



2023-2024 Parent Handbook



2023

Dear Preschool Parents,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 St. Charles Park District's Preschool Program. **Please complete and submit the following forms for each child by August 14, 2023.** Completed forms are required prior to your child's attendance in the preschool program. If your child was in our preschool program last year, we do not need another copy of a birth certificate or immunization record.

*A link to provide your child's information will come from **ePACT Network**, following your program enrollment. An account for your child must be created with the following information, in order for students to participate in any preschool class:*

- ☐ Parents/guardians must provide Medical, Emergency, and Authorized Pickup information, and include a photo of their child
- ☐ A copy of your child's birth certificate, uploaded
- ☐ Record of immunizations provided by physician, uploaded
 - *If your child is 2 years of age or older and entering preschool for the first time, the chickenpox (varicella) vaccine is required*

Questions? Contact Kara Guizzetti-Reif, Preschool Supervisor, at kguizzetti@stcparks.org or 630-513-4326.

Thank you!

Welcome!

Thank you for choosing the St. Charles Park District's Preschool Program for your child's earliest educational experience. Our programs at Pottawatomie Community Center (PCC) and Hickory Knolls Discovery Center (HK) are both structured to help the whole child grow through developmentally appropriate activities. When children play, they benefit from engaging in hands-on exploration of materials. Participating in art and sensory-filled tasks support the emergence of children's fine motor and gross motor skills. Social and emotional growth occurs in every area of our day. Our classrooms promote an atmosphere that encourages children to:

- Become independent
- Respect others
- Develop creativity
- Feel safe within the school environment
- Learn kindergarten readiness skills

The health and safety of St. Charles Park District participants and staff is our top priority. *Please know we will be closely following and enforcing our sick policy guidelines.*

Registration Information

Our goal is to accommodate as many families as possible. The Park District reserves the right to adjust minimums/maximums and locations based on the availability of space, staff, and enrollment in order to maintain the safety, structure, and integrity of the program.

All registrations are subject to acceptance based on program availability, proper completion of registration material, payment status, and history, and the Park District's ability to meet any special needs of the participant.

The St. Charles Park District (SCPD) follows St. Charles School District 303 (D303) age requirement guidelines. Registrants must meet the age requirement for the requested preschool class by March 1 (Twos Plus) or September 1 (Threes & Pre-K) of the preschool year registered for.

Early enrollment for the following school year is available for registrants enrolled in the current school year. Registration priority is given in the following order:

1. Currently enrolled residents
2. Open resident enrollment
3. Currently enrolled non-residents
4. Open non-resident enrollment

Early Registration Forms will be distributed in February to all current school year registrants.

2023-2024								
			RES/month	RES/year	NR/month	NR/year	Reg. Code	Instructors
Hickory Knolls Preschool HKDC						Aug 21-May 17		
Threes	TuTh	9-11:30am	\$167	\$1,553	\$173	\$1,603	30807	HB, JM
Threes	TuTh	12:15-2:45pm	\$167	\$1,553	\$173	\$1,603	30808	NG, SM
Pre-K	MW	9:30am-2pm	\$279	\$2,555	\$284	\$2,605	30805	HB, NG
Pre-K	F	9:30am-2pm	\$132	\$1,238	\$138	\$1,288	30806	HB, NG
Pottawatomie Preschool PCC						Aug 21-May 17		
Twos Plus	TuTh	8:30-10am	\$103	\$975	\$109	\$1,025	30820	AC, KF
Twos Plus	TuTh	10:30am-12pm	\$103	\$975	\$109	\$1,025	30820	AC, KF
Threes	TuTh	8:45-11:15am	\$152	\$1,418	\$158	\$1,468	30816	PB, BW
Threes	TuTh	12:15-2:45pm	\$152	\$1,418	\$158	\$1,468	30817	JS, BW
Threes	MWF	8:45-11:15am	\$218	\$2,010	\$224	\$2,060	30818	PB, BW
Threes	MWF	12:15-2:45pm	\$218	\$2,010	\$224	\$2,060	30819	JS, BW
Pre-K	TuTh	8:30am-1pm	\$276	\$2,530	\$282	\$2,580	30813	AL, AP
Pre-K	MWF	8:45-11:15am	\$216	\$1,993	\$222	\$2,043	30814	JK, AP
Pre-K	MWF	12:15-2:45pm	\$216	\$1,993	\$222	\$2,043	30815	JK, AP
Pre-K	M-Th	8:30-11am	\$300	\$2,748	\$306	\$2,798	30810	LM, JS
Pre-K	M-Th	12:15-2:45pm	\$300	\$2,748	\$306	\$2,798	30811	JS, BW
Pre-K	F	8:30-11am	\$67	\$651	\$73	\$701	30812	LM, JS

Payment Options

1. Pay the full activity registration fee at the time of registration.
2. Choose to have monthly payments, determined by the total number of classes, automatically withdrawn from your bank account. Monthly payment information is required at the time of registration. A \$50 initial payment per session will secure your child's place in this program. Payments will occur on the 15th of each month beginning in August and continuing through April.
 - Electronic Check Payment (ECP)
Monthly payments will be automatically debited from your checking or savings account.
 - Credit Card Authorization (CCA)
Monthly payments will be automatically charged to your credit card:
Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express.

Refund Policy

1. Refunds requested will be issued, less a \$50 withdrawal fee.
2. Refunds will be granted, less the \$50 withdrawal fee, if a valid physician's written excuse or proof of relocation out of the area are submitted. Refunds may be pro-rated based upon the remaining number of classes in the session.
3. The Park District reserves the right to review and make the final decision on all refunds
4. Should preschool be canceled for emergency situations due to unforeseen circumstances, refunds made for classes missed will be processed as a household credit to your account, in a timely manner. Payment plans may be paused for prolonged closures.

Childcare Expense Statements

Receipts can be issued upon request, as well as a Statement of Account that includes all registrations and payments to SCPD for a given period of time. A Tax ID Letter is also available. SCPD is not responsible or liable for determining childcare expenses.

Inclusion Services

Fox Valley Special Recreation Association

If your child has any special medical, physical, psychological, and/or emotional needs, please list them in detail on your registration material. Lack of information may adversely affect the Park District's ability to accommodate the needs of your child, and may necessitate that participant's removal from the program. SCPD is not responsible for any injuries, complications, damages, or losses due to withheld information. Accommodations may be made to assist your child. A two-week notification prior to the start of classes is required for all children requesting inclusion services. *Please note all special needs your child requires in your Emergency Information ePACT account and notify the Preschool Supervisor.*

Along with other area park districts, the St. Charles Park District works in collaboration with Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA) to make reasonable modifications in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for any individual with a disability that registers for programming. To request modifications, please contact us at least two weeks in advance of the child's start date. For more details, call 630-513-6200.

Modifications for patrons with disabilities:

Families seeking modifications for their child should indicate this on their registration form at the time of registration, or by first contacting the Preschool Supervisor for St. Charles Park District. A member of the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA) team will follow up to facilitate an individualized assessment (intake form) with the parent/guardian. Using this information and any documentation from previous participation, an inclusion support plan will be created.

This plan can include the following modifications:

- Staff training
- Visual systems (i.e. timers, written/picture schedule, etc.)
- Adaptive equipment/supplies
- Sensory supplies (i.e. noise-canceling head phones, fidgets, etc.)
- Behavior Management support (i.e. token economy systems, positive coping tools, etc.)
- Verbal cues
- Modifications to activities
- Additional personnel (i.e. Inclusion Companions or Sign Language Interpreters)

Modified Behavior Expectations

ALL participants should be able to meet behavior expectations with or without accommodations.

Behaviors that could result in immediate dismissal from programs due to interventions requiring close proximity of staff and participant include, but are not limited to the following:

- Spitting, licking, biting
- Hitting, grabbing, kicking, wrestling
- Running from the designated program area

Preschool Teachers

We take pride in providing a quality preschool program, allowing you to feel confident in the experience your child will receive. Preschool staff hold a degree in early child education or a related field, and are certified annually in CPR/AED and First Aid. All staff are Mandated Reporters, certified through the Department of Child and Family Services.

Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival: Preschool participants must be walked to the building by a parent or guardian, and classroom doors will be opened at the class start time. To promote independence, children should be encouraged to hang their own jacket and backpack in their assigned location. *Write your child's first and last name on all personal belongings to ensure they are not misplaced.*

Dismissal: Pickup at the end of class will take place at your child's classroom door. Preschool participants must leave with a parent or guardian. Students and siblings are not permitted to play in the classroom at dismissal.

A Parent or Guardian must sign their child out on park district tablets at the end of each class.

Note: Arrival and dismissal times are busy! Please watch your child(ren) at all times. As we are housed in public buildings, many community members are here for programming other than preschool. Please help your children respect those who visit and work in our buildings.

Late Pickup Fee (per child)

If you are late picking up your child, a late fee of \$5 for the first five minutes (or any portion thereof) and \$1 for each additional minute will be charged. The Late Pickup Fee will be placed on your park district account. If late pickup becomes habitual, you will run the risk of your child being discharged from the program.

Emergency Contact & Release Form-Authorization

- Following program enrollment, a link will be sent by **ePACT Network** for parents or guardians to create a secure Emergency Information Account for each child registered. You will be asked to upload a photo of your child. We will refer to this account in emergency situations.
- Only authorized individuals listed in each participant's ePACT Account will be permitted to pick up a child.
- Authorization for release will be accepted **ONLY** from parent/guardian(s) with primary custody.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for informing the Preschool Supervisor of any changes to primary custody, restraining orders, or any other situations or changes which may affect the participant.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for updating ePACT Accounts and notifying the Preschool Supervisor that changes have been made.

Absentee and Late Arrival Reporting Procedures

For the safety of the children enrolled in our preschool program, we require a telephone call for any day your child will be absent or arriving late to school. If your child will not be attending, **please call our Teacher Hotlines at 630-513-4325 (PCC) or 630-513-4398 (HK).** A call is not necessary on a scheduled "No School" day.

If you are arriving to school after class has begun, please stop at the front desk OR the Preschool Supervisor's office to be escorted to the classroom and allowed entry. Classroom doors are closed and locked during class time.

Healthy Kids Policy

- If a child seems to be running a fever or appears sick, we will request that they be picked up immediately. A child is to be fully symptom-free (including fever-free and/or vomit-free) for 24 hours before returning to the program.
- We ask that you be considerate of other children and staff by keeping your child home if they show signs of illness such as uncontrolled coughing or sneezing, runny noses (not due to allergies), diarrhea, stomach issues, or rash.
- Paramedics (9-1-1) will be called to handle serious injuries. If your child needs emergency medical care, we will accompany them and a parent/guardian must meet us at the medical facility as quickly as possible.
- If your child contracts a contagious condition (e.g., lice or pink eye) that restricts them from returning, you must inform the Preschool Supervisor at 630-513-4326. The staff will then post Health Alert Notices to affected participants accordingly.
- A child must receive appropriate treatment, depending on the condition, before returning to the program and may require a medical release from a physician or medical provider before returning.

Dispensing Medication Procedures

Strict policies have been established for dispensing of medication to participants. These steps must be taken if a participant is required to receive medication while in the program. This includes restrictions for cough drops, vitamins, pain relievers, and over the counter or prescription drugs.

Parents/Guardians are required to complete a *Medication Dispensing Form* via ePACT for all medications to be administered to participants by park district staff or the participant themselves.

Prescription Drugs / EpiPen-Controlled by Instructor

- Parent/Guardian will provide District staff with the child's medication in the original container with prescription label that includes patient's name, physician's name, pharmacy name, name of medication and complete dosage information. The proper dosage for the day should be sent in the original container each day.
- Medication will be stored in a secure area and at a temperature consistent with the package instructions. If the program is held outside, staff will carry the medication with their emergency kit.

Inhaler-Controlled by child for self-administration

- Medication must be in the original container with prescription label that includes patient's name, physician's name, pharmacy name, name of medication and complete dosage information.

School Closing/Program Cancellation

Emergency Closing Information will be distributed in these locations:

www.d303.org

www.emergencyclosingcenter.com

television and radio news programming

In case of inclement weather, preschool will follow St. Charles School District 303 closing guidelines. If D303 cancels classes or calls for a full “e-learning” day, preschool classes will be canceled. Inclement weather days will be prorated and not be rescheduled.

D303 Late Start days that are declared due to inclement weather will result in morning preschool classes being canceled, but afternoon preschool classes in attendance. Please check the above sites and your email for information in these cases.

If Pottawatomie Community Center or Hickory Knolls Discovery Center closes for any reason, including weather or an emergency due to unforeseen circumstances, preschool will be canceled and missed days will be prorated.

Accidents and Injuries

Preschool teachers are trained to treat minor cuts, bruises, and other simple playground injuries. In the event of a serious injury, preschool teachers will call 911 to request emergency assistance. While a teacher attends to your child, another staff member will notify a parent or guardian, and if neither can be reached, an emergency contact person.

School Attire and Personal Belongings

Have your child dressed for independence, comfort, and active play. Know that sometimes a successful day in preschool includes a little mess.

- Casual play clothes and close-toed shoes are appropriate preschool attire.
- Apply sunblock prior to arrival for activities that may be planned on-site outdoors.
- Backpacks (and extra clothing) are kept in assigned locations during school hours.
- Clearly label ALL personal belongings with your child's *first and last name*.
- Leave toys at home, where they will not be lost or broken.

Independence

An important aspect of attending preschool is the development of a child's independence. Please be sure your child practices carrying their backpack, putting on (and taking off) their own coat, and can *independently* open and close the water bottle and snack/lunch they bring each day.

Bathroom Procedures

Twos Plus Preschool

We understand children at this age are learning toilet training. Although we do allow children in Pull-Ups, parents must be within 5 minutes of Pottawatomie Community Center to tend to the needs of your child should an instructor call. Children may use the bathroom at any time during the school day.

- Instructors will stand outside the bathroom door.
- Instructors will not wipe bottoms.
- Instructors may assist with buttons, snaps, zippers, and belts.
- Parent/Guardian will be called to come in and tend to bathroom accidents.

Threes/Pre-K Preschool

All participants must be fully toilet-trained and are responsible for all of their own toileting needs. Children may use the bathroom at any time during the school day. Encourage your child to tell the instructor if they need to use the bathroom to avoid accidents.

- Instructors will stand outside the bathroom stall or door.
- Instructors will not wipe bottoms.
- Instructors may assist with buttons, snaps, zippers, and belts; however, please have your child dressed for *independent* success.
- Parent/Guardian will be called to come in and tend to bathroom accidents.

Safety Drills

Safety drills will be scheduled throughout the school year to prepare participants for emergency situations. Safety Drills include fire drills, tornado drills, and active threat drills.

Parent Communication

Communication is key to your child having a positive preschool experience. Each preschool classroom distributes a monthly calendar and newsletter via email containing important information regarding curriculum, special events, reminders, and general classroom news. Please be sure to check your email account frequently, and let your child's teachers know if you are not receiving information. Parents are welcome and encouraged to email classroom teachers at the addresses below, or to leave messages on our Teacher Hotlines at 630-513-4325 (PCC) or 630-513-4398 (HK), to receive a phone call back.

Mrs. Cline & Mrs. Fuentes	TwosPlus@stcparks.org
Mrs. Walsh & Mrs. Bradley (AM 3's)	Threes@stcparks.org
Mrs. Walsh & Mrs. Sebahar (PM 3's)	
Mrs. Kreml & Mrs. Patel	Foursandfives1@stcparks.org
Mrs. Mehan & Mrs. Sebahar	Foursandfives2@stcparks.org
Mrs. Lewis & Mrs. Patel	Foursandfives3@stcparks.org
Mrs. Muncie & Mrs. Beck (AM 3's)	HKThrees1@stcparks.org
Mrs. Garwood & Mrs. McCubbin (PM 3's)	HKThrees2@stcparks.org
Mrs. Beck & Mrs. Garwood (Pre-K)	HKPreschool@stcparks.org

Additionally, teachers will communicate with parents via **Seesaw Class**. The Seesaw Class App is available from the Apple *App Store* or *Google Play*, and can also be accessed on your computer. Each classroom will send individual QR codes and connection instructions.

Contact Information

It's important that the Park District has accurate contact information should a parent/guardian need to be called. Notify the Preschool Supervisor and your classroom teachers of any changes in phone numbers, emergency contact people, or medications so our records can be updated. Be sure to update this information in your child's ePACT account as well.

Parent Survey

Each preschool year, parents are given the opportunity to participate in a survey about your child's experience in our preschool program. Your feedback is important to us and we appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts. If you have questions or concerns anytime throughout the year, feel free to contact the Preschool Supervisor or your child's preschool teachers.

Developmental Assessments

Your child will receive a developmental assessment completed by their preschool teachers in January (Pre-K) or February (Threes) and again in May. These assessments will highlight areas we are seeing developmental growth in your child as well as identify areas we feel your child needs additional practice. Teachers use the information in the assessment to modify and develop curriculum plans to better meet the needs of each individual child. Parent/teacher conferences will be offered in January (Pre-K classes) or February (Twos and Threes classes) once assessments have been completed.

Discipline Policy

Discipline is the ongoing process of helping children to develop inner controls and assume responsibility for their own actions. We accomplish this by setting and enforcing consistent and clear rules, limits, and consequences prior to and as part of any disciplinary action. Preschool teachers will use positive statements to redirect behavior. Children will have a reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts, with adult intervention as needed.

2023-2024 Preschool Calendar

Preschool classes begin in August and follow the D303 calendar until the third week of May.

Classes are in session August 21, 2023 – May 17, 2024, with the following exceptions:

No School Days

Friday, September 1 (D303 Teacher Work Day)
Monday, September 4 (Labor Day)
Thursday, October 5 (D303 Teacher Work Day)
Friday, October 6 (D303 Teacher Work Day)
Monday, October 9 (Columbus Day)
Friday, October 20 (D303 School Improvement Day)
Monday, November 20—Friday, November 24 (Thanksgiving Break)
Monday, December 25—Monday, January 8 (Winter Break)
Monday, January 15 (Martin Luther King Day)
Monday, February 19 (Presidents' Day)
Thursday, February 29 (D303 Teacher Work Day)
Friday, March 1 (Kane County Institute Day)
Monday, March 25—Friday, March 29 (Spring Break)
Friday, April 19 (D303 School Improvement Day)



FAQ's for Pottawatomie and Hickory Knolls Preschools

"How can I meet my child's teachers and find out what my child will be doing in preschool?"

A *Parent Orientation* with the Preschool Supervisor will take place via *Zoom Meetings* on Monday, August 14 (Pottawatomie) and Tuesday, August 15 (Hickory Knolls) from 6 – 7pm. This event is for parents/guardians only. Teachers will schedule Zoom meetings that pertain to individual classrooms, in conjunction with these times. Links will be sent in advance.

"When will my child be able to meet his/her teacher?"

Meet the Teacher will be recorded, with a link to the video emailed the week of August 14. We hope you will be able to view the video with your child as many times as it takes to feel comfortable with our first day of school. Teachers will also share information regarding a supply drop-off window, scheduled in conjunction with our Preschool Family Picnics on August 16 or 17. Watch your email for more details!

"When does preschool begin?"

The first *full* days of school will be on Monday, August 21 (M/W/F & M-Th classes), Tuesday, August 22 (T/Th classes) or Friday, August 25 (Friday-only classes). You will be asked to hug your child at the door and let them begin this new adventure in their classrooms. We promise to take good care of them!

"What paperwork must I complete before the first day of preschool?"

✓ You will need to create (or update) an ePACT account for each child that will share important medical, allergy, and emergency contact information with us, identify authorized persons for pickup, and upload a picture of your child.

✓ Copies of your child's vaccination records and birth certificates will also need to be uploaded to your child's ePACT account

This information is stored on a secure, web-based system that our staff will have access to in case of an emergency. You will be emailed a link to the ePACT Network upon registration and must create/complete the account online.

"When is the paperwork due?"

Your ePACT account must be established online *before your child participates in our preschool program*.

"What if my child is sick or will be absent?"

Please call the Teacher Hotline to report absences: 630-513-4325 (PCC) or 630-513-4398 (HK)

"What should my child bring to school each day?"

Each day, your child will need:

- ☐ Backpack
- ☐ 2-pocket folder
- ☐ Snack (or lunch—Pre-K classes only),
- ☐ Pre-filled water bottle
- ☐ A change of clothes
- ☐ Weather-appropriate outerwear
- ☐ A readiness to participate in new experiences!

**Please be sure ALL items are labeled with your child's first & last name.*