

Tripoli Preschool

2022-2023

Family Information Book



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## **Philosophy**

### Goals for Program:

The purpose of Tripoli's Preschool is to provide a positive learning experience for preschool aged children. The experience will provide the foundation that is needed by all children to flourish and become successful in school and life. The Tripoli Preschool's staff will provide a safe and caring learning environment for all student learn and flourish. Tripoli's Preschool curriculum will be child-centered and utilize the children's questions and interests as a basis for expansion. All children will be encouraged to take risks. Along with teacher interaction, extensive opportunities for peer interaction will be provided. A partnership between school and family is developed and the importance of working together to support children's optimal development and learning is stressed. Tripoli's Preschool program welcomes all families, communicates regularly with families, and supports home values, beliefs, experiences and language.

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

### Goals for children:

Children will show competency in social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development skills.

Children will be enthusiastic and curious learners.

Children will be safe and healthy.

### Goals for Families:

Families will feel welcome in the classroom and school.

Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help their children be better prepared to learn to read and write.

Families will advocate for their children.

## **Curriculum**

The Tripoli Preschool program will cultivate the early stimulation of a child's natural inclination to observe, explore, and experiment with the new concepts and to promote social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development. The preschool curriculum is the Creative Curriculum and is aligned with Tripoli's K-12 curriculum and the Iowa Early Learning Standards. It addresses all areas of early learning: language and literacy, math, science, physical skills, and social skills. It is based on study units familiar and meaningful to young children such as Pets, Roads, Buildings and Trees. 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. Suggestions for modifications and adaptations are an integral part of the curriculum. We also integrate Handwriting Without Tears, Al's Pals, Engage NY Preschool Math as research based supplemental materials.

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities with solitary time, indoors with outdoors, quiet play with noisy play. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day: Large and Small Group Activities, Self-directed Play, Snack, Learning Center Activities: Art, Science, Writing Table, Games and Put together toys, Book Center, Blocks and Wheel Toys, Pretend Play, Story Time, I-pads, Outdoor Activities, and Individual Activities. Lesson plans for each week are available in the classroom showing how these activities are incorporated into the daily schedule. Weekly notes will be sent home to families in children's backpacks.

## **General Information about Program**

### **-Who Works In The Preschool**

**Program Administrator:** The elementary principal is designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool program. The principal meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Page 6 of 28

**Teacher:** A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an early childhood endorsement is assigned to the preschool classroom.

**Teacher Assistant:** A full-time teacher assistant in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher assistant will have specialized training in early childhood education.

**School Nurse:** The preschool will have the assistance of the school nurse. The current nurse is employed part time, is a certified RN, and is recertified every three years. She maintains student health records by updating them quarterly, and attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school. She is available for parent consultation when necessary.

**Support Staff Central Rivers Area Education Agency:** 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.

### **-Clothing**

Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes to school. 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. 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.

## **Assessment**

At the fall parent meeting, parents are informed on how students' progress is assessed formally and informally. Information is given to parents on the purpose of the assessments,

the procedures for the assessments, the timing of the assessments and how the results are shared. In addition, it is explained how the assessments are used to guide instruction.

Creative Curriculum Teaching Strategies Gold, Individual Growth and Development Indicator (IGDIs), and the Brigance are used to assess students' progress. Each is an ongoing assessment with results given two times per year at parent/teacher conferences and in progress reports sent home three times a year. Each student has an individual portfolio that demonstrates student achievement throughout the course of the school year. The portfolios are shared with parents at conferences and then sent home at the end of the school year.

### **Program Assessment**

Tripoli Preschool implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. We did receive a verification visit during the 2012-13 school year to confirm we are meeting these standards. Administrators, families, staff, and other routinely participating adults will be involved annually in a program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. The annual evaluation process includes gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

### **Admission Requirements**

In order to be admitted to the Tripoli Preschool program, the following requirements are needed:

1. Children must be four years of age prior to September 15th of the current school year to attend four-year-old preschool, and three years of age prior to September 15th to attend three-year-old preschool.
2. Signed consent forms for medical care in emergency cases and permission to give non-aspirin reliever.
3. Completed preschool information and registration forms.
4. A **current** copy of your child's immunization record must be on file by the first day of school.
5. A preschool physical prior to the first day of school must be on file.

### **Tuition**

**\*4 year olds will not be charged tuition for the designated Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) hours of instruction. If a child is only enrolled in SWVPP hours there will be NO charge. SWVPP hours are 8:10 to 11:10 AM Monday through Friday.**

A nonrefundable \$55.00 fee (**per student**) which is used for supplies that are not part of **the instructional program** must be paid at registration.

#### **Tuition is as follows:**

4-day program (half-days)	\$120 (Monthly)
5-day program (half-days)	\$150 (Monthly)
Full-day program	\$100 (Weekly)

**Tuition may be waived for students with an academic/behavioral IEP**

Three-year olds will be offered a half-day program. A full-day program may be offered to three-year olds if space is available.

The **first payment** is due on (**September 1<sup>st</sup>**.) Payments are due the first school day of each month for the half-day program students and the beginning of each week for full-day program students. **The regular fee will still be charged should your child miss sessions due to illness or a conflict in plans.** Our operating costs continue, and the space reserved is for your child. December will be prorated for all-day, every day students.

### **Scholarships**

Preschool Tuition Scholarship applications will be made available to income-eligible families as a result of funding available through the Together 4 Families Collaborative. If you would like more information on the assistance, please contact the Elementary Principal at 882-4203. Fees are subject to change with Board of Education approval. **The school will not be able to help with fees if scholarships are not approved.**

### **Discharge**

Some children at this age may not be ready for a group experience in a structured setting. If a child is having difficulty adjusting and his/her needs are not being met, parents will be consulted to help determine interventions. If interventions are not successful, parents may be asked to withdraw the child. **Also, if a family is more than one month behind on payment, the school has the right to determine if preschool services will continue for the family.**

### **Withdrawal**

If circumstances require that your child discontinue his/her attendance, please contact the Elementary Principal at 882-4203 immediately to allow enrollment of another child on the waiting list. A two-week notice is requested, and tuition is nonrefundable.

### **Absences**

Please contact the Elementary office at 882-4203 when your child will be absent or you may notify the preschool teacher prior to the session. Please keep in mind that continuity is essential for learning, and unexcused absences will impede your child's learning opportunities.

### **Health Concerns**

Tripoli Preschool must have a Parent Emergency Medical Consent Form on file authorizing emergency care. This includes emergency phone numbers for parents and/or guardians.

Children with infectious or communicable diseases are to remain home until the family physician gives permission for them to return to school. Children who arrive at preschool noticeably ill will not be admitted to class that day. Should your child become ill during class time, you will be notified immediately. Symptoms that necessitate keeping your child home include the following:

1. Temperature above 99 degrees

2. Severe coughing
3. Diarrhea (keep home 24 hours after last occurrence)
4. Vomiting (keep home 24 hours after last occurrence)
5. Eye drainage, discharge, or pink eye
6. Sore throat
7. Skin rash (undiagnosed or contagious)

Although we strongly encourage daily attendance at school, we also believe that students should not attend school when they are ill. If you are unsure whether your child should attend, please contact the school nurse.

If your child has been exposed to an unusual level or type of communicable disease a written notice will be sent home by the school nurse. The notice will contain signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures being implemented at school and one that should be implemented at home.

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other person authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child's pediatrician. In the meantime, we will provide the child a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives under the supervision of someone familiar with the child. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then until she or he can be picked up, the child is located where new individuals will not be exposed.

### **Biting Policy**

Our perspective: Biting is a very common behavior among children birth to three years. It is important to think positively of children who bite. Biting is a form of communication, as biting is almost always a response to the child's needs not being met or coping with a challenge or stressor. If we label children as 'biters' we will harm children's self-perceptions and intensify biting behaviors.

How the center will respond: If a biting incident occurs in the classroom the caregivers response will include the following: caregivers will keep their feelings in check and not express frustration or anger to the child, ensure all children are safe, will in a firm calm voice address the child that bit in a short, simple and clear way, will shift their attention to the child who was bitten and show concern and support for that child, go back and talk with the child (if the child is verbal and able to talk) and the different strategies she/he can use next time, instead of biting, and help the children move on. How the center will assess the adequacy of caregiver supervision and the context and the environment in which the biting occurred: the center will ask questions on the quality of relationships between the child and caregivers, consider environmental influences on the child's behavior, and identify targeted social-emotional supports. The center may conduct observations with parent permission, use the data

from observations to find patterns and potential solutions, respond immediately to any unsafe behaviors, and meet with family to collect information about the child's behavior at home, share information, and demonstrate a commitment to working together to address the child's needs.

The center will respond to the individual child or caregiver who was bitten by: showing immediate concern and support to the person being bitten, the child with the challenging behavior should be taught in a caring and firm way that the behavior is not acceptable as well as alternative behaviors; the center will also examine the needs of the child including potential changes to the environment and routines to prevent future incidents, if a child is provided developmentally appropriate and individualized care in a purposefully planned environment, discharging a child is needed only in rare, extreme situations.

First aid procedures will be used to address the appropriate care for injuries and human bites.

### **Medication Policies and Procedures**

**Policy:** The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in the school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

**Procedure:** The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at the school.

For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.



Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log.

## **Toilet Learning**

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:

1. Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the bathroom adjacent to the classroom with a fold down changing table. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.

2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7:

- 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 check 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.

3. Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.

4. 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.

### **Reporting Communicable Diseases:**

Staff and teachers provide information to families in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

### **Supervision**

Students are supervised primarily by sight. The adult to student ratio for 4-year olds is 1:10 and the 3-year olds are 1:9. It is our policy to always stay within ratio.

### **Weather Closings**

In the event of bad weather (heavy snow, ice, bitter cold, etc.), Tripoli Preschool will follow the Tripoli School District when it announces a closing. Please tune into radio or TV stations to hear announcements of school closings or sign-up using Iowa Alerts (link located on the Tripoli Schools website). **In the event of a two-hour late start, IT WILL BE AN OPTION FOR YOU TO SEND YOUR CHILD FOR THE REMAINING TIME. MORNING SESSION WILL END AT REGULAR TIME.**

### **Arrival and Departure**

	<b>Arrival</b>	<b>Departure</b>
Morning (AM) session	8:10 a.m.	11:15 a.m.
Full-Day session	8:10 a.m.	3:20 p.m.

**Please do not bring your children before arrival times.** Tripoli Preschool will not be able to supervise early arrivals. If you have an extenuating circumstance, please provide at least a 24-hour notice to determine appropriate accommodations. In addition, late arrivals will disrupt the flow of activities and will decrease all the children’s learning time. **Preschool families will be allowed to use the Before and After School Day Care Program. If you are interested in the program, there is a \$75 registration fee. If you have any questions, please contact the Elementary office at 882-4203.** We will release your child only to the care of persons listed on the General Information Form. This ensures your child’s safety. You must give prior notification if your child is to be released to anyone not on the permission form.

Please walk your child all the way to the Early Childhood entrance where he/she will be greeted by the teacher. Please make sure the teacher is aware of your child’s arrival. This is for your child’s safety as well as emotional security. Please do not drop your child off in the parking lot AND PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN BUS AREA.

## **Rural Transportation**

Transportation will be provided for **rural** Tripoli Preschool students. If your child attends the AM session the buses will pick him/her up during the morning route. **Parents will need to arrange transportation for their child's departure from school at 11:15 a.m.** If your child is a rural student and will attend the full day session, the buses will provide transportation home and will depart from school at 3:20 p.m. Please indicate if your child needs bus transportation at registration. **IF YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ATTENDING SCHOOL IN THE A.M. AND RIDES THE BUS, PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL BY 7 A.M. SO WE CAN NOTIFY THE BUS DRIVER.**

## **Field Trips**

In the fall, you will be receiving a Parent Consent form for field trips as part of your school registration packet. Your child must have a signed consent form in order to participate in field trips throughout the year. Field trips are an optimal way for children to learn and may be used to introduce, enrich, or culminate teaching units. Prior to each field trip, parents will receive additional information. Always be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the field trips.

## **Mandatory Abuse Reporting**

It is mandatory, under Iowa Code Section 232.69, for the person in charge of a preschool center to report immediately to the Department of Human Services when, in the course of working with a child, the person has reason to believe that the child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect. This report shall be both oral and written.

## **Discipline**

Teaching staff will equitably use positive guidance, redirection, 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, to 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 turn taking.

### **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 promote prosocial behavior by:

- interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
- modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors
- 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 become 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 is there is a recurrence.

#### Prohibited Practices

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

1. harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
2. physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
3. any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
4. withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

#### Newsletter

Weekly emails and/or written notes or newsletters will be sent home to keep you informed of the events happening in the preschool program. We feel it is important to keep an open line of communication and look forward to exchanging ideas and information with all parents. Information can also be found on our district website <http://www.tripoli.k12.ia.us/>.

#### Parental Involvement

Parents are recognized as the first and most important teachers and play an integral role in each child's education. Parents are welcome anytime to volunteer or visit. Please feel free to call or make an appointment if you have any special concerns or questions regarding your child or the preschool program.

#### Preschool Advisory Committee

The Tripoli Preschool has a preschool advisory committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets 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.

### **Visitors**

Parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, relatives, friends, and any interested people are always welcome to visit. However, the first and last months of school are not the best times to visit due to setting a routine and completing assessments. If the teacher is not free to talk with you, please understand that it is difficult to divide one's attention when young children are involved. The children's education is the first priority. Just make yourself comfortable and enjoy the activities. Questions and comments will be gladly accepted at the end of the session.

### **Breakfast, Lunch & Milk**

Tripoli Community School offers a breakfast program to students in grades PK-12. Breakfast is served in the Elementary lunchroom. Elementary students wishing to eat breakfast may enter the building at 7:50 a.m. and should have their breakfast completed by the 8:15 a.m. bell. In case of late bus arrivals, breakfast time will be extended to bus students wishing to eat. (Breakfast is not served when school is delayed due to late starts.)

Hot lunches are also offered at the Elementary building. Two lunch shifts occur with PK-Grade 2 students eating first from approximately 11:25 a.m.-12:05 p.m., and Grades 3-5 students eating from approximately 12:05-12:30 p.m. Milk is served with each hot lunch. Students may purchase an additional carton of milk using their milk tickets or by paying the individual carton fee. Students bringing their own lunches are encouraged to bring a nutritious lunch and may either bring their own nutritious drink or purchase milk from the school. Students are not allowed to trade items from their lunch. Lunch tickets are available for purchase from the elementary office.

### **Snacks**

Snacks will be provided during both the morning and afternoon sessions. The preschool will cover the cost of snacks. If parents would like to provide additional snacks, please contact the teacher prior to doing so. All students wishing to have milk must purchase a milk ticket. Teachers communicate with parents to ensure the safety of food brought from home. Foods must meet the food requirements of USDA's CACFP; all foods and beverages brought from home are labeled with child's name and the date; foods requiring refrigeration stay cold until served; food is provided to supplement food brought from home, if necessary; and food that comes from home for sharing among the children are either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program in individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialist 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 hotdogs, 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, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

### **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 for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet your child's needs. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the teacher understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you'd like addressed. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator.

### **Family Teacher Conferences**

The preschool program will have formal family teacher conferences at the same time as the elementary school - fall and spring. The teacher will send home a sheet before the conference asking you to consider what new skills you see your child developing at home or in the community, to think about what you'd like more information about the classroom, and whether you have new or different goals for your child. 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.

### **Family Night**

Family night is an opportunity for you and your family to come to school to participate in fun as well as educational activities. The teaching staff will select a topic for the evening. The night will be planned to meet the needs of the children and families in the classroom.

### **Preschool Criteria**

The following criteria will determine which children are admitted into our preschool or placed on a waiting list. The following list is not necessarily the order that will be used and is not all inclusive. Final decision of enrollment is subject to administrative approval.

1. Tripoli student
2. Student was enrolled the previous year
3. Age (older student will get preference—by birthday)
4. Carpooling convenience
5. Academic/Behavioral IEP students
6. Date of enrollment
7. Siblings are enrolled in district

### **Objects From Home**

Because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you limit toys brought from home. If your child brings an “attachment” item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

### **Weapon Policy**

No student shall carry, have in his or her possession, store, keep, leave, place or put into the possession of another student any real weapon or a look-alike weapon on any school premises, in any school vehicle or any vehicle used by the school or for school purposes, in any school building or other buildings or premises used for school functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions. "Lookalike weapon" means any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. A zero-tolerance policy on dangerous weapons (real or toy) is in effect; i.e., gun, squirt guns, water rifles or pistols, slingshots, toy guns, toy grenades and other similar items knives, etc. Violation may result in a student suspension/expulsion.

### **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 their families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their 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.

### **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 board secretary in the high school 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.

### **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 concern to your child's teacher.

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 Tripoli 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.

### **Preschool Staff General Information**

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 are 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 at 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 are expected to attend all staff trainings and meetings throughout the year. Trainings will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community.

**Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan** All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor or, in the case of the program administrator, by the superintendent. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflections 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.