



Springfield Platteview Community Schools
Preschool Operation Guide

2023-2024 School Year

Important Phone Numbers:

Springfield Early Education Center (SEEC)
Springfield Elementary School(402) 253-2245
940 Main Street, Springfield, NE 68059
Ms. Claire Johnson, Preschool Teacher
Dr. Kaela Heneger, Principal

Westmont Early Education Center (WEEC)
Westmont Elementary School.....(402) 895-9602
13210 Glenn Street, Omaha, NE 68138
Mrs. Megan Moore, Preschool Teacher
Mrs. Melissa Hasty, Principal

Early Childhood Speech Language
Pathologist.....(402) 895-9602
Mrs. Leslie Wilson

Transportation.....(402) 884-4025

District Administration Office.....(402) 592-1300
Dr. Ryan Saunders, Superintendent
Mrs. Jaci Lucas, Director of Special Services
765 Main Street, Springfield, NE 68059

Welcome to the Springfield Platteview Community Schools' Preschool Program

The Springfield Platteview Community Schools (SPCS) early childhood team would like to welcome you and your child! We believe YOU are your child's first and most important teacher. Our goal is to provide an environment that builds upon the foundation you have established with your child. We are here to partner with you, to encourage your child's growth and development. Together we will make a great team!

SPCS Philosophy of Early Childhood Education and Intervention:

We believe quality early childhood programs nurture the continuing growth of children's knowledge and understanding of themselves and their world. Quality early childhood programs provide a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment that facilitates learning and development. SPCS early childhood programs recognize that children and families are individuals, and that every child and family is unique.

We believe children develop skills at their own rate. What your child CAN do will be the starting point in developing your child's program. Children need a structured, child-directed environment that fosters cognitive, social, self-help, physical, and communication skills. We believe in a process-centered approach. What is important is the process by which children discover and learn, not just the end product.

Preschool Hours

(See District Preschool Calendar)

A.M. Session- Tuesday-Friday 8:15am-11:15am

P.M. Session- Monday-Friday 12:00pm-3:00pm

**Please note: The classroom will not be open before class starts. This will allow the staff to prepare for class and also to hold any meetings.

Pick up/Drop off:

Students may be dropped off/picked up from the Preschool Classroom Entrance. Please drop off/pick up your student on time. The classroom door opens at the start of class time and will remain open for 5 minutes. After this time, the door will be locked, as preschool staff will be assisting children with classroom procedures. If you arrive late, please enter and check in at the main office. All doors to the school are locked. The school's main door has a buzzer system and you will need to push the button to be buzzed in.

Safety of our students is our number one priority. Your child will be released only to parents/guardians and those persons listed as emergency contacts. If someone else is going to be picking up/dropping off your student, it must be in writing from you. Please let the person picking up

your student know that the teacher may ask for photo identification to confirm that it is the correct person.

Please drop off and pick up your student on time.

Springfield Early Education Center (SEEC): Preschoolers enter the classroom from Door F on the east side of the elementary building. Please walk your child up to the door and wait for the teacher/Educational Assistant to let you in.

Westmont Early Education Center (WEEC): Preschoolers enter the classroom from the west entrance at the front of the school. Please walk your child up to the door and wait for the teacher/Educational Assistant to let you in.

Special Education Transportation:

If your child is eligible for special education transportation, please contact transportation when your child does NOT need to be picked up/dropped off. If you require a change in transportation arrangements, you need to contact transportation to make those arrangements. It may take 5-10 business days for the arrangements to be made. The number for transportation is 402-884-4025.

Attendance/Health:

Springfield Platteview Community Schools Early Childhood program believes in the importance of regular school attendance even at this early age. Regular attendance during the preschool years is just as important as regular attendance for later grades. Research shows that early regular school attendance results in improved success not only in later grades but as adults. Learning for a child can only occur when they are in class and have access to the developmentally appropriate curriculum. The Early Childhood curriculum builds on each day's activities and is important for the learning process. If a child misses school frequently, they have missed an opportunity to learn and grow. Parents are asked to contact the school if a student is going to be absent.

We ask you to please follow the SPCS Elementary Student and Parent Handbook guidelines concerning illness. The guideline states, "Students who have been ill with vomiting, diarrhea, severe headaches, excessive coughing and excessive nasal drainage should not return to school until symptoms subside and their temperature is below 100 degrees for 24 hours without medication." If your child becomes ill at school, you will be called and expected to come for him/her as soon as possible. If you cannot be reached, the person(s) indicated on the emergency card will be notified.

If your child has more than 10 unexcused absences, SPCS reserves the right to discontinue preschool services (for children who qualify for special education, your IEP team will be required to hold a

meeting). Please communicate with your child's teacher on a regular basis concerning any attendance concerns.

Cancellation of School:

The school district will use our automated text messaging system to notify all parents of school cancellations/changes. This information will also be posted on social media (Facebook/Twitter).

Birthday/Party Invitations, Treats & Celebrations:

Birthday/party invitations can be passed out at preschool if the **ENTIRE class** is invited to the party. If your child is not inviting all of the children in their class, we will not pass out invitations at preschool. You will need to make other arrangements for sending out invitations.

Bringing birthday treats or prizes is optional for parents/students. All foods offered on the school campus needs to meet or exceed the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. This includes school lunches and treats brought in or sent to school by parents or guardians. All treats and prizes must be approved by the classroom teacher or building administration in advance. We are asking parents to choose snacks that meet the USDA Smart Snacks in school nutrition standards. The most convenient birthday treats are healthy, easy to hand out, do not require refrigeration, and are easy to clean up. If you choose to provide a treat, please provide the teacher with any serving items necessary to distribute the treats such as plates, napkins, etc.

There will be special activities over the course of the year where you will have an opportunity to send treats to preschool. Due to student food allergies, we will be very strict on the district policy of NO HOMEMADE GOODS unless your child's teacher has a special activity planned that requires food. Please remember to notify your child's teacher of any allergies. **All donations must be store bought, sealed and still in the package so that we can double-check the ingredients!** Thank you for your contributions!

Preschool Snack Program

SPCS Preschool provides a healthy snack in accordance with the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 11 requirements and within the USDA Child Nutrition Guidelines as part of your child's monthly tuition. The snack menu will be available monthly.

If your child has special dietary requirements, you are welcome to talk with your child's teacher and arrange to send a healthy snack to preschool.

Suggested Supplies (including clothing):

Families are encouraged to provide your child with a backpack they will bring to preschool every day. This backpack should be large enough to accommodate preschool projects and to an 8 x 11

folder—mini-backpacks are usually not large enough for all of the creations your child will make over the course of the year! If you are unable to provide a backpack for your child, please let your early childhood provider know.

Please send an extra change of clothes (shorts/pants, shirt, underwear, socks, etc.) to school, even if your child is potty trained or if he/she rarely has accidents. The extra clothes are good for days your child may get wet or messy during play/activities. If your child wears pull-ups or diapers, we would ask that you keep your child's backpack stocked with an adequate supply, including baby wipes. The change of clothes (including diapers/pull-ups/wipes) can remain in the backpack and travel from home to school daily, if that is your preference.

Dress your child in simple, washable clothing. Much time is spent on the floor and working with messy art materials. Closed-toe shoes make playing on the playground much easier and safer for the children. Open-toe shoes and "flip flops" are discouraged due to safety concerns. Please send your child to school in appropriate clothing for the weather—we will go outside and play, weather permitting.

We encourage self-help at toilet time. For this purpose it is helpful that children are dressed in clothing that is manageable for them to pull up, down, snap, zip, etc. Label all removable clothing such as coats, hats, mittens and your child's backpack with their FULL name.

Please make sure your child brings only necessary items to school (backpack, jacket, folder, etc.). Items from home (toys, stuffed animals, blankets, etc.) will not be allowed to be removed from backpacks. Please be sure to check your child's backpack every day!

Home Visits:

SPCS abides by Nebraska Department of Education Rule 11 Regulations for Prekindergarten Programs. One of the requirements is that 2 home visits are conducted each year. The home visits are designed to last about 20 minutes.

The intent of the home visits is to build positive relationships with families, and to partner together to support your child. Research indicates that positive interactions during home visits lead to higher student growth and achievement in the classroom, along with more parent involvement in schools.

Home visits may be completed at another location, but please discuss this with your child's teacher if you would like to make these alternate arrangements.

Communication:

Communication between home and school is very important to the success of our program. If at any time you have questions or concerns about your child's preschool day, do not hesitate to send a note in your child's backpack, call, or email the teacher. A communication folder will be in your child's backpack every day. This will hold projects that have been completed, as well as any notes that need to go home to parents.

Teachers check backpacks daily and look for notes from parents. It is important for parents to check your child's backpack daily. Notes in Class Dojo will be the primary method of daily communication. If you have an emergency or need to get information to the teacher immediately, please call the school office.

Please check with your child's preschool teacher for the best time/method for contacting them. The following are some ways to share information:

*Email and Phone Numbers (listed in the "important phone numbers" section)

*Parent Teacher Conferences/home visits: There will be opportunities to meet with your child's early childhood teacher during the school year to discuss your child's progress.

*Progress Reports: For those children who have Individualized Education Plans (IEP), progress reports will be sent home at the end of each quarter and annual IEP meetings will be held.

*Teaching Strategies GOLD assessments reports are sent home in November and at the end of the school year.

Class Dojo

The main form of communication we use in our classroom is an app called Class Dojo. This is an app that only members of our classroom and their families have access to. We will post pictures and updates throughout each day as well as any reminders. A permission form for Class Dojo must be completed to participate.

If your child's contact/personal information changes in any way, it is critical that you communicate these changes to your child's teacher and/or building secretary. This may include any changes in address, phone number, emergency contact, guardianship, child care location, transportation, and custody arrangements.

Discipline:

Our preschool promotes positive behavior supports and actively teaches children how to solve simple social problems using a variety of strategies. You can find more information about our framework for social-emotional development at the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>.

"Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe, Be Kind"- we teach our preschoolers these expectations across all aspects of their preschool day. We will send strategies home with you so that you can reinforce what your child is learning in school.

Children will be encouraged to learn self-discipline and practice social problem solving strategies. The following strategies are examples of what may be implemented: modeling of appropriate behaviors, redirection, verbal prompts, self-talk, planned ignoring, review of classroom rules, use of visual cues and supports, and facilitating peer mediation.

Each early childhood classroom uses multiple levels of social-emotional supports intended to support healthy social-emotional development, and the development of critical peer interaction strategies. SPCS teachers have completed training in The Well Managed Classroom from the Boys Town Education Model which supports using positive behavior strategies and positive reinforcement in the classroom. You will have an opportunity to learn more about the positive supports/strategies used in your child's classroom over the course of the preschool year.

Residency:

Families MUST reside within the Springfield Platteview Community Schools District boundaries to attend district preschool and receive services from SPCS staff. If you consider a move during the school year, please talk with your child's educational team prior to the move. They can help you determine whether your new location is within our district boundaries.

If you do move out of the SPCS boundaries, your child will be allowed to complete the semester in which they are currently enrolled. **They will NOT be "automatically" allowed to continue in SPCS for Kindergarten.** If you move out of our District and wish for your child to continue in SPCS Schools for Kindergarten, you MUST complete the application for option enrollment that can be found on our District website at spcsne.org. This does not guarantee your child will be able to continue in SPCS for Kindergarten. There are specific deadlines for application, and it is your responsibility to meet those deadlines.

If you have questions regarding your residency status, please contact our District Administration Office. Please note: Option Enrollment laws do not presently apply to early childhood-age students.

The SPCS preschool abides by all Nebraska regulations regarding immunizations, health physicals and birth certificate documentation. If you have questions regarding any of these issues, please contact your child's early childhood provider.

What Can I Expect My Child to Learn in Preschool?

Springfield Platteview Community Schools is proud to offer high-quality early childhood learning environments that will engage your child in meaningful and structured play opportunities that enhance their learning.

Over the course of the preschool year your child can expect to experience a variety of developmentally appropriate activities which:

- Develop social skills including how to participate in a group setting, playing with other students, and relating to adults
- Nurture budding independence and self help skills
- Provide opportunities to develop executive function and self-regulation skills
- Engage in activities that develop fine and gross motor skills including outdoor play time when the weather permits
- Provide pre-literacy skills through exposure to literature and the alphabet
- Provide pre-mathematical skills through exposure to numbers and a variety of counting and measuring activities
- Encourage expressive and receptive language skills within the context of routine classroom activities including playtime

Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum

Preschool students will engage in this rich curriculum that encourages learning in everyday experiences while taking into consideration individual differences and unique needs of every child. In an inquiry-based learning model, all preschoolers can be successful as they are building on their prior knowledge to gain new knowledge. In inquiry-based learning, preschoolers generate questions about specific topics, make observations and gather data to answer the questions, collect, analyze and interpret their findings, and then make predictions about what might happen in the future. The Creative Curriculum is aligned with the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for 3-5 year olds.

Along with the developmental domains listed above, the SPCS preschool classroom curriculum facilitates specific instruction in social skills, interaction with other children, literacy, math concepts, and fine motor/pre-handwriting activities that are developmentally appropriate and aligned with the curriculum used in Kindergarten.

In addition to Creative Curriculum, SPCS utilizes the following supportive preschool curriculums:

- Handwriting Without Tears to support fine motor and handwriting development.
- Heggerty to support phonemic awareness
- Second Step to support social emotional learning

Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment

Your child will participate in the general education assessment which, at the early childhood level is Teaching Strategies GOLD. Results are provided based on widely held expectations. Widely held expectations are criterion-referenced: your child's performance is compared to specific research-based milestones of child development—not to the performance of other children. GOLD determines whether each child has achieved specific skills or concepts.

GOLD is intended to answer:

- Are children performing where research says they should (i.e., developmental expectations/widely held expectations)?
- Are children growing/adding skills?

Your child's development will be monitored through careful observation and you will receive updates regarding your child's progress throughout the year. You are also an important participant in this process, and we will ask for your input and observations regarding your child's skills. You will also have a chance to discuss your child's assessment at parent/teacher conferences and home visits.

Field Trips

The preschool program will participate in field trips that are aligned to the preschool curriculum. Teachers will share more information about the field trips as they are scheduled.

Early Childhood Advisory Team

The SPCS Early Childhood Advisory Team is part of Planning Region Team 3. The advisory team is a representative group of early childhood administrators and teachers, services coordinators, community partners, and parents. This team meets 3-4 times a year to collaborate in the development and review of early childhood programs and resources for families and young children. If you are interested in learning more about the Early Childhood Advisory Team and/or are interested in participating as a member of the team, please call the Director of Special Services, Jacci Lucas, at 402-592-1300.