent tripping.

## **Protection and Privacy of Student Records**

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information. Northridge Local Schools maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number; date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially-recognized activities and sports, height and weight, dates of attendance, date of graduation, awards received, and the student's photograph. Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the Board to disclose any or all "directory information" upon written notification to the Board. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release you may consult the Board's annual Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents;
- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- C. sex behavior or attitudes;
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers,
- G. physicians, and ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Consistent with the PPRA and District policy, parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation. Please contact the Superintendent to inspect such materials.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the principal.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW 20202-4605  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco)

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email

Addresses:

[FERPA@ED.Gov](mailto:FERPA@ED.Gov) and [PPRA@ED.Gov](mailto:PPRA@ED.Gov).

### **Student Valuables**

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property and should not bring items of value to school. Items such as irreplaceable items, jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion and should not be brought to school. The school is not liable for any loss or damage to personal valuables.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips include trips that require students to be transported via school bus to an off-site location, as well as when children take walks around the neighborhood. Children may participate in field trips to enrich the early childhood curriculum. Parents indicate field trip permission for their child the permission form upon enrollment. This indication can be changed at any time. It is your responsibility to notify your child's teacher if you make a change regarding your consent to field trips. A parent may change his/her mind or make a decision before each trip.

It is the teacher's responsibility to notify parents at least one week in advance of field trips that may occur. Teachers are also responsible for notifying the office and school nurse in advance of a field trip to arrange necessary medicine administration.

### **Parent Teacher Association**

The PTA is a very important link between the home and school. Through the PTA, parents, teachers and school staff work together for the good of all students. You will be contacted in the early fall about joining the PTA and will be given the opportunity to volunteer for various positions and/or functions throughout the year. Your support is greatly needed and appreciated.

### **Child Find**

Northridge Schools is responsible for locating any child ages three to 21 with a suspected disability who resides within the Northridge Local School District. The school district provides special education services to any child who qualifies as disabled according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ages 3 through 21 years of age. Suspected disabilities include: a preschool child with a disability, multiple disabilities, deaf-blind, hearing impairment, visual impairment, speech/language disability, orthopedic

impairment, emotional disturbance, mental retardation, specific learning disability, autism, traumatic brain injury, and other health impairment. If you know of a child who is suspected to have a disability, please call the Director of Special Education at 1-740-966-3277 or contact your building principal for more information.

### **Deteccion de Ninos**

Las Escuelas de Northridge son responsables de localizar a cualquier niño desde su nacimiento hasta los 21 años de edad que se sospeche discapacitado y él cual resida dentro de los límites del Distrito Escolar de Northridge. El Distrito Escolar proporciona servicios de Educación Especial a cualquier niño que califique como tal, de acuerdo con la Ley del Mejoramiento Educativo para los Individuos con Discapacidades (IDEIA de acuerdo con sus siglas en inglés) o la Sección 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitación para las edades comprendidas entre los 3 hasta los 21 años de edad. Las discapacidades sospechadas incluyen: un niño en edad pre-escolar con discapacidad, discapacidades múltiples, sordo-ciego, discapacidad auditiva, discapacidad visual, discapacidad en el habla / lenguaje, discapacidad ortopédica, trastorno emocional, retraso mental, discapacidades específicas de aprendizaje (lento aprendizaje), autismo, lesión traumática al cerebro, u algún otro impedimento físico. Si Usted conoce a algún niño con discapacidades o tiene la sospecha de que sufre de alguna, por favor comuníquese con el Director de Servicios Estudiantiles en 1-740-966-3277 o contáctese con el Director de la Escuela correspondiente a su área para más información.