

# Pawnee Grade School Preschool Program Handbook



...a fun place to  
play and learn!

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# SCHOOL INFORMATION

**Pawnee Grade School**  
**810 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, P.O. Box 1040**  
**Pawnee, IL 62558**

**Phone Number: (217) 625-2231**

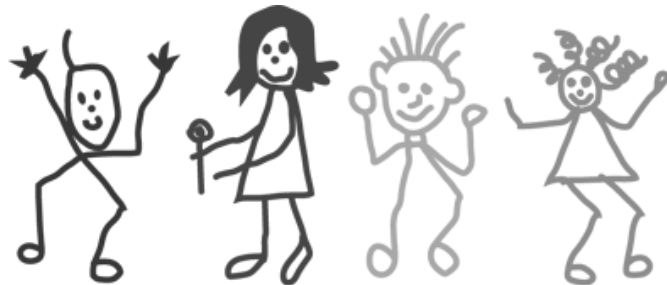
**Fax Number: (217) 625-2251**

**Website: <http://www.pawneeschools.com>**

## PRESCHOOL STAFF DIRECTORY

Jenny Mendenhall, Principal	(217) 625-2231 ext. 201 jmendenhall@pawneeschools.org
Chelsea McGlothlin, Preschool Teacher	(217) 625-2231 ext. 260 cmcglathlin@pawneeschools.org
Jennifer McQuality, Preschool Teacher	(217) 625-2231 ext. 306 jmcquality@pawneeschools.org
Janet Rustman, Early Childhood Teacher	(217) 625-2231 ext. 260 jrustman@pawneeschools.org

OFFICE HOURS	STUDENT HOURS
7:45 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Morning Session: 8:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
	Afternoon Session: 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
	Full-day Session: 8:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.



Learn to play. Play to learn.

## Philosophy

1. Children learn through play and hands-on experience. We believe in providing a variety of opportunities for discovery by touching, tasting, smelling, feeling, and hearing. Making discoveries by themselves along with interaction and supervision of adults is the way children learn best.
2. Each child is a unique, special individual deserving acceptance, love and the chance to grow and learn.
3. Clear, consistent limits and expectations for behavior provide a secure environment for children.
4. Positive verbal reinforcement or feedback nurtures self-esteem in children. Once children feel good about themselves and what they can do . . . there's no stopping them!
5. Self-sufficiency and independence are encouraged. Children who feel they have some control over their lives and can accept responsibility for themselves, their actions, and their environment are happier and more content than those children who don't.
6. Each child is encouraged to communicate and verbally express their feelings and needs.
7. Adults working with children need to model appropriate behaviors and show concerns and sensitivities to others' needs and encourage children to do the same.
8. The teachers in the Pawnee Preschool Program believe that each child will learn, through play to do the following:
  - Get along with others
  - Express their feelings.
  - Feel good about school.

## Preschool for All (PFA) Program

The Pawnee preschool program is designed for children 3 to 5 years old. It is our goal to facilitate the development of children and to strengthen and support their families in their efforts to prepare their children for future school success. Your child will benefit from an enriched preschool environment and experience the joys of making new friends, the excitement of learning new skills, and the opportunity to develop independence.

## Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG) Program

The Pawnee preschool expansion program is designed for children 4 to 5 years old. It is similar to the PFA program; however, our PEG program focuses more

extensively on kindergarten readiness skills. It is a full-day program, and both breakfast and lunch are served.

## You and Your Child

You are your child's first teacher. Parents are the most important people in a child's life. Everyone needs help being a parent! None of us are born parents. We learn to be parents by:

1. Talking to and watching other parents
2. Reading books
3. Listening to the advice of doctors and professionals
4. Remembering how our parents raised us
5. Attending parenting classes

We teach our children by PLAYING with them, TALKING TO and EXPLAINING things to them, and by SETTING CONSISTENT LIMITS.

Children need to feel loved and to know that they have our attention and guidance. By talking with them, we can help them to be aware of who they are and to understand the world around them. Children need to hear their names said to them often and to be clearly told the names of objects and places.

Children need to have FUN! Parents are the primary teachers of fun. Taking time to play with our children, taking them to visit new places and sharing what we know of our world will teach them to have fun and to enjoy life.

The staff of the Pawnee preschool program believes parents are the most important persons in a child's life. **We encourage parent participation at school and invite you to come into the classroom to work with the class, as often as you can. Please note: We require parent participation at least once per month. This participation could consist of volunteering in our classroom, reading to the class, attending classroom activities, attending education nights, sending in family projects, etc.**

*YOU ARE WELCOME AT ANYTIME!*

## School Visitors

The school doors will be locked after 8:15 a.m. each day and remain locked throughout the school day. To enter the building, visitors must buzz in at the doors located outside the office. Visitors will be monitored on an audio/video screen and may be allowed to enter after responding to a staff member. All visitors should report first to the Grade School office immediately upon entrance to the building to receive a visitor's badge and

sign the “sign-in sheet”. Visitors are required to proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. All visitors must return to the main office and sign out before leaving the school. Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself/herself in a manner that is appropriate will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespass and/or disruptive behavior.

### Home/School Communication

Open communication between school and parents provides a strong foundation for building a positive relationship between the two. Please make use of our willingness to listen by sharing your needs and concerns with us.

Your child should carry a tote bag or regular sized backpack with him/her to and from school every day. **PLEASE CHECK THIS BAG DAILY FOR MESSAGES FROM SCHOOL!** We check this bag as soon as your child arrives at school, so please put any notes, etc. for the teacher in this bag instead of in your child’s pocket or hands. We find that notes that are not placed in bags often get misplaced, or children forget to give them to the teacher. The bags should be large enough to transport large art and family projects. **(SMALL BAGS WILL NOT WORK.)**

The sense of trust you place in us is valued and respected. This handbook is designed to initiate good mutual communication. Whether we do so in person, before and after your child’s session, by telephone, or by way of written note, we will try to get information to you in a timely manner. Please do the same with us! Communication is two-way, and we need feedback on your child’s adjustment and progress.

Twice each month, the preschool program will send home a newsletter. This newsletter will be sent home with students on Fridays and will also be posted on the school’s website. Information will include important reminders and dates, as well as information relating directly to what students will be learning about in class.

### Health, Immunizations, and Medications

Your child’s health is very important! Good health will make it easier for him/her to succeed. Children need to develop good health habits at an early age. YOU are the teacher they will learn from the most! Please set a good example for your child.

**Before your child begins school** he/she will need a physical exam done by your doctor. A special health

form will be given to you for you and your doctor to fill out and sign. A visit to the dentist is also strongly recommended. Your child’s immunizations need to be up-to-date. A listing of the required immunizations is attached to the student child health record distributed by the Pawnee School nurse.

The Health Form **MUST** be turned in to the teacher **BEFORE** your child starts school. If for some medical reason your child cannot complete the full series of immunizations, it will be necessary for you to submit to us a written statement signed by a physician or county health department official indicating the reason and stating when the remaining shots will be given. If there is another reason for not having this completed, discuss this with the Preschool staff.

Preschool staff will not administer any medications to any children. All medications must have written consent and instructions from the doctor and be administered through the school nurse.

### Birth Certificate

The school does need a copy of your child’s **CERTIFIED BIRTH CERTIFICATE** to keep on file. This is the copy received from the county in which your child was born, not the birth certificate received at the hospital. We can make a copy of your original and return it to you.

### Early Release and Emergency Cancellations

1. Regular school days have two sessions. The morning session meets 8:15 - 10:45 a.m. while the afternoon session meets 12:30 - 3:00 p.m.
2. On 2:00 p.m. dismissal days, preschool classes will run the same for the morning session, but the afternoon session will meet from 11:30 - 2:00 p.m.
3. Noon dismissal days: Neither the morning or the afternoon session will be held.
4. The district calendar will be observed for all school holidays and snow days. Our schedule may sometimes vary from the district’s schedule. Please refer to the preschool calendar for our schedule.
5. You may watch Channel 20 or Channel 17 television stations for school cancellations during bad weather. Radio stations that will have cancellation information include WMAY, WNNS, WRVI, WCVS, WFMB, WTAX, and WTIM.
6. The school will do an “all call” for any cancellations or early dismissals that are unannounced.

## Sample Daily Schedule

### Arrival

### Circle Time

### Centers

- Children make decisions about where they want to play in the room. Choices include an art center/painting, blocks, dramatic play, a reading and listening center, a discovery center, sand or water play, music and movement, math & literacy games, etc.

### Concept Development

- Small group activities that promote literacy, fine motor development, visual-motor integration, color, shape, and math readiness

### Story/Language Activity

- Large group activities that promote speech and language, and auditory and visual skills

### Daily Snack

- A snack and milk are provided

### Specials

- Students will attend art and music classes once each week

### Gross Motor

- Outside play or gym

### Dismissal

## Screening Process for English Language Learners

Under 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228 Transitional Bilingual Education, public school districts must uniformly identify children who are English learners (ELs) by administering a home language survey to all children new to the district and conducting an English language proficiency screening process for children who come from a language background other than English. Preschool programs must offer a language instruction program for ELs consistent with the requirements of Part 228 to all preschool children identified as ELs.

At Pawnee Grade School, a comprehensive language evaluation occurs during the preschool developmental screening. Children identified as having language difficulty are further screened by the Speech and Language Pathologist. If identified as a student speaking English as a second language, he/she will also be screened using the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA). Assessment data gathered through the WIDA results are used to develop intervention or support services to meet the unique needs of the learner. In addition to the preschool language screening, parents are asked to complete a Home Language Survey (HLS)

as part of the enrollment process. Students not identified during the screening may be identified by the HLS.

The school strives to offer opportunities for English learners to develop high levels of academic attainment in English and to meet the same academic content and student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to attain. Parents/guardians of English learners will be (1) given the opportunity to provide input to the program, and (2) provided notification regarding their student's placement in, and information about, the district's English learners programs. For questions related to this program contact the principal.

## Daily Snacks

Pawnee Preschool is a participant of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This program provides for daily snack and milk at no cost to the family.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs).

## Classroom Treats and Snacks

Pawnee Grade School encourages alternative treats for birthday and classroom celebrations. Classrooms at Pawnee Grade School are considered "peanut and nut allergy aware," and extra precautions will be taken to help keep students who have peanut and/or other nut allergies safe. Products that indicate they are made in a facility that processes peanuts or tree nuts are not safe for students who have peanut or nut allergies.

**Birthday/Classroom Party Treats:** Homemade treats and/or snacks are not allowed at Pawnee Grade School. Birthday treats and/or classroom party treats to be distributed to students MUST be ordered and purchased through the school's cafeteria by calling (217) 625-2231, extension 217. Please call to order and prepay at least two weeks prior to your student's birthday or classroom party. Selections to choose from include the following:

- Rice Krispie Treats - \$3.00 per dozen
- Goldfish crackers - \$3.60 per dozen
- Pretzels - \$3.60 per dozen
- Happy Birthday cupcakes (chocolate or vanilla) - \$6.00 per dozen

- Sugar cookies - \$6.00 per dozen
- Chocolate chunk cookies - \$6.00 per dozen
- Gogurt (strawberry) - \$6.00 per dozen
- Sherbet cups (lime, raspberry, or orange) - \$6.00 per dozen
- String cheese - \$3.00 per dozen
- Pudding cups (chocolate or vanilla) - \$6.00 per dozen
- Ice cream cups (chocolate or vanilla) - \$6.00 per dozen
- Fresh fruit (apple slices, grapes, or orange wedges) - \$10.00 per dozen

**Ideas for non-food celebrations:** Consider the following in place of food treats:

1. Donate one of your child's favorite books to the library. You can write their name and birthday on the inside cover, so the book will always be a representation of that special day. For example: *This book was donated to Pawnee #11 Library (or Mrs. Smith's classroom) in honor of John Jones's 8<sup>th</sup> birthday.*
2. Make a small gift to the classroom. Be sure to check with the teacher for anything that might be especially needed.
3. Bubbles, sidewalk chalk, pencils, stickers, note pads, Ferris wheel tokens for Scheels, etc.
4. Discuss with your child's teacher the possibility of an additional recess/game time to celebrate

## **Birthdays**

Because each child is special and needs a special time to feel very important, we will recognize and celebrate birthdays. Students who have birthdays during the summer are given a "half birthday" during the year. We encourage non-food celebrations; however, please refer to the school's "Treats and Snacks" policy regarding birthday/classroom party treats if you would like to send birthday treats (see policy above).

## **Food Allergies**

Please let us know if your child has a food allergy. Our classrooms are considered "peanut and nut aware". Snack/milk substitutions may be allowable.

## **Holidays**

We do observe and celebrate some other special days throughout the year. More information will be sent home as the holidays approach, so watch for notes and newsletters for this information. If you have religious or other objections concerning your child's participation in

any of these activities, please discuss this with your child's teacher.

## **Invitations and Gifts**

Party invitations and/or gifts for classmates should not be brought to school to be distributed. Items such as these are of a personal nature and should be mailed home. The office is unable to release addresses and phone numbers of students. The school will provide each family with one copy of the Student Directory annually. This directory houses the names, addresses and phone number of those students whose parents have granted permission.

## **Transportation Policy**

More information about transportation to and from school will be provided during the Preschool Orientation, as well as during your initial home visit. A few general reminders include:

- When you bring your child to school, please **DO NOT** arrive until 5 minutes before the session begins. The teacher is busy preparing for the day and cannot safely care for the children. Please pick up your child **promptly** at the scheduled end of class.
- If someone other than a parent is to pick up your child, you **must** notify us **in writing** or give us a call when there is no time for a note. We **cannot** legally send a child with anyone other than parents or those designated by the parents or guardians in writing.
- Preschool parents/guests are asked to park behind the school on the old tennis court. Always use the gravel driveway to enter/exit the school grounds. **Do not ever go behind the Grade School where children may be playing or loading up on buses after school.**

## **Clothing**

1. Your child will need comfortable clothes for school. Please have them wear washable clothes which will not be ruined by active play. Give consideration to the type of shoes your child wears to school. Slick-soled dress shoes can be dangerous on both the asphalt playground and the polished floor of the school gym. Shoes that have no backs and are floppy on the child's feet make it difficult to run, play and climb during gym and outdoor play. These activities are important for gross motor development. Except in severe weather, we plan to go outside for a few minutes each day. Listening to the local

weather report will help you know how to dress your child appropriately.

2. Coats, hats, backpacks, and tote bags should be labeled with your child's name.
3. Please send a complete set of extra clothes, including socks, to school with your child in a plastic bag marked with your child's name. These will remain at school all year and will be returned at the end of school. If your child should need to change clothes at school, we will send the soiled or wet clothes home with him/her. Please send his/her extra clothes back the following day.
4. Children should wear clothes with convenient fastenings so that they can manage for themselves in the restroom. This encourages their feelings of independence.

### Preschool Behavior Management Policy

We believe that the development of self-control and self-discipline is important for each child. We strive to teach both the children and the parents in our program how to achieve this. We feel self-control and acceptance of responsibility for themselves and their actions is a major goal.

Children do best when clear, consistent limits and expectations for their behavior are defined for them. By providing a carefully planned day, consistent adult attention to children's needs, lots of praising for good behavior, and accepting and discussing a child's feelings and needs, we find little need for punitive measures.

Behavior is typically managed by staff talking to the student about the behavior, problem solving with the student, and then helping the student either make a better choice, or assisting the student in his/her reconciliation with a peer, if needed. Teaching children how to "use their words" and how to problem solve is ongoing process and a priority in our program! Sometimes students need a break in the cool down area. This break allows the student an opportunity to deescalate or calm down. Typically the student will rejoin his/her peers once he/she is ready. Adult assistance is provided as needed.

Individual behavior management plans will be created with the parent as needed.

### Parent/Teacher Conferences & Home Visits

Each student will receive one parent conference during parent/teacher conference days. Parent/teacher conferences are planned to follow the end of the first nine-week's grading period. Parents may request

additional conferences at a mutually agreed upon time! Please do not hesitate to let us know if you would like to meet!

PreK teachers are also available during both the drop off and pick up time. While we cannot have an in-depth conference, please know we will gladly schedule time if you have concerns or would like more information about our Program.

Home visits occur for all PFA students entering our program for the first time. Additional home visits are scheduled as we are able.

### Sign-Out Procedure

Students who must leave the school during the day (after having once arrived on the grounds) must notify the office staff or PreK teacher. The reason for leaving must be verified by a parent or guardian. Students or parents must sign the "sign-out sheet" located in either the PreK classroom or the Grade School office.

Students who are ill will be directed to the nurse who makes the decision on whether the student is to return to class, rest in the nurse's office, be sent to the doctor, or be taken home. All students who become ill are taken to the nurse's office by a PreK team member.

### Health Services

Parents should not send students to school when they are sick or hurt to ask the nurse to diagnose and/or treat a possible illness or injury. Any student becoming ill throughout the day should report the illness to his/her teacher who may then refer the student to the nurse.

A student with a temperature of 100 degrees or more, or who has vomited **must** go home. It is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements within an hour of being notified. The school has a responsibility to protect the health of remaining students. It is imperative that parents notify the school throughout the school year with any changes of phone numbers for home, work, or emergency contact persons. Students should remain home 24 hours after their last sign of fever and/or vomiting to protect other students from illness.

Any student missing school more than 3 consecutive days must show a doctor's excuse and/or release to return to class. This written confirmation must have a date and time of appointment or visit, and include the student's name on office letterhead/script within five (5) school days upon the student's return. This may be faxed within five school days of the student's return from the



doctor's office to the school office using fax number (217) 625-2251.

The school does not provide or administer over-the-counter medication or prescription medication without written authorization from the physician and the parent. Those students who have met these requirements must be taken by a PreK team member to the nurse's office to turn over these medications which will be dispensed by the nurse. Complete medication guidelines are cited in Board Policy 7:270.

Only the nurse or her designee may decide to send a sick or injured student home. A student will not be allowed to go home sick unless a parent/guardian comes to pick up the student or other arrangements are made.

The school will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding communicable diseases.

1. Parents are required to notify the school nurse if they suspect their child has a communicable disease.
2. In certain cases, students with a communicable disease may be excluded from school or sent home from school following notification of the parent or guardian.
3. The school will provide written instructions to the parent and guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the communicable disease.
4. A student excluded because of a communicable disease will be permitted to return to school only when the parent or guardian brings to the school a letter from the student's doctor stating that the student is no longer contagious or at risk of spreading the communicable disease.

### **Food Allergy & Diabetic Management Plan**

Pawnee School District has implemented a Food Allergy Management Plan in accordance with the Illinois School Code. The plan serves to provide education to school staff and promote prevention and management of life-threatening food allergic reactions. Pawnee #11 classrooms are "peanut and nut aware," and extra precautions will be taken to help keep students who have peanut and/or other nut allergies safe. The district's Food Allergy Management Plan is available upon written request to the school.

A child who has diabetes or a food allergy must submit to the school principal a Diabetes Care Plan or a Food Allergy Action Plan. Parents/guardians are responsible for and must:

- a) Inform the school in a timely manner of any change

which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan or Food Allergy Action Plan on file with the school for their child.

- b) Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
- c) Sign the Diabetes Care Plan or Food Allergy Action Plan.
- d) Grant consent for and authorize designated school district representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan or Food Allergy Action Plan.
- e) For further information, please contact the building principal.

### **Sharing of Medical Information with School Staff**

It may be necessary to share a student's medical information with school staff in order to meet their health and safety needs. Medical condition and allergy lists are given to teachers and staff on a need-to-know basis. Any objections should be submitted in writing to the school nurse.

### **Vision Screening**

Vision screening is done at Pawnee School District as mandated by the IL School Code including special education, new and transfer student, and teacher referrals. The screenings begin in August and continue throughout the school year as necessary. Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening at school if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and the evaluation is on file at the school.

### **Student Medication**

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "School Medication Authorization Form." (This form can be obtained from the school's nurse or website.)

No school or district employee is allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription

medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure

### Head Lice

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, head lice do not transmit communicable diseases. Persons from all socioeconomic levels without regard to age, race, sex, or standard of personal hygiene, can become infested with head lice. The psychological, social and economic impact of head lice infestations can create a problem in the home, school, and community. Head lice as a social problem far outweighs its significance as a health concern in most situations. It becomes a social concern because of the emotional reaction to its presence. Due to the continued concern and frustration in dealing with head lice in the school, the latest national recommendations for school guidelines have been reviewed and Pawnee School District will seek to achieve a consistent approach to head lice management within the school. The following information was obtained from the American Academy of Pediatrics, Center for Disease Control, Center for Health and Health Care in Schools, and the National Association of School Nurses.

- Head lice are not a serious medical condition, but rather a nuisance.
- Adult lice are 1-2 cm in length. Head lice crawl; they do not jump or fly and they are dependent on their host for nourishment (human blood). Lice that fall off a head are either injured or dying and incapable of causing an infestation on another person. Lice are very fragile and cannot live off of their human host for more than 24 hours. Transmission occurs by direct head to head contact. Indirect spread through contact with personal belongings (combs, hats, coats) is very unlikely due to the biology of the louse.
- Nits (eggs) are tiny white/yellowish oval shaped eggs that are attached to the hair shaft at an angle. Nits found more than 1 cm from the scalp along the hair shaft are considered non-viable. These are empty egg cases from the current infestation or a past infestation.
- Routine head checks of healthy students are not recommended. Entire classrooms should only be checked when head lice is present in 2 or more students.
- Head checks should be done on symptomatic students (i.e.: itching of the scalp).
- Parents have the primary responsibility for the

detection and treatment of head lice and schools should work in a cooperative and collaborative manner to assist all families.

### **It is the expectation of the parents/caregivers and families attending this school that:**

1. Child's hair will be checked for head lice on a weekly basis at home.
2. Upon detecting head lice at home, parents will use a safe and recommended treatment for head lice and inform the school of finding head lice at home and/or treatment of such.
3. Upon detecting head lice at school, the student **must** go home. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange for this to occur within an hour of being notified. Parents will use a safe and recommended treatment for head lice and inform the school of finding head lice at home and/or treatment of such. Parents will send a note verifying the student has been treated. The student may return to school after receiving treatment.
4. Encourage children with long hair to attend school with hair tied back.
5. Notify parents of your child's friends so they have an early opportunity to detect and treat their children if indicated.
6. Maintain a sympathetic attitude and avoid stigmatism/blaming families who are experiencing difficulty with control measures.
7. Act responsibly and respectfully when dealing with members of the school and community around head lice issues. Parents are asked to respect privacy issues and not call the school with reports of names of children other than their own who have or were known to have head lice. These reports will not be accepted by school personnel, nor will those children be checked by the school nurse for head lice under those circumstances.

### **It is the expectation of the school to undertake the following:**

1. Distribute current and up-to-date information on the control of head lice to parents and staff at the beginning of the school year. Include updates throughout the year as needed.
2. Inform parents when there are 2 or more cases of head lice in the child's classroom.
3. Inspect the heads of children in a classroom that has 2 or more identified cases of head lice.
4. Once a child has been identified as having an active infestation of head lice at school, the parent will be notified and given information regarding standard treatment and follow-up procedures and encouraged to contact their physician/pharmacist for further

questions or information. The parent must pick the child up from school to allow the school nurse to show the parent the evidence of infestation, and at the same time, provide assurance and guidance. The child will be sent home.

5. Follow-up the day after treatment by checking the child's head to assure that proper practices were used for treatment of head lice. If it is determined that the child still has an active infestation, the parent will be contacted and asked to come to the school to pick up the child. Additional instruction will be given to the parent on standard head lice management, treatment, and follow-up. Continued follow-up and assurance will be given to the family.
6. Provide privacy and confidentiality when dealing with head lice issues.

### **Field Trips**

The classroom teacher arranges field trips. The classroom teacher will notify parents about each field trip. All students are required to ride the bus to and from the field trip unless prior approval has been given. Field trips are planned for educational purposes to meet classroom objectives. Students must abide by all school policies during transportation and during field-trip activities, and shall treat all field trip locations as though they are school grounds. All students who wish to attend a field trip must receive written permission from a parent or guardian with authority to give permission.

### **Chaperone Guidelines for Field Trips**

Field trips are an extension of classroom learning. They offer a wide variety of experiences, which enhances the learning of our students. Providing a safe environment for our students during these trips is an added responsibility for teachers and chaperones. These guidelines are designed to help all chaperones provide a safe and educationally successful trip for our young learners. All chaperones need to be approved by the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher and principal may provide additional guidelines.

1. Chaperones are responsible for the students the teacher has assigned to them. Chaperones are to know where their students are at all times and are never to leave students unattended.
2. Chaperones are to escort students to the restrooms and whenever possible, accompany them into restrooms. Male and female chaperones may need to assist each other at times.
3. Chaperones are to see that their students abide by the time schedule that is outlined for the field trip.
4. Chaperones must ensure that all of their students follow the necessary and applicable safety rules on and off the bus.

5. If a student should become ill or injured, the chaperone is to notify the teacher immediately available. The chaperone gives the responsibility of the rest of the group to another chaperone and takes care of the child in need.
6. Chaperones are to direct their students to behave in a manner that allows them to best benefit from the trip. Students are to be respectful and courteous at all times. Any behavior problems are to be dealt with in a firm, consistent, and fair manner. The teacher should be informed of any behavior problems as soon as possible.
7. Chaperones are to assist the student in learning during the field trip. They are to help students understand displays, speakers, etc.
8. Chaperones are expected to follow all policies and guidelines. Smoking is not allowed.
9. Chaperones cannot bring other children on field trips.

### **Medications on Field Trips**

Medications are not sent on field trips unless a specific written request (school form) is made by the parent and presented to the school 24 hours prior to the field trip. The parent must send the medication to school on the morning of the field trip and the teacher will keep it in a safe and secure place while on the field trip until such time the child requires the medication. The medication must be in the original bottle from the pharmacy along with a note stating parental request for the child to take the medication at the given time

### **Mandated Reporters**

All school personnel, including teachers and administrators, are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. This is done by calling the DCFS Hotline at **1-800-252-2873** or **1-800-25ABUSE**.

### **Emergencies**

**Weather:** On days when school will not be in session or closed early due to weather conditions, parents/guardians will receive a phone call from the school's automated, School Reach system. **Parents/guardians need to have a current phone number in the grade school office.** The school will notify the local radio and TV stations regarding school closings.

### **Fire and Disaster Procedures**

Directions are posted in each room for both fire and disaster procedures. These procedures should be followed every time the fire alarm goes off or a dangerous storm announcement is made.

**FIRE ALARM** – A continuous blast or honk from the alarm horns.

**DISASTER ALARM** – An announcement will be made over the public address system informing students of the situation and the course of action to follow.

### **Fire and Disaster Drills**

Safety drills will occur at times established by the administration. Students are required to be silent and shall comply with the directives of school officials during emergency drills. There will be a minimum of three (3) evacuation drills, a minimum of one (1) severe weather (shelter-in-place) drill, a minimum of one (1) law enforcement drill, and a minimum of one (1) bus evacuation drill each school year. There may be other drills at the direction of the administration. Drills will not be preceded by a warning to the students. During fire drill students should leave the immediate area of the building as directed by their teachers. During severe weather drills students must be sure to stay away from openings, doors, windows, and areas where shattered glass may be flying. In storms of this nature the smaller a target the student is, the better chances are of coming through unharmed.

### **Pawnee's Tuition-based Preschool Program**

**There is a one-time registration fee of \$25.** This fee will both secure your child's slot and will be used to purchase art supplies and milk for the class. This fee is non-refundable and will be collected on or before the PreK Parent Orientation Night in August.

**Each monthly fee is \$200.** The first monthly payment is due on or before the PreK Parent Orientation Night in August. This payment will be your student's first monthly payment for September.

**Note: Payments are due on the first of each month. The first payment due on September 1<sup>st</sup> is for October. The final payment will be due April 1<sup>st</sup>. This payment is for the month of May.**

Payments should be made by check and payable to Pawnee Preschool. You can also pay your student's tuition online at [www.pawneeschools.com](http://www.pawneeschools.com). A link is available under Preschool Parent Resources.

If sending the payment to school, please place the payment in your child's backpack in an envelope labeled with your student's name.

### **Transition into the PreK Classroom**

Our PreK team is here to help you and your child transition successfully into our PreK program! PreK teachers will schedule a home visit with each incoming PreK student's family. During this home visit, we will review important registration forms and answer any questions you might have about our PreK program.

A few days before the PreK school year begins, the PreK team will also host a Parent Orientation Night. Your PreK student is encouraged to attend this with you! You and your excited PreK child will get to unpack and discover all types of things about their new PreK classroom. Students joining our program midyear will have a personal meeting with the classroom teacher to review all forms, the important aspects of the PreK student handbook, and to ensure all of your questions are addressed.

The following information may also help you prepare:

#### **Two (2) Weeks before Preschool Starts**

- Purchase a backpack together with your child. If possible, let your child choose it himself. This gives him/her a sense of control and emphasizes the fact that s/he is a "big kid" starting preschool.
- Label all items—backpack, jacket, shoes, blanket, teddy bear, etc.—with your child's name and teacher's name in permanent ink.
- Contact the school nurse if your child has medication that he or she takes on a daily basis. There will be special rules and forms to fill out for your child to receive medication at school.
- Make transportation arrangements for your child – how s/he will get to school and where (and how) s/he will go after school.
- Talk to your child about the morning and afternoon routine so that s/he understands that s/he will be safe, okay, and cared for.
- Make sure your child meets his/her before and/or after school caregiver (if you are using one).
- Start using your child's "school bedtime." Children often go to bed later as the summer months and longer days kick in. Help your child get into a preschool schedule by keeping to his school bedtime, beginning about 2 weeks before school starts.

#### **The Night before Preschool**

- Answer any last-minute questions from your child. Let your child choose (weather and school-appropriate) clothes for her first day.
- Make sure that your child goes to bed on time.

- Pick a bedtime that gives your child a good night's rest before the first day. Keep the bedtime routine soothing and relaxing.
- Don't focus too much (or at all!) on the first day of school unless he wants to.

### **The First Day**

- Wake up early enough so that you and your child don't have to rush to get to preschool.
- Make breakfast for your child and, if possible, sit down to eat together—or at least talk with her as she eats and you get ready. (Note: Full-day PreK students will be given breakfast at school.)
- Review the day's routine (what preschool will be like, how your child will get to school/come home).
- Pack your child's backpack together. Having some familiarity on his first day is helpful as he adjusts to so many changes.
- Let your child choose a special stuffed animal or blanket to bring to school with her. These "loveys" can help children make the transition from home to school, and can also make naptime easier, too. You may want to send your child with a family photo or favorite book as well. These familiar objects can help if she feels lonely during the day.

### **Saying a Good Good-Bye**

- These strategies can ease the jitters of separating on your child's first day at preschool.
- Plan to stay a little while. Staying for 15-30 minutes on that first morning can help ease the transition. Together, the two of you can explore the classroom, meet some other children, and play with a few toys. When you see that your child is comfortable, it is time to leave. If he is having a harder time getting engaged, you may want to ask your child's teacher to stay with your child as you say good-bye so that when you leave, he can turn to another caring adult for support.

### **Keep your tone positive and upbeat!**

- Children pick up on the reactions of the trusted adults in their lives. So try not to look worried or sad, and don't linger too long. Say a quick, upbeat good-bye and reassure your child that all will be well.
- Think about creating a special good-bye routine. For example, you could give your child a kiss on the palm to "hold" all day long. Or the two of you could sing a special song together before you leave. Good-bye routines are comforting to children and help them understand and prepare for what will happen next.

### **Resist the Rescue**

- Try not to run back in the classroom if you hear your child crying, as upsetting as this can be. This is a big change and your child may, quite understandably, feel sad and a little scared. But if you run back in, it sends the message that he is only okay if you are there and it is likely to prolong your child's distress and make it harder for him to adapt. Rest assured, teachers have many years of experience with helping families make the shift to preschool. Instead, you can wait outside the classroom for a few minutes to ensure that all is well, or call the school later in the morning to check in.

### **Transition to Kindergarten**

Going to kindergarten is an important life event! Preschoolers can feel excited—and a bit worried, too. Families have similar feelings, knowing their child is going to the "big school." We want our children and their families to be ready for kindergarten!

- Starting in the spring of the school year our Preschool Team will schedule multiple visits to our kindergarten classrooms. Your preschool student will get to spend short amounts of time in the kindergarten classroom getting to know the kindergarten teacher and figuring out what kindergarten is all about!
- Kindergarten teachers will spend time in our preschool classroom getting to know who their new learners will be in the upcoming school year.
- Students with IEP's will have a Transition Meeting in the late spring. This meeting will include both the preschool teacher, and the student's kindergarten teacher, along with any other members of the IEP team. We will discuss your student's unique needs and build a plan together.
- Incoming kindergarten parents are invited to join a Kindergarten Orientation Night in the latter part of April. This orientation will include everything you need to know to be prepared for kindergarten!
- If special circumstances exist, a more detailed transition plan can be created for students who do not have an IEP. Parents are welcome to ask their PreK teacher about this additional support.

### **Homelessness**

The district's Homeless Liaison is James Scheffers. Mr. Scheffers can be reached by calling the Grade School office. Mr. Scheffers assists the PreK team in addressing homelessness. Homelessness can mean many things. The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youth as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and

adequate nighttime residence.” The term includes children and youth who are:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as doubled-up).
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters, abandoned in hospitals, or awaiting foster care placement.
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

If you/your family are experiencing homelessness, our team is here to help you. Some of the services our school can help with include:

- Automatic enrollment in the school, with no delay for the regular requirements like proving residency, providing immunizations and a birth certificate.
- Automatic enrollment in the Free Lunch Program.
- Assistance with locating local resources, like the local food banks.
- Assistance with school supplies or other personal hygiene needs.