Parent Handbook

2022-2023

Waconia Community Education

Waconia Wildcat Preschool

Waconia Enrichment Center

Early Childhood Office

520 Industrial Blvd. Waconia, MN

(952) 442-0613

Community Education Office (952) 442-0610

www.waconiacommunityed.org

Welcome to Waconia Wildcat Preschool!

ISD 110 Early Childhood Office
(952) 442-0613
520 Industrial Blvd.
Office Hours: 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Early Childhood Supervisor
Sara Linsley
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Early Childhood Administrative Assistant
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ISD 110 Community Education
(952) 442-0610
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Community Education Director
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Preschool Location
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520 Industrial Blvd.

ISD 110 Preschool Teachers
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Early Childhood Special Education
(952) 442-0600

Waconia Community Education connects, empowers, and enriches lives through lifelong learning and service to our community. Early Childhood Education is a core component of Community Education where families and young children begin their relationship with Waconia Schools. We recognize that every student has unique needs. It is our goal that we offer the best learning environment for your child. Academic and support specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to deliver classroom instruction. This collaboration is designed to support each child who comes through our door to reach his/her full potential.

Waconia Wildcat Preschool provides innovative classrooms where creativity and imagination flourish. Our inclusive programs help all children discover the joy of learning. Your child will be immersed in a stimulating environment that encourages physical, intellectual, and emotional development through play based investigation, purposeful questioning and exploration for deep learning and a seamless transition to kindergarten. Wildcat preschool aligns with the ISD 110 K-12 curriculum and initiatives. We work closely with Early Childhood Special Education and kindergarten teachers to foster a successful transition from preschool to kindergarten.

Greetings,

ISD 110 is excited to welcome you and your family to Waconia Wildcat Preschool! We are dedicated to providing a great learning experience for your child. Our staff will be working hard to create a love for learning and meet your child's individual needs.

This handbook is intended to be a resource for you. We have included important contact information, descriptions of services and policies that apply to students and families. If you have further questions, we welcome you to contact our office.

Thank you for choosing Waconia Wildcat Preschool for your child's early learning.

Sara Linsley
Early Childhood Program Supervisor

About Waconia Wildcat Preschool

At ISD110, our mission is to allow students to explore their passions and create success. In early childhood we give children a high quality preschool experience in partnership with parents. We strive to educate, collaborate, challenge, empower and support families, nurture development and treat all with respect.

We believe:

- Parents are a child's first and most important teachers.
- By nurturing young learners and providing structure, licensed teachers are able to support young learners and their parents.
- Research based curriculum embedded with standardized goals will provide learning to ensure kindergarten readiness.
- Classroom environments should be carefully designed to support developmentally appropriate exploration for preschool children.
- Play opens the world of learning for the preschool child.

We are a Pyramid Model School

Pyramid model is a social and emotional framework incorporated into the classroom to ensure high quality classrooms for all students. Preschool staff members are supported in implementing this framework through the Minnesota Centers of Excellence. Children benefit from this program through learning lifelong skills such as: friendship, self-regulation, problem solving and labeling emotions.

Parent Aware

Waconia Wildcat Preschool is a four star Parent Aware rated program. Parent Aware star ratings help parents find programs that go above and beyond to prepare children for school and life. To earn this top rating, a program must demonstrate the following:

- Conducts ongoing assessment of student's progress
- Continually adapts lesson plans and goals to meet individual needs
- Regularly updates parents on child's progress
- Provides staff with annual professional development relevant to early

Back to School Checklist

- Schedule an appointment for a listening conference with your child's teacher
- Double check that all forms have been uploaded in Infinite Campus
- Attend open house
- Turn in electronic payment form and supply fee
- Confirm transportation
- Make tuition payments by the 1st of each month

Questions?
Brenda Buesgens
(952) 442-0613
bbuesgens@isd110.org

Program Information

Tuition

Waconia Wildcat Preschool monthly tuition should be paid **on or before the 1st of each month** by cash, check or credit card and submitted to the Early Childhood or the Community Education office. The billing policies are as follows:

- You **will not** receive a monthly invoice.
- Electronic payment is available. If you are interested in this option, please download the automatic payment form from our website or ask the Early Childhood office for a copy.
- All preschool classes will be charged a registration fee, payable at the time of registration
- Tuition credit or refunds will not be given for school holidays, school cancellations due to inclement weather or other emergency closings, vacations or illness
- Please see the ISD 110 Safe Schools Plan for policies specific to COVID-19

Children currently enrolled will be given priority registration for the next school year. Registration will begin in March.

Scholarships

Individuals or families who live in ISD 110 boundaries and meet certain income eligibility guidelines may qualify for a 50% fee reduction on their preschool tuition. Scholarship forms are available at the Early Childhood office. Free tuition through a Pathways I or II scholarship may be available for participants who meet income guidelines and complete an application. Please contact the Early Childhood office for guidelines and application forms.

Past Due Tuition Policy

Parent/guardian will be notified of the past due tuition via email, phone call and/or invoice. All accounts maintaining a past due balance after the 15th of the month will be assessed a late payment fee of $10. Continued late payments or failure to pay will result in a hold on future community education registrations and may result in discontinuance from the preschool program. Please contact the program supervisor if you are having a hardship and together we will work to find a solution.

Cancellation Policy

Notice of cancellation needs to be received two weeks prior to withdrawal or participants will be required to pay the difference. The registration and supply fees are non-refundable.

Waconia Wildcat Preschool Calendar

Wildcat Preschool generally follows the ISD 110 School Year Calendar; however, some adjustments may be made. A calendar can be found on the school district website using the link below..

ISD 110 Calendars

Health Policy

Your child is too sick to be at school if they:

- Have a fever over 100 degrees
- Vomited or had diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- Have an undiagnosed rash (not including known, recurrent, non-communicable skin conditions
- Have red, crusty, weepy eyes until antibiotics have been started
- Have an undiagnosed or communicable cough until doctor clears you for return to school (not including allergies, asthma non-communicable ongoing conditions)
- Are not feeling well enough to engage and learn at school

Health guidelines specific to COVID-19 can be found in the ISD 110 Safe Schools Plan.

Allergies

We work hard to make our school a safe environment for every student. Please inform the staff of any allergies your child has so we can take appropriate precautions to prevent exposure. You will be provided a form to fill out giving our staff instructions on how to proceed if your child comes into contact with those allergens. We are able to store an EpiPen you provide if needed for your child.

Immunizations

State law mandates that an immunization record be kept on file for each child in our program. The immunization form is due before the start of the school year. If you are a conscientious objector, a notarized immunization form must be on file with the school district. We have two certified notaries employed in the district who can help with this requirement. Free or reduced cost immunizations for children are available through Carver Co. Public Health at 952-361-1329.

Medical Emergency

Every child attending Waconia Wildcat Preschool needs to have a completed district registration through Infinite Campus. This will ensure that we have contact information in the event of an emergency. In the event of an accident or medical emergency during school hours, parents will be notified by phone if medical assistance is needed or told of the incident at the end of class, if medical assistance is not needed. An accident report will be

shared with parents as needed. In the event that your child needs immediate medical attention, we will call the ambulance and route your child to the hospital you listed on your emergency contact. Parents will be notified immediately.

Attendance

Attendance is important. Please make every effort to get your child to school every scheduled day and arrive on time. If your child is unable to attend class please call or email your child's teacher or the Early Childhood office. If you are receiving a Pathways Scholarship you may not miss more than 12 school days, or your grant may be revoked.

Express Drop-off & Pick-up

Parents will drop their child off with a staff person at an assigned door and proceed through the parking lot to the street. Parents will que up and wait for a staff member to come to your car to help your child out of the car and into the building. As soon as your child exits your car, please move through the parking lot onto the street as safely as possible. Please prepare your child for this and make drop-off brief, so traffic can continue to move forward.

At pick up, parents will que up in a line and wait for a staff person to bring your child to the car. You will need to get out of the car to buckle your child into their car seat. Then quickly return to your seat and proceed to the exit.

Heavy congestion is likely, so your patience and help to keep traffic flowing is imperative.

Late Pick-up

Please arrive promptly at dismissal time. Arriving late causes unnecessary worry for many children. Our teachers have tight schedules and must be allowed time to prepare for their classes. In the case of an emergency please call the Early Childhood Office at (952) 442-0613. A child who is not picked up on time may be brought to Kids Company and the family will incur the charges.

Transportation

Bussing is available for qualified families and/or for a fee. Koch Bus Company provides vans to transport preschool children. If your child is riding the bus, please be ready and waiting at least 5 minutes prior to the pick-up and drop-off times. The drivers must see an adult at drop-off to ensure the safety of the child. If an adult is not present the child will be brought back to school and parents will be notified. A fee for extended care may be assessed in this situation.

Classroom Visits

Parents are welcome to volunteer in our classrooms. We encourage family engagement. There are several opportunities for volunteering. If this is something you are interested in, please speak with your child's teacher. If your child is experiencing separation anxiety, it might be best that you wait until your child has adjusted to school before volunteering in the classroom.

Parent Communication

Communication is important for a successful school year and is two way between school and home. We want to partner with you and understand you have valuable information about your child. We will communicate our classroom activities and want to hear from you anytime you feel it is necessary.

- Calendars will be posted on the district website www.isd110.org.
- Emails will be sent from your children's teacher with special updates and alerts.
- Monthly and/or weekly newsletters will be shared electronically. If you prefer a paper newsletter please let your teacher know.
- Most teachers will use an app called SeeSaw. SeeSaw is an additional form of communication and is used to share daily classroom happenings.

Conferences

Conferences are held two times per year and the dates are noted on the school calendar. This is a wonderful time to connect with your child's teacher and share about social, emotional and academic achievements for your preschooler. During these conferences teachers will share observation notes and samples of your child's work.

Wildcat Preschool uses Teaching Strategies Gold as our formal assessment, as well as success criteria selected through the MN Early Childhood Indicators of Progress. Teachers will continuously monitor and support every child's development.

Preschool Parents Connect

Wildcat Preschool parents are invited to a preschool parents connect opportunity that will meet once a month. Parents of preschoolers will come together to share joys and concerns and learn in a fun and relaxing atmosphere. There will be topics of interest to discuss and learn about, but mostly this will be a time for open sharing to get to know each other. The group will be led by our parent liaison and the early childhood program supervisor. Childcare is offered for a fee. Register under District 110 Preschool Programs.

Please check the Community Education catalog for specific dates and times.

Behavior Guidance

Most children do very well in the preschool environment. Our licensed teachers understand the developmental level and needs of children and have appropriate expectations for young children. They are attentive to the children and give verbal and often visual cues to teach behavior expectations. Teachers positively reinforce helpful behavior, acknowledge feelings, use tools and strategies to teach self-regulation and provide a framework for problem solving. If behavior escalates, parents will be informed and consulted about the issue, and a behavior plan will be developed.

Special Education Services

Wildcat Preschools works in full partnership with the district's Early Childhood Special Education program. Qualifying children will receive extra support and services to help them succeed at school. If your child's teacher or yourself have any concerns about your child, the ECSE team can be consulted and a plan to support qualifying children will be created.

Early Childhood Screening

Early Childhood Screening is a free, developmental check required by the State of Minnesota for kindergarten entrance.

Screening appointments:

- Last approximately 60 minutes with parent observation during the entire appointment
- Are best when complete at the age of 3-4 years
- Check your child's height, weight, hearing, vision, immunization record, coordination, large muscle and small motor skills, speech, learning development, and social/emotional skills
- Involves playful activities that make it an enjoyable experience for your child, while providing valuable information to ensure development is on track
- Are not tests. Screening simply helps identify any needs that may require additional support before your child enters kindergarten. Studies show that early intervention can make the biggest impact on development.
- Your screener will discuss the results of the screening with you immediately and answer any questions you may have

To schedule an appointment, go to:
Early Childhood Screening or call (952) 442-0613.

Early Childhood Advisory Council

This is a group of parents and staff that meet monthly during the school year to support, advise, and take action on behalf of Waconia Early Childhood Programs. This may include such things as planning events, fundraising or teacher appreciation. If you are interested in joining this group please contact or (952) 442-0664.

Snack Time

All Wildcat Preschool sessions include snack time as an important learning time of our day. Familes take turns providing nutritious snacks for their child's class. Guidelines will be shared with parents by classroom teachers. All food brought into school for children is required to be commercially prepared. ***All classrooms are peanut free.*** Individual classrooms may have additional guidelines due to allergies and you will be notified in that case.

Toilet Training

All children are required to be fully toilet trained, unless a special need is involved. If a special need is present, a plan will be created with the parents and may need to include medical information from your child's physician.

Backpacks

Children are requested to bring a school-sized backpack each day. Please make sure to check your child's backpack daily.

Dressing for School

We ask that you dress your child comfortably for play. It is our desire that children participate fully in large muscle opportunities, art, sensory play, science experiences and nature play, which can be messy. Please supply jackets, snow pants, boots, mittens, and hats as needed. You may also want to apply sunscreen and bug repellant to your child before school. Please provide a full change of clothes for your child in case of potty accidents or spills. A gallon ziplock bag works well to store the extra clothes in your child's backpack. ***Please check and empty the backpack daily***.

Curriculum

Creative Curriculum: This is our base curriculum. Creative Curriculum includes developmentally appropriate goals and objectives for children within four main categories of interest: social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language. Teachers use Creative Curriculum as their guide to set-up their classrooms, observe children and ensure they are teaching to the whole child.

Second Step: This is our social-emotional curriculum. Second Step is research-based, teacher-informed, and classroom-tested to promote the social-emotional development, safety, and well-being of young children. When children enter kindergarten with self-regulation and well-rounded social-emotional skills, they are set-up for success.

Fundations: This is our language arts curriculum. Fundations assists children with phonemic awareness, phonics and letter formation.

120B.20 Parental Curriculum Review

Each school district shall have a procedure for a parent, guardian, or an adult student, 18 years of age or older, to review the content of the instructional materials to be provided to a minor child or to an adult student and, if the parent, guardian, or adult student objects to the content, to make reasonable arrangements with school personnel for alternative instruction. Alternative instruction may be provided by the parent, guardian, or adult student if the alternative instruction, if any, offered by the school board does not meet the concerns of the parent, guardian, or adult student. The school board is not required to pay for the costs of alternative instruction provided by a parent, guardian, or adult student. School personnel may not impose an academic or other penalty upon a student merely for arranging alternative instruction under this section. School personnel may evaluate and assess the quality of the student's work.

Field Trips
Field Trips are planned throughout the year based on curriculum. School bus transportation will be used when needed. All field trips will require a completed permission slip and will have opportunities for parent chaperones. Field trips will happen during regular school hours.

Nature Play
We believe children need to connect with nature to support healthy development. Wildcat Discovery Park is designed to be a place where children can connect with trees, shrubs, perennials, vines and edible gardens. This outdoor classroom space will be used often in all seasons.

Holidays
We approach holidays with cultural sensitivity. Please be open with concerns you have about what might be included in these days and potential conflict to your personal beliefs. With open communication we have found culturally appropriate ways to celebrate a variety of holidays within our classroom. If you have information about celebrations that you would like to share with the class, please let your child's teacher know to see how we might share those ideas.

Photos and Video
We take many photos in class. A portion of these photos are used as part of our curriculum and classroom management. Other photos are used in promotional literature or on our programs Facebook page. If for any reason you are not comfortable having your child's photo taken in class for these purposes, please let a staff member know so that we can offer you an opt out form. In addition, professional photos will be taken of every child in the fall. Purchase of these photos is optional.

Safety Guidelines
As part of our ongoing commitment to student safety, we practice fire drills, tornado drills, and lock down drills throughout the year. When we conduct safety drills, visitors, parents/guardians and anyone else in the building are expected to participate. If you are in a building during a drill, follow the instructions of the early childhood or building staff.

Mandated reporting
Staff are mandated by state law to report any instance of observed or suspected neglect and physical or sexual abuse of children in the home, school, or community setting.

Weather Emergencies
Any changes made to planned school hours will be posted on the district website. Local news broadcasts will scroll the information at the bottom of the screen or can provide a text, email or call if changes are made to your designated school district. A 2-hour delay to our school cancels morning preschool, afternoon preschool classes will be held. The district's weather line is (952) 442-0640 which provides a recorded message. Tuition refunds due to weather will not be given.

ISD 110 Website

Process for Addressing a Concern

For concerns you would like to be addressed. Please utilize the following protocol:

1. Contact the person directly in charge of the area of concern. Ex: the classroom teacher.
2. If the concern is not addressed to your satisfaction, contact the supervisor of the person directly in charge. Ex: the principal of the building
3. If the concern is still not addressed to your satisfaction, contact the next person in the chain of command. Ex: the superintendent of the school district
4. Finally, if the concern is still not addressed to your satisfaction, contact the school board chair or a school board member of your choice.