



Dallas Center-Grimes
Community School District

Dallas Center – Grimes Preschool Program

Program & District
Policies and Procedures

Heritage Elementary
Kids Korner

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Dallas Center-Grimes CSD Program Policies & Procedures

I. WELCOME TO DALLAS CENTER-GRIMES EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Dallas Center-Grimes program's goal is to provide a high quality preschool program meeting individual needs, including children with disabilities and those from a diverse background. The preschool provides a rich learning environment that encourages natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. This is an opportunity for all three and four-year-old children to take part in active learning experiences to build readiness skills. The preschool program has adopted and meets the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards administered by the Iowa Department of Education. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are used to guide expectations and instructional practices.

II. MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND GOALS

The mission of Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District, a partnership of school staff, parents, and community, is to prepare students to be lifelong learners who can become successful and productive future citizens. This will be accomplished by recognizing the value of each individual and promoting academic and personal growth in a challenging and caring environment.

Dallas Center-Grimes Mission Statement:

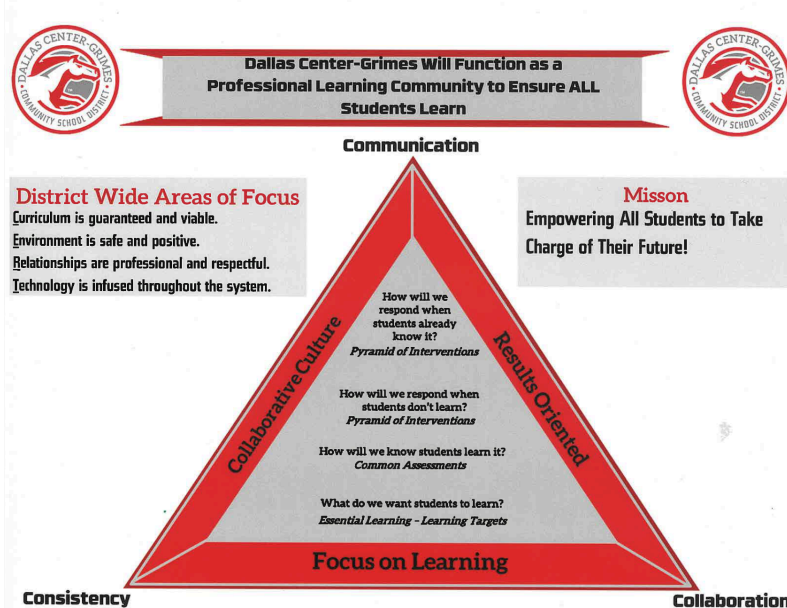
"Empowering students to take charge of their futures!"

The **fundamental purpose** of our school is to ensure that your child learns.

There are four main questions that drive our work:

1. What do we want students to learn?
2. How will we know if they learned it?
3. How will we respond if they don't learn it?
4. How will we respond if they already know it?

The following visual summarizes our district focus.



Goals for DCG preschoolers:

- Children will show competence in social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development skills.
- Children will be enthusiastic and curious learners.
- Children will be safe and healthy.

Goals for DCG families:

- Families will feel welcome in the classroom and school.
- Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help students be better prepared to learn to read and write.

III. ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY

Children must be three or four years of age prior to September 15th of the current school year.

Student and Parental Rights

The Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District does not discriminate in its educational programs and activities on the basis of a student's disability. If it is determined that your child has a qualifying disability in need of accommodations, you have the right to the following:

- Participation of your child in school district programs and activities, including extracurricular programs and activities, to the maximum extent appropriate, free of discrimination based upon the student's disability and at the same level as students without disabilities
- Receipt of free educational services to the extent they are provided students without disabilities
- Receipt of information about your child and your child's educational programs and activities in your native language
- Notice of identification of your child as having a qualifying disability for which accommodations may need to be made and notice prior to evaluation and placement of your child and right to periodically request a re-evaluation of your child
- Inspect and review your child's educational records including a right to copy those records for a reasonable fee; you also have a right to ask the school district to amend your child's educational records if you feel the information in the records is misleading or inaccurate; should the school district refuse to amend the records, you have a right to a hearing and to place an explanatory letter in your child's file explaining why you feel the records are misleading or inaccurate
- Hearing before an impartial hearing officer if you disagree with your child's evaluation or placement; you have a right to counsel at the hearing and have the decision of the impartial hearing officer reviewed

Hours

Classes meet for three hours each day, four days per week. Children attend on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Students do not attend on Wednesdays. This allows for parent meetings and home visits, planning time for the teaching staff, and collaboration with community agencies. The preschool follows the Dallas Center-Grimes school calendar.

AM Section: 8:15 - 11:15 3 yr olds/4 yr olds
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

PM Section: 12:15 - 3:15 4 yr olds
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

Students may arrive between 7:45 and 8:15 AM. Students will not be permitted to leave the school grounds after arrival unless escorted by school personnel or parents/guardians. Students who return to class or arrive after the school day has begun must be accompanied by a parent/guardian, or the office must receive a phone call or a signed note from the parent/guardian.

General Information

The maximum class size for the 3 year old program is 16 children and the class size for the 4 year old program is 20 children in each section. The staff-child ratio of 1:10 will be maintained at all times to encourage adult-child interactions and promote activity among children.

Inclusion

The preschool program provides all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs, a quality preschool experience. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, all children, and their families. The preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District offers career and technical education programs in the following areas:

- Agricultural, Food, and Natural Resources
- Applied Science, Technology, Engineering, and Manufacturing
- Arts, Communication, and Information Systems
- Business, Finance, Marketing and Management
- Human Services

It is the policy of the Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), or socioeconomic status (for programs) in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities or hiring and employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator:

Dr. Greg Carenza, Associate Superintendent

Dallas Center Grimes Community School District
2405 W 1st St., PO Box 680, Grimes, Iowa 50111
Phone: 515.992.3866
Email: greg.carenza@dcgschools.com

Director of the Region VII Office of Civil Rights

Department of Education
Citigroup Center, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475
Chicago, IL 60661-7204
Phone: 312.730.1560
Fax: 312.730.1576
Email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov

Director of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission

Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, Iowa
Phone: 1.800.457.4416

IV. A CHILD'S DAY

Preschool Staff

Program Administrator

The early childhood administrator supervises the preschool program. The administrator meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

Teacher

A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an Early Childhood Endorsement or an Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement is assigned to each preschool classroom.

Teacher Associate

A full-time teacher associate in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher associate will have specialized training in early childhood education.

School Nurse

The preschool will have the assistance of the school nurse. She maintains student health records and attends to health needs. She is available for parent consultation when necessary.

Support Staff

Heartland AEA 11 support staff provide resources and assistance to the teacher and classroom upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist, or others.

Daily Activities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day:

Large and Small Group Activities	Self-Directed Play	Snack
<i>Learning Center Activities:</i> Art, Science, Writing, Games, Books, Toys, and Pretend Play	Story Time	Technology
	Outdoor Activities	Individual Activities

A daily schedule of activities and snacks is posted in the classroom. Daily notes and weekly newsletters will be sent home to families.

Curriculum

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. It is a process by which learners obtain knowledge and understanding while developing life skills. It is continually revised and evaluated to make learning fun and exciting.

It is the policy of this district that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, and physical disability. The curriculum should foster

respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society.

The preschool program uses *Creative Curriculum*, a research and evidence-based comprehensive curriculum designed for three and four-year-olds. It addresses all areas of early learning: language and literacy, math, science, physical skills, and social skills. Delivering curriculum based on studies familiar and meaningful to young children such as community helpers, nutrition, and transportation. It provides children an opportunity to learn in a variety of ways - through play, problem solving, movement, art, music, drawing and writing, listening, and storytelling.

Assessment

It is the school district's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. The results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. A family's culture and a child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child's growth and development. All results will be kept confidential and placed in each child's file.

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- *Teaching Strategies Gold* continues to align with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. It records student progress in all developmental areas three times a year.
- Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- *Really Great Reading* screener
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data, and child work samples collected on an on-going basis.
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 is completed by parents at the beginning of the school year. This questionnaire provides information regarding the child's developmental skills upon entry into the program.
- The Home Language Survey is completed during online registration.
- Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

The information from the above is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones
- To indicate possible areas requiring additional assessment

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Parent Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time.

If, through observation and assessment information, the teacher feels there is a possible concern related to a developmental delay or other special needs, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- A request made to Heartland Area Education Agency for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing. The preschool teacher would assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated.

If a child is determined to need special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom.

Supervision Policy

Before children arrive at school:

- Safety plugs and electric outlets covered
- Carbon monoxide detectors in working order
- Heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. in working order
- Cleaning supplies out of children's reach and stored properly
- Classroom materials and playground equipment are clean and in working order
- Required supplies: first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.

No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check every two to three minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently, who are in the library area, etc.)

Child Guidance and Discipline

Teaching staff will equitably use positive guidance, redirection, and planning ahead to prevent problems. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules and involving children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self disciplined. Where the child understands words, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people, be fair, respect property, and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn to take turns.

Classroom Behavior Plan – Each class will have a positive behavior reinforcement system. If it is necessary to have your child on a separate behavior plan, you will be contacted.

Challenging Behavior

The teaching staff in the preschool is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They

evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors, teachers will respond in the following ways:

- Interacting in a respectful manner with all children
- Helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials
- Engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group
- Encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed

Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

Permissible Methods of Discipline:

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident. (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

Prohibited Practices

The program does not and will not employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

- Harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
- Physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
- Any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
- Neither withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Biting Policy

We understand that biting is a natural developmental stage that many young children go through. However, we do not promote biting in any way.

If biting occurs while a child is in our care, the staff member will respond to the incident by separating the children involved and attending to the needs of each child. A child that has been bitten will receive the appropriate care and first aid. The biter will be redirected from the situation. The director will always be informed of any biting incident and staff will complete all necessary paperwork.

When biting occurs we will evaluate each biting incident in the following ways:

- Date and time of the incident
- Who was in the room and where the caregiver was located in the room
- What activities were occurring in the room

All this information will be recorded on the biting incident log. A conference between the director and staff will take place to develop a plan of action to stop the biting. Staff will respond to a bitten child or staff member with the appropriate care and first aid. The wound will be assessed and cleansed with soap and water.

The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident by phone and/or written notification. Confidentiality shall be maintained and no staff member will reveal names of the children involved in the biting incident verbally or on written documentation for the parents.

Every biting incident will be documented with an accident report for the bitten child, a biting incident report for the biter, and also recorded on a biting incident log for the center. All care will follow the training of the first aid and bloodborne pathogens procedures.

Anti-Bullying/Harassment Board Policy Code 105

See [Dallas Center - Grimes School Board Policy](#) Code 105

Water Activities

We have a water table in the classroom for children to stand and play with hands in the water. During water play, children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervises all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

Snacks/Foods and Nutrition

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, physical growth, ability to learn, and overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about food and enjoy a variety of foods from different cultures. This will help establish healthy habits and an understanding of how our bodies work. Eating moderately in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form.

The program serves snacks at regularly established times. Meals and snacks are at least two hours apart, but not more than three hours apart. Families have the opportunity to volunteer to bring snacks, but are not required to. Snacks will be provided by the preschool program if any family cannot provide the snack. Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in the USDA guidelines. A written snack menu is posted in the classroom and available to families. All menus are kept on file for review by a program consultant. The preschool serves a wide variety of nutritional snacks and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered.

All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. Program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes when any child with a disability has special feeding needs and provide parents with that information.

High-risk foods often involved in choking incidents will not be served. For children younger than four years, these include hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas and hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

The school district does not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment. Teaching staff will never threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Outside Play and Learning

We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the weather air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large motor skills, get exercise, and be active. We use the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions), children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment. For example, tumbling mats may be offered for upper body activities or rolling across the mat.

In order to make sure children can play comfortably outside, it is important to dress according to the weather. When it is cold outside, provide a warm coat, mittens or gloves, and a hat (labeled with the child's name). For the warmer days, dressing lightly is just as important, and on questionable days, layering is a practical idea.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage bringing a hat or other clothing to wear as another protection from the sun. You may apply sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher before your child comes to school. DCG staff will complete the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance Checklist on a weekly basis.

Clothing

Children will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Clothes and shoes should be comfortable and washable. While we encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, we can't guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal, or disruptive in nature for our 3 and 4-year-olds. All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Toilet Learning

All children are eligible for preschool regardless of needs, abilities, or special circumstances. This includes children who are still learning to use the bathroom independently.

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

- Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.
- Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 5:
 - Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
 - Staff checks children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
 - Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
 - At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
 - Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
 - Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
 - Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.

Objects From Home

Students who bring **personal items** to school assume all risks, including theft, associated with that item. Students should not bring personal items to school unless the items are related to specific classroom activities. Trading of items is not allowed. If a staff member feels that any item a student has brought to school is disruptive to learning or potentially dangerous to the individual student or another person, that staff member may take the item(s) from the student. The item(s) in contention, especially if potentially dangerous to the student or another person,

will be brought to the attention of the principal. The following items are not allowed to be used during school (8:00-3:15): toys, electronic game systems, iPods, cell phones, or trading cards.

Exceptions may be made at the building level for instructional purposes.

Weapons

See [Dallas Center - Grimes School Board Policy](#) > Code 502.13

Classroom Animals and Pets

The director shall approve all **pets** that are brought into the schools for instructional purposes. Reptiles are not allowed due to the risk of salmonella.

Birthdays

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, students who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. **Invitations to birthday parties will not be distributed at school.**

V. COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

The program will promote communication between families and staff. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the teaching staff in a manner that works best for them (email, written, phone, etc).

Open Door Policy

Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the elementary school office. Visitors are asked to use discretion with regard to bringing babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt class sessions. Photo identification will be required for any unknown visitor to the classroom.

Arrival and Dismissal

All motor vehicle transportation provided by parents, legal guardians, or others designated by parents or legal guardians will include the use of age-appropriate, and size-appropriate seat restraints.

At Kids Korner, please park your car and turn off the engine before entering the building. To decrease the possibility of an accident, please hold your child's hand as you enter the building. No child will be permitted to leave the building without an adult.

When bringing your child to Heritage Elementary, please adhere to Arrival & Dismissal Procedures found in the [Elementary Handbook](#). There will be adult supervision to ensure child safety. Preschool students are not allowed to ride routes or shuttle buses.

Other than parents or legal guardians, only persons with prior written authorization will be allowed to pick up a child from the school. Anyone who is unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them.

In the interest of students' safety, parents/guardians/authorized individuals are requested to report directly to the office when picking up their child rather than going to the child's classroom. Likewise, when a student returns to the building following an absence during the school day, the adult should stop in the office and sign the child in.

Transportation

The Dallas Center-Grimes Schools does not provide school bus transportation for preschoolers. Children who have special needs will use any accommodations indicated in the child's Individualized Educational Program and will be implemented as described.

Field Trips

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. The DC-G school buses are used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip through a newsletter or special note. A parent or legal guardian must sign an informed consent form for trips for each child before each trip. Adult family members may be asked to volunteer to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios. Communication of the dates, time of departure, time of return, and the destination location will be posted prominently at least 48 hours before the field trip. Each child will be assigned to an adult for every part of the trip. Before every trip, the teaching staff will instruct children and all adults using the bus about the 10-foot danger zone around the vehicle where the driver cannot see.

During the field trip, all children will wear identifying information indicating the program name and phone number. A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization information for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children may only use a public restroom if a staff member accompanies them. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult.

Attendance

Students who are enrolled for classes in the DC-G Preschool are expected to be in school for the full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. Please call the elementary office with the reason for an absence no later than 8:30 AM if your child is in the morning session and by 12:30 PM for the afternoon session. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school office will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence.

Ethics and Confidentiality

Staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way we demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child negatively or positively. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

All teaching staff will receive training on ethics and confidentiality on the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Code of Ethical Conduct as part of their orientation. Each staff person will sign a Statement of Commitment to document their willingness to adhere to the values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood education.

Children's Records

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest, are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the administration office.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

Preschool Advisory Committee

DC-G Preschool has a school improvement advisory committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets yearly to provide feedback on services that meet children and family needs. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services. Please let the preschool teacher know if you are interested in being part of the Preschool Advisory Committee.

Grievance Policy

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high-quality early childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we want to encourage you to address your concerns to your child's teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for assistance from the Early Childhood Administrator.

If you have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, please contact the Elementary Principal who is the program administrator for the preschool. If you remain dissatisfied, you may contact the Superintendent of Dallas Center-Grimes Community Schools.

As part of our program assessment, in the spring of each year, we also provide you with a family questionnaire to evaluate our program. This information helps us to assess how the program is meeting the needs of families and children, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Student Complaints and Grievances

See [Dallas Center - Grimes School Board Policy](#) > Code 502.15

VI. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

DCG Schools encourages families to be very involved in their child's education by observing their children during the day when possible and meeting with staff. Family members are welcome to visit at any time during class sessions.

Teachers and administrators use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication; and information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year. Family/Teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters, as well as when either party requests. At least one Family Night is held during the year.

DCG Preschool values the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. As the teacher learns from the families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs, goals for your child's growth and development can be incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences, or questions with the preschool teacher or administration at any time.

DCG Preschool invites you to become involved in one or all of the following ways and welcomes other ideas as well:

- Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs
- Attend family meetings
- Return all pertinent forms promptly.
- Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring semesters.
- Take time to read the family bulletin board and daily notes.
- Check your child's backpack each day
- Participate in field-trip activities

- Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken.
- Share any of your families' cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
- Read all the material sent home with your child.
- Come to play
- Help with special events. Helping takes many different forms such as preparation of materials at home, making telephone calls, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting donations or prizes, running errands, photography, setup before the event, or clean up afterwards.
- Serve on the Preschool Advisory Committee

The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful family participation with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats upon request, and to the extent possible, in a language families understand.

The school district believes that families should be supported in making decisions regarding services children may need. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections.

Home Visits

Home visits are made prior to the start of school. This is an opportunity for the preschool teacher to get to know you, your child, and your family and build a partnership between home and school. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and your knowledge about your child's interests, family's beliefs and culture, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the teacher understand your goals and concerns.

Family Teacher Conferences

The DCG Preschool program will have formal Parent/Teacher conferences at the same time as the elementary school--spring and fall. During the conference, the teacher will share results of classroom assessments and samples of your child's work. Together you can make a plan to continue to encourage your child's growth and development.

Transitions

Home-school connections are crucial for the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The DCG Preschool program is committed to promoting wellness and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow guidelines required by the Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

Health and Immunization Certificates

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records shall be submitted showing the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both must provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemptions.

Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. Files are kept current by updating as needed. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to the child's parent or legal guardian, administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, upon request.

Child Health and Safety Records will include:

- Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency;
- Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results;
- Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up to date by a specified method during the year;
- Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
- Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes);
- Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support;
- Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implements a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

General Health and Safety Guidelines

- All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions.
- Under the supervision of the preschool teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.
- All staff is to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- All teaching staff completes “Occupational Exposure to blood borne Pathogens” annually.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is present in the program at all times.

Illnesses

See [Dallas Center - Grimes School Board Policy](#) > Code 504.1R

Communicable Diseases

See [Dallas Center - Grimes School Board Policy](#) > Code 504.2

Medication Policies and Procedures

See [Dallas Center - Grimes School Board Policy](#) > Code 504.01

Cleaning and Sanitization

The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately.

Toys that have been placed in a child’s mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using a non-toxic solution. To disinfect, the surfaces will be sprayed until glossy. The solution will be left on for at least 2 minutes before it is wiped off with a clean paper towel, or it may be allowed to air dry.

Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child’s mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child’s use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III, page 47 of the QPPS manual. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Non-toxic substances will be used whenever possible.

Hand Washing Practices

Frequent hand washing is key to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children
- Hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others
- Staff assists children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task

Children and adults wash their hands:

- Upon arrival for the day
- After diapering or using the toilet (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants)
- After handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit)
- Before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry)
- After playing in water that two or more people share that
- After handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals

Adults also wash their hands:

- Before and after feeding a child
- Before and after administering medication
- After assisting a child with toileting
- After handling garbage or cleaning

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include:

- Using liquid soap and running water
- Rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water)

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any situation listed above.

- Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur
- Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal material
- In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food

First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is located in the preschool classroom next to the door. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. Following each use of the First Aid kit, the contents will be inspected, and missing or used items will be replaced immediately. The First Aid kit will be inspected monthly. The first aid kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

Fire Safety

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents

The Dallas Center-Grimes Community School District has in place a “Safety Procedures Booklet” that describes the following situations and procedures to follow:

- Emergency phone numbers
- Fire procedures
- Utility Failures (electric power failure, water line break, gas line break)
- Severe weather
- Bomb threats
- Physical Threats/Armed Intruder
- Evacuations
- Crisis Intervention Plan, Crisis Intervention Steps, and Media Procedures
- Accidental Injury or Illness procedures for life threatening and non-life threatening situations
- School crisis team members and a checklist to use
- List of CPR/First Aid experienced persons in each building

This booklet will be posted by the classroom door. The booklet will be reviewed by each staff member at the beginning of each school year and when changes are made to it.

In the event that your child receives a minor, non-life threatening injury during their time at preschool, our teacher or school nurse will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Any incident or injuries will be documented on an “Injury and Illness” form and a copy will be given to the parent within 24 hours of the incident.

All staff will have immediate access to a device that allows them to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers of the Fire Department, Police Department, Hospital, and Poison Control will be posted by each phone with an outside line. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member will be kept readily available. The list of emergency telephone numbers, and copies of emergency contact information and authorization for emergency transport will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.

Emergency phone numbers will be updated at least quarterly. Emergency phone numbers will be verified by calling the numbers to make sure a responsive, designated person is available.

Inclement Weather

Families will be alerted through the district's School Messenger system (ParentSquare) if weather should prohibit holding school on a scheduled day, or if an emergency should occur that would require early dismissal, such information will also be announced on television stations WOI (Channel 5), WHO (Channel 13) and KCCI (Channel 8) during the public service announcements.

Protection From Hazards and Environmental Health

Program staff protects children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, or scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping.

The Heritage Elementary building has been tested for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, and other hazards that could impact children's health with documentation on file. Custodial staff maintains the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children.

The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children. The program uses the techniques known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

Smoke Free Facility

In compliance with the Iowa Smoke free Air Act of 2008, Dallas Center-Grimes Community School buildings and grounds are smoke-free. A "No Smoking" sign meeting the law's requirements is posted at the entrance to the preschool classroom building to inform people that they are entering a non-smoking place. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children.

Child Protection Policies

See [Dallas Center - Grimes School Board Policy](#) > 402.2

See [Dallas Center - Grimes School Board Policy](#) > 402.3

Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of the Dallas Center-Grimes Community School. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Volunteers

Parents, friends, grandparents, and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Please contact the teacher, the elementary principal, or our office secretary if you would like to be a school volunteer. If a volunteer will be working with children, a background check will be performed. In addition, no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

VIII. STAFF

The Dallas Center-Grimes School district has written personnel policies that define the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and specialized training required of staff and volunteer positions. The policies outline nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and policies for staff evaluation. Policies detail job descriptions for each position, including reporting relationships; salary scales with increments based on professional qualification, length of employment, and performance evaluation; benefits; and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures.

Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. The policies are provided to each employee upon hiring.

Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks: criminal-record check, free from history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check, education credentials, verification of age, completion of high school or GED, personal references and a current health assessment.

Orientation

Employees must know their role and duties. New preschool teaching staff will be required to participate in an initial orientation program that introduces them to fundamental aspects of the program operation including:

- Program philosophy, mission, and goals
- Expectations for ethical conduct
- Individual needs of children they will be teaching or caring for
- Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques
- Daily activities and routines of the program
- Program curriculum
- Child abuse and reporting procedures
- Program policies and procedures
- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria
- Regulatory requirements

Follow-up training expands on the initial orientations. See Staff Orientation Checklist.

The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. The superintendent will explain payroll procedures, employee benefit programs and accompanying forms to the employee. Regular employees ineligible for the school district's group health plan will be given information regarding where they can obtain health care or health care insurance.

Staffing patterns and schedule

The preschool program is in compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our program follows requirements for staffing for Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards of maintaining an adult/child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. The program administrator will maintain lists of current substitutes for both the preschool teacher and the preschool teaching assistant in case of absence. If one of the teaching staff needs to temporarily leave the classroom, the person will call the elementary office to arrange for coverage in order to maintain the adult/child ratio.

Staff is provided space and time away from children during the day. Should staff work directly with children for more than four hours, staff is provided breaks of at least 15 minutes in each four-hour period. In addition, staff may request temporary relief when they are unable to perform their duties.

Staff Development Activities

Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. All teaching staff continuously strengthen their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community, and beyond. Teaching staff is encouraged to participate in informal and formal ways in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities. They may join an early childhood group or organization, attend meetings, or share information with others both in and outside the program.

Teaching staff will be informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local Empowerment areas, and the area education agency. Staff is expected to attend all staff training and meetings throughout the year. Training will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community.

Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan

An appropriate supervisor evaluates all staff at least annually. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflection and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. From this, they develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.