

# +Humphrey Public Preschool Handbook



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## Humphrey Public School **Preschool Handbook**

2026-2027

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### **Staff**

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- Teacher – Natalie Beranek
- Principal –Josh Rathje
- Superintendent –Brice King

## **Mission Statement**

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- The mission statement of the Humphrey Public School system is to provide quality educational opportunities in a supportive environment. In addition, Humphrey Public School will provide its students with equitable opportunities for an essential education in an efficient manner. An essential education is one that enables students to reach the following outcomes:
  - Proficient in meeting the State's academic content standards and essential learning and such additional standards that are established by the Board of Education
  - Successful at each educational level and in transitioning between those levels from early childhood through postsecondary education and/or career entry
  - Effective in functioning in and contributing to our culturally diverse democratic society

## **Philosophy**

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- Humphrey Public Preschool uses a research based curriculum and assessment coupled with developmentally appropriate practices to provide an environment that is conducive to growth and development. By placing the students at the center of all decisions and activities it will ensure that the students feel safe, welcome, and wanted in the classroom community. By differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students in the classroom, students will be able to participate in learning experience that build their kindergarten readiness, and help reach GOLD assessment guidelines. The staff will also collaborate with, and invite families to partake in their child's education. Building lasting, trusting relationships with the staff, students, parents, and families will help foster the overall development of the child.

## **Goals**

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- Provide a welcoming, supportive, and engaging learning environment in which students feel comfortable to explore and learn
- Encourage students to engage and discover their learning
- Promote opportunities for students that help foster their development in the areas of: social emotional, physical and health, languages/literacy, cognitive and general knowledge
- Offer opportunities for students to learn and explore at their own pace

- Provide scenarios for students to build independence and self-confidence through successful learning experience
- Meet the needs of *all* students while preparing them to be Kindergarten ready

## **Curriculum**

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- Humphrey Public Preschool uses a research-based curriculum called *Three Cheers* along with Zoo Phonics that includes large group instruction, small group instruction, centers (interest areas), and outdoor play experiences. This curriculum fosters growth in all developmental areas. It is also designed to create an environment in which children have opportunities to grow and develop at their own pace.
- The preschool will also reference the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines as an educational source. The Early Learning Guidelines help teachers to plan learning activities by providing the preschool staff with information about supporting the learning and development of preschool aged children.

## **Assessment**

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- Humphrey Public Preschool will use the research-based Teaching Strategies GOLD to assess each child's learning and development using the following objective areas.
  - Social Emotional
  - Physical
  - Language
  - Cognitive
  - Literacy
  - Mathematics

## **Family Participation**

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- Parents are a child's first and most important teacher. Being involved in your child's education is a vital part to their developmental and academic success. We will have multiple opportunities for parents to be involved in the classroom and your child's education. Some classroom opportunities might include:
  - Literacy Night
  - Volunteer to read during center time
  - Classroom "Parent"
  - Muffins with Mom and Donuts with Dad
  - Classroom Party Helpers

## **Daily Schedules**

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- Daily schedules can be found at the school office or in the preschool classroom. Schedules are subject to change based on the needs of the students.
- Half Day: Half day Preschool is an option for 3 year- old students only. If you choose to partake in half day or full day preschool you must make this decision by the beginning of the year and continue the decision throughout the entire school year. Transportation home is not provided to students who attend the half day preschool.

## **Arrival/Departure**

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### Arrival At School/Dismissal From School

- Arrival at School: Students should not be on school grounds prior to 7:30 a.m. Students will be allowed to enter school at 7:30 a.m. Students are to stay in the hall and are not to go to any other part of the building without permission or can also eat breakfast in the cafeteria.
- The Preschool bell will ring at 7:55 allowing students to proceed to classrooms.

## **Absences/Attendance**

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- Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The administration is responsible for developing further attendance rules and regulations, and all staff are expected to implement this policy and administrative rules and regulations to encourage regular and punctual student attendance. The Principal and teachers are required to maintain an accurate record of student attendance.
- Circumstances of Absences – Definitions. The circumstances for all absences from school will be identified as School Excused or Not School Excused. Absences should be cleared through the Principal's office in advance whenever possible. All absences, except for illness and/or death in the family, require advance approval.
- School Excused. Any of the following circumstances that lead to an absence will be identified as a School Excused absence, provided the required attendance procedures have been followed:
  - Impossible or impracticable barriers outside the control of the parent or child prevent a student from attending school. The parent must provide the school with documentation to demonstrate the absence was beyond the control of the parent or child. This could include, but is not limited to documented illness, court, death of a family member, or suspension.

- Other absences as determined by the principal or the principal's designee.
- **Not School Excused.** Absences that are not school excused may result in a report to the county attorney and may be classified as follows:
  - Parent acknowledged absences are those in which the parent communicated with the school in the prescribed manner that the child is absent and is the parent's responsibility for the extent of the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, illness, vacations, and medical appointments.
  - Other absences are those in which the parent has not communicated a reason for the student's absence.

Please see Student/Parent Handbook Section 1 and 2, page 15 for more information on this.

## **Behavior Policy and Positive Guidance**

- Introducing positive behaviors to the students, then modeling and reinforcing these positive social behaviors is a staple of the behavior system we will use. We will utilize a proactive approach that focuses on establishing the behavioral supports needed for all students to have success.
  - Teachers will provide positive encouragement
  - Teachers will acknowledge positive behaviors made by students
  - Teachers will model and guide students to make appropriate behaviors and choices
- Students will be rewarded for positive choices and good behavior with a point system. Children in the class will be rewarded for individual choices and positive behaviors, as well as, whole class, collective behavior. Students can collect "points" individually, and "temperature" as a whole class (on a thermometer) to earn prizes. Prizes may include: lunch with the teacher, tell a joke to the class, line leader, etc...
- If a behavior occurs, the behavior will be confronted not the student.
- If a behavior continues to be an issue, the teacher will contact the parents and discuss an approach that is appropriate for the child and situation.

## **School Closing and Weather**

- The Superintendent of Schools is authorized by the Board of Education to close public schools in case of severe weather. Representatives of the Superintendent's staff will notify local news media when emergency or inclement weather warrants such action. The information is sent through the **Connect 5** system and broadcast regularly by the following radio stations:

- KEXL 106-7 FM, WJAG AM 78, KZ100 FM (KZEN), KKOT FM 93.5, KLIR FM 101, KJSK AM 900, KTTT AM 1510, KNEN FM 94.7 AND US 92 FM 92.
- Decision to Close Schools. A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service and civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise for students to go to school. If possible, a decision about the next school day will be made by 9 p.m. for announcement during the 10 p.m. news. School officials will make periodic assessments of conditions during the night and will decide early in the morning (by 6 a.m. if possible). In any case, an announcement will be made to the news media when school will be closed.
- Late Starts. If the school should decide to have a 2 hour late start for any reason **we will still have Preschool.**
- After School Starts. Every attempt will be made to avoid closing school once classes are in session. In some instances closing school during the day is inevitable if children are to safely return home before the brunt of a major storm hits. In these cases as much advance notice as possible will be given to parents. If school is closed during the day the notice will be broadcast by the media and parents should have a plan in place to accommodate these circumstances.
- Parental Decisions. Parents may decide to keep their children at home in inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will be marked absent. The absence will be treated like any other absence for legitimate causes provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather at any time during the school day. Students will not normally be dismissed from school during severe weather on the basis of a telephone request.
- If there is an early out or Teacher- In- Service for the elementary school and high school there will not be school for the preschool. The teacher will remind parents of this information within newsletters.
- If there is an unpredicted early out for the school, please communicate who will be picking up your child.

## **Yearly Academic Calendar**

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The academic calendar for the preschool can be found by going to the link below.

<https://humphreybulldogs.socs.net/vnews/display.v/ART/5aa94da445756>

## **Meals**

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- We will have snack each day in the afternoon for the students. Bringing snacks to school is the responsibility of the parents since the school offers the breakfast and lunch program.

### Breakfast and Lunch Programs:

- Humphrey Public Schools has agreed to participate in the National School Lunch Program and accepts responsibility for providing free and reduced price meals to eligible children in the schools under its jurisdiction. The school food authority assures the State Department of Education that the school system will uniformly implement the following policy to determine children's eligibility for free and reduced price meals in all National School Lunch Programs.
- **School Lunch Program** - The Humphrey Public Schools serves nutritious Type A breakfast/lunches daily. The prices for breakfast and lunches are established prior to the beginning of each school year based upon levels of federal support. Students may choose on a daily basis whether or not they want to eat the school breakfast and/or lunch. If a student brings a sack lunch, they are to store it in their locker. The school provides a hot lunch program. No refrigeration or heating services are available for those who do not participate. During lunch, all students will report to the lunchroom for supervisory purposes.
- Students must purchase meals in advance. Students will not have breakfast and/or lunch tickets. The student's breakfast and/or lunches will be kept track of by the bookkeeper. Students will be notified when their lunches are running low.
- Breakfast and lunch programs are as follows
  - Breakfast (everyone) \$1.85/day
  - Lunches Grades PK-3 \$2.60/day
  - Milk \$0.50

Please see section 12, page 105 of the Student/Parent Handbook for more information on this.

## **Clothing and Personal Belongings**

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- Please label all of your child's personal belongings that are brought to school. The preschool is not responsible for any lost items.
- **Please bring an extra change of clothes with your child.** We will be doing a lot of playing outside, painting, exploring, etc... The clothing will be used in case of any

emergency and/or accident (spills, food, toileting, paint...) The change of clothing will be kept in the student's cubby area or storage in the room.

## **Toilet Accidents**

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- If a student has an accident at school, staff will help the student into clean clothing. Please send one change of clean clothing with your child to school, which we will store in the classroom and use if needed. If there are no clean clothes available for the student, staff will contact the parents to bring some for the child.

## **Field Trips/Classroom Visitors**

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- All visitors must report to the office, upon entering the southeast entrance, to sign in, in order to receive a visitor's pass. Parents are welcome at all times. Please sign in/out at the office upon entering/exiting the southeast entrance to the school. Student visitations are not allowed during school hours without administrative approval.
- The preschool may participate in field trips throughout the academic year. Staff will send home notes, and emails, informing the parents/guardians of any upcoming trips. A permission slip will be sent home for each child, and must be returned for the child to participate in the field trip.

## **Transportation and Safety**

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- Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian (unless using the bus system). Parent(s)/guardian(s), or a related adult must be present in the home or pick up location when the child is dropped off, and picked up from the bus.
- If student is part of the half day Preschool program transportation home is the responsibility of the parent.
- Incident reports for all injuries will be completed during the school day. Communication with parents about the incident will take place in each case.
- In the case of biting, the following practice will be used.
  - Respond immediately and assess the child's injury
  - Separate the children involved
  - Give first aid to the child, and comfort as needed
  - Confront the child who bit in a non-threatening voice and manner. If the biter is still upset, they will be moved away from other children until they have calmed down. They will be directed to other play.

- An incident report will be filled out for both children and discussed with the parents of the children involved separately. Confidentiality will be maintained on all reports!

## **Discrimination**

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- The Humphrey Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age or other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:
- Complaints or concerns involving discrimination or needs for accommodation or access should be addressed to the appropriate Coordinator.
- Humphrey Public Schools expects every staff member and student to be treated with respect and dignity. A show of disrespect toward a staff member or insubordination on the part of the student will not be tolerated.

## **Health Services**

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### Student Illnesses

- School health personnel will notify parents when a student needs to be sent home from school due to illness. Conditions requiring a student be sent home include: Temperature greater than 100°F., vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rashes, live head lice, or on determination by the school nurse that the child's condition prevents meaningful participation in the educational program, presents a health risk to the child or others, or that medical consultation is warranted unless the condition resolves. Please include emergency daytime phone numbers on your child's enrollment card so that you can be reached if your child becomes ill or injured while at school. Please also inform your school health office staff of health related information you feel is important for your student's success in the classroom and/or safety at school.

### Guidelines for Administering Medication

- Whenever possible your child should be provided medications by you outside of school hours. In the event it is necessary that your child take or have medication available at school, the parents/guardians must provide a signed written consent for the child to be given medication at school. A consent form is available at the school health office. If your child has asthma or diabetes and is capable of self-managing his or her health condition, contact the health office to develop a self management plan.

- Medications must be provided to the school by the parent/guardian in the pharmacy-labeled or manufacturer-labeled bottle. Repackaged medications will not be accepted. All medications also require a physician's authorization to be given at school. The school nurse may limit medications to those set forth in the Physician's Desk Reference (PDR). Please limit the amount of medication provided to the school to a two-week supply.

Please see page 30 and 31 of the Student/Parent Handbook for more information on this.

## **Immunization Policy**

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- Nebraska law requires that students receive the following immunizations prior to admission into school: Mumps, Measles, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Polio, Varicella or date of disease in case of varicella (chicken pox) and DPT. Exceptions to this requirement are based on religious beliefs or medical waiver from a physician. In addition, students must have a physical exam and vision exam prior to Kindergarten entrance or when enrolling from out of the state.

## **Home Visits and Conferences**

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- Staff will be conducting home visits, as well as parent/teacher conferences throughout the academic year. Each family will receive a home visits and two parent/teacher conferences per year. If family choses to have a home visit somewhere other then their home, arrangements may be made with the teaching staff. Parent/teacher conferences will be held halfway through the first semester and toward the end of the second semester. Families will be informed of the dates as they approach during the school year.
- The purpose of the home visits and parent/teacher conferences are as follows:
  - Home Visits:
    - Meet the teacher and develop a trusting relationship
    - Allow the teacher to meet, and get to know the student and family
    - Set up goals and discuss the program with the family
    - Discuss any information regarding the student
  - Parent/Teacher Conferences:
    - Discuss the child's progress
    - Review any assessments and discuss any screenings
    - Display samples of the child's academic work
- Parent-teacher conferences will be held during the 1st quarter and 3rd quarters. Refer to the school calendar for the schedule. Conferences with teachers, at any other time, are

possible by calling the school office and making arrangements with one or more teachers as needed.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

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- We are a mandatory reporter! This means we are responsible for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect to the Department of Human Services. The well-being and safety of each student is our main concern.
- Reports are always confidential and made with the child's safety in mind. Anyone may report suspected child abuse by calling the Department of Human Services at 1-800-652-1999.

What are signs of suspected child abuse?

- Unexplained bruises, burns, fractures, etc...
- Lack of cleanliness, medical care, or warm clothing for the winter months
- Interest in or knowledge of sexual behaviors
- Abuse or neglect reported by the child
- Leaving a child alone in a vehicle
- Behavior changes such as anxiety, depression, fear, aggression, withdrawal, not wanting to go home, or appearing fearful of certain individuals.

Please see the elementary handbook for more information on this.

## **Communication**

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- When a parent has any question or concern, please feel free to contact Natalie Beranek or Principal Josh Rathje.
- Each child will receive a monthly newsletter that will encompass what has been going on in the classroom and school. Newsletters will include our current topic of study, areas of development, what we are exploring, and what is upcoming in our classroom. These will be in each child's take-home folder at the end of each month.
- Humphrey preschool will also communicate with parents through emails, and phone calls periodically. This is in addition to home visits, and parent/teacher conferences.

## **Special Education and Services**

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### What Does Special Education Mean?

- Special education means educational experiences, curriculum and services, including transportation, through the use of staff, facilities, equipment and classrooms which have been adapted to provide special instruction for students with disabilities. In addition, special education provides the support services necessary for evaluation, placement and instruction for students with disabilities. These services are free to parents, unless they elect to place their child in a program other than one approved by the school district.

### How are Students With Disabilities Identified?

- The first step is for parents to provide written permission to have their child evaluated. The request for permission will include a description of the action to be taken and a description of each evaluation procedure. Written statements showing the results of the evaluation and the reasons for placement in a special education program must be kept on file. Within 30 days after a student has been verified as having a disability, a conference will be held with parents. Advance notice will be given. At the conference, an Individual Education Program (IEP) will be developed.
- Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the District's special education policy, the Parental Rights in Special Education brochure, or a copy of the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51 (special education regulations and complaint procedures) or Rule 55 ((special education appeal procedures) may contact the Superintendent.

## **Resources for Parents**

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- [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) --American Academy of Pediatrics
- [www.answers4families.org](http://www.answers4families.org) --Answers for Families
- [www.cdc.gov/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/parents) --Centers for Disease Control
- [www.pbs.org/parents](http://www.pbs.org/parents) --PBS Parents
- <http://medicaidwaiver.org/state/nebraska.html> --Nebraska Medicaid Waiver, Disability Services and Waivers
- <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/> --Center for Parent Information and Resources