

Pacific Ridge Beginning School Family Handbook



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT US.....	4
Our Program	
Our Philosophy	
Our Program Goals	
Adult-Child Interactions	
ENROLLMENT.....	6
Preschool Promise Eligibility	
Attendance	
Withdrawal	
Tuition	
CALENDAR.....	8
Weekly Schedule	
Yearly Calendar	
DAILY LIFE AT PACIFIC RIDGE BEGINNING SCHOOL.....	7/8
Sample Daily Rhythm	
Arrival and Departure	
Quiet Time	
Extra Clothing and Items from Home	
CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT.....	10
Play, Create, and Explore	
Developmental Screening	
Assessment	
SPECIAL PROGRAMS.....	12
Students with Disabilities	
Dual Language Learners	
GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE.....	13
Expectations	
Guidance	
Challenging Behavior in the Classroom	
Peace Corner	
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT	15
Communication	
In the Classroom	
At Home	
Family Engagement Events	

HEALTH AND WELLNESS16
 Immunizations
 Illness
 Head Lice
 Accidents and Illness During the School Day
 Administering Medication and Sunscreen
 Toileting and Toileting Assistance
 Screen Time
SAFETY.....18
 Emergency drills
 School Closures and Delays
 Asbestos
FOOD.....19
TRANSPORTATION.....19

ABOUT US

Our Program

Pacific Ridge Beginning School provides a safe, developmentally appropriate, nurturing environment that promotes social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth as well as a positive self-image and a love of learning.



Our Philosophy

The Pacific Ridge Beginning School has a comprehensive approach to educating and enriching the whole child. We believe children learn best through meaningful play, which encourages curiosity, discovery, and opportunities for problem-solving. A powerful image of the young child as intelligent, creative, and capable allows each child to reach his or her highest potential. A deep respect for difference and a belief that diversity strengthens community creates an environment where children build a strong sense of self and empathy for others. Because we believe children play a central role in their own learning, our approach is founded on the research of child development and how children learn, building on the individual strengths, needs and interests of each child. We also believe that families are the child's first teachers. Children learn best when families are involved in their learning. When children, families, and educators participate together we build opportunities for children to reach their full potential.

ABOUT US (CONT.)

Our Program Goals

Children

- Promote social development through clear and respectful communication
- Foster the growth of functional independence, completion of tasks and self-regulation
- Provide a variety of materials for the development of refined sensory perception and the development of literacy and mathematical understanding
- Curate opportunities for imaginative exploration leading to confident, creative self-expression

Staff

- Support children emotionally and socially by ensuring staff has the appropriate training and supervision so they can be responsive to each individual child while encouraging self-care, independence and self-regulation
- Encourage children intellectually through extensive opportunities for interactive exploration of a variety of tasks and topics
- Promote physical development of each child through providing healthy meals and offering a diverse and interactive outdoor space for physical activity and exploration

Families

- Families support their child's learning and development
- Families share in decisions about their child's care and education

Adult-Child Interactions

At Pacific Ridge Beginning School, teachers are partners in the learning process. They are expected to be the ones who guide experiences, open-ended discovery, and problem solving. The main goal for the teacher is to listen and observe the children, as well as question and listen for opportunities to encourage further exploration of a child's interests. Children and teachers are expected to collaborate, but it's the responsibility of the teacher to identify when a concept can be used to further discovery and learning.

Strategies that Support Children's Social Emotional Needs

- Adults use open-ended questions.
- Adults interact with children at the child's level.
- Adults join in children's play.
- Adults use encouragement instead of praise.
- Adults acknowledge and validate children's emotions.

Strategies that Support Learning, Language, and Concept Development

- Adults provide feedback rather than praise.
- Adults provide support through scaffolding.

ENROLLMENT

Preschool Promise Eligibility

This program is funded in part by a Preschool Promise grant through the Oregon Department of Education Early Learning Division. To be eligible to participate in the Preschool Promise program, children must:

- Be at least three years old, but not older than five years old by September 1 of the year of attendance,
- An Oregon resident, and
- Live in a household with an income at or under 200% poverty.

If you are not eligible for Preschool Promise, please refer to the section below regarding tuition.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential to maximize the opportunity for the growth of your child. Under the guidance of the Preschool Promise grant, it is recommended that all children achieve a minimum average monthly attendance rate of 85%.

If your child is unable to attend due to illness or another unexpected event, please call the PRE main office to report the absence.

If your child must be absent for more than 14 consecutive days, families are expected to request a leave of absence. Children on an approved leave of absence do not need to have eligibility re-verified prior to returning to the Preschool Promise program.

Withdrawal

An absence of 14 days without an approved leave will be considered a withdrawal from the program, and the child will be placed in inactive status.

A parent or guardian will need to request to reactivate the child's enrollment status if they wish to be re-enroll.

Any child who is withdrawn from the program may be reconsidered for re-enrollment if there is a vacancy.

Tuition

We offer a variety of options for tuition. Please select the option below that best meets the needs of your family.

* Note that this is a flat rate per month. The monthly flat rate includes all holidays, school breaks and reduced day months. This flat rate takes the place of each month being prorated.

Full Pay and Sliding Scale (up to 18 slots available)

Cost per month: See below

Annual Income % above Federal Poverty Level			
Family Size	% FPL 201-225	% FPL 226-250	% FPL 251+
2	\$36,540	\$40,600	Does not qualify for a reduction Full-tuition \$550/month
3	\$45,945	\$51,050	
4	\$55,350	\$61,500	
5	\$64,755	\$71,950	
6	\$74,160	\$82,400	
7	\$83,565	\$92,850	
8	\$92,970	\$103,300	

Reduced Tuition	\$385/month	\$465/month	\$550/month
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Preschool Promise Funded (18 slots available)

Cost per month: Free

Annual Income % above Federal Poverty Level	
Family Size	FPL 200%
2	\$34,840
3	\$43,920
4	\$53,000
5	\$62,080
6	\$71,160
7	\$80,240
8	\$89,320

CALENDAR

Weekly Schedule

PRBS holds classes 8:30-2:30, Monday through Friday. Wednesdays are our pre-scheduled early release days, hours are 8:30-1:30.

Yearly Calendar

PRBS follows the Seaside School District calendar for K-5 students. This calendar can be found on the district website.



DAILY LIFE AT PACIFIC RIDGE BEGINNING SCHOOL

Sample Daily Rhythm (times are approximate)

- 8:30 Arrival/Welcome Rituals
- 9:00 Morning Meeting
- 9:30 Explore Time
- 10:30 Outdoor Play
- 11:00 Small Groups
- 11:30 Bathrooms and handwashing
- 11:45 Lunch
- 12:15 Quiet Time
- 12:45 Outdoor Play
- 1:15 Story Workshop
- 1:45 Music/Closing Circle
- 2:30 Dismissal

DAILY LIFE AT PRBS (CONT.)

Arrival and Departure

Guardians/parents will remain with the child until the child is accepted by the staff. Staff will be present no later than 8:30am.

Children must be signed in and out each day in the classroom.

If you need to pick up your child within the scheduled school day (not at regular dismissal time), please visit the PRE main office to request your child be released from class.

Children will not be released to any person not authorized on your child's pick up form without signed, written permission from the parent/guardian.

Anyone who is picking up your child and unfamiliar to the PRBS staff may be asked to show ID.

Quiet Time

PRBS will have a natural quiet time to transition from lunch into our afternoon thinking and learning time. We have cots and blankets to support this time in class.

Extra Clothing and Items from Home

At PRBS sometimes things get a bit messy or children have toilet accidents or spills. Please send an entire change of clothes to be stored in a Ziplock bag and stored at school. Be sure to include:

- pants
- shirt
- underwear
- socks

Children may also bring a small comfort item to be kept in their backpack if needed. These items may be brought out as a tool when working through big emotions, but children will be encouraged to keep them in their backpacks when not in use.

PRBS works hard to create a stimulating and engaging environment for children. Personal toys or other items are best left at home. We plan special days during the year when children may bring a prized possession such as a teddy bear or special toy. Please write your child's name on any artifact brought to school.

Curriculum and Assessment

Play, Create, and Explore

At PRBS, the curriculum is focused on exploration, creation, and play. We use the Tools of the Mind Pre-K curriculum as an evidence-based guiding framework. Your child's teachers will individualize instruction, meeting each child where he or she is in development each day. Your child will be engaged in rich make-believe play with peers, have the opportunity for free play, and engage in small group and partnered literacy, math and science learning activities throughout the day. Our teachers manage transitions, and set up a classroom environment and schedule to support children's self-regulation and executive functions development. Children learn fingerplays, songs and play movement



games to recharge as needed. Each child will be partnered with and play with every other child in the class, and has a teacher focused on the development of the whole child. Our classrooms are joyful places to learn and grow.

At PRBS, teachers use a project approach to explore themes of interest in the classrooms. In working collaboratively on meaningful projects, PRBS children develop academic competencies in authentic contexts. During project work, each child explores concepts of early literacy, math and reasoning differently depending on his or her unique development. While working on significant projects, children discover their own strengths and learn from each other. In working together, children build on each other's knowledge and develop familiarity with language, early math concepts, and scientific thinking and prepare them for the curricular content of kindergarten.

Occasionally we may plan learning experiences that take place outside of the classroom. Field trips are an enjoyable means of extending the daily curriculum and providing opportunities to learn about the community. You will be notified in advance of the date, time, destination, and any necessary preparation needed. Volunteer parent/guardians will be invited and encouraged to attend.

CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT (CONT.)

Developmental Screening

Assessments are an integral part of the PRBS program, and sometimes highlight areas of needed support or intervention. PRBS families will complete a developmental screening (ASQ) for each child within 45 days of entering the program. If the screening shows or the child's teaching team suspects a developmental delay or other special need, families would be contacted to share the concerns and request permission for further observations and assessments. All information is communicated to families in a private conference, where the teaching team will be able to guide the family toward resources for further assessment and specialized support.



Assessment

At PRBS, assessment is not only an integral part of our program. It is also an opportunity to celebrate the successes and growth of each child. Teachers use Teaching Strategies Gold, an authentic, observation based tool that allows teachers to focus on the strengths of each child as well as opportunities for growth specific to each child. This information is compiled in a portfolio that will be shared with families during parent-teacher conferences.

Special Programs

Students with Disabilities

The Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) program through Northwest Regional Educational Service District (NWRES D) provides services for children who are experiencing developmental delays and their families. Services available include: specialized classes, speech therapy, occupational and physical therapy and services from specialized teachers. Services, including evaluation, are free of charge to families. PRBS and NWRES D work together, when needed, to provide children the tools they need to succeed. A student or parent/guardian with questions should contact the preschool program director.

Dual Language Learners

PRBS places a high priority on equity and culturally responsive practice. We believe being exposed to two or more languages as a young child is a gift and children who are exposed to multiple languages benefit cognitively, socially, and emotionally. We provide an environment in which children are supported in their language development through research-based practices and provide resources for bilingual families to support the learning of their home language as well.



Guidance and Discipline

Expectations

It is vital to the well-being and successful development of children that they have clear, consistent, and appropriate limits on behavior. PRBS teachers strive to create an environment that supports all children in their play and learning. Students will be taught behavioral expectations and held to those expectations through the year. We have three basic rules for children:

1. Be Safe
2. Be Kind
3. Do the Right Thing

Guidance

Our teachers respond to all of the children's behavior related to these expectations in a developmentally appropriate manner. At PRBS, the term "guidance" is used to describe the non-punishing methods in which teachers lead children's behavior in positive directions so that they learn to respect themselves and others and control their actions. Teachers intervene to keep the environment safe and productive in a way that models respect for others. PRBS teachers never use withholding food, threats of withholding food, coercion, bribing, physical intimidation or physical punishment in guidance of children. We use four basic guidance and discipline strategies designed to both teach children self-regulation and preserve their self esteem.

1. Honoring Natural Consequences
2. Setting Respectful Limits
3. Validating Feelings
4. Problem-Solving

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE (CONT.)

Student who demonstrate social or emotional lagging skills in the Classroom

When lagging skills are identified and not resolved using the above described guidance strategies, teachers may request the support of a support specialist to use functional assessment procedures to discover patterns and better understand the behavior. The functional assessment tool allows us to see lagging skill patterns by documenting the antecedent, behavior, and consequence of different challenging scenarios. When lagging skills persist for a child, the child's teaching staff may develop an Individualized Support Plan (ISP) in partnership with the family to support the child with the appropriate

interventions. All child assessment information is kept in confidential folders accessible only to the child's teaching staff and the child's family.

Peace Corner

PRBS does not use or condone the use of time-outs as punishment. We believe time-outs send the message that children are only welcome in the group when their behavior is desirable and will be isolated if their behavior is undesirable. This can be damaging to a child's confidence and emotional health. In fact, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) includes the use of time-outs in a list of harmful disciplinary measures, along with physical punishment, criticizing, blaming, and shaming. Our classrooms each have a designated Peace Corner, a quiet area of the classroom where children have the opportunity to practice the self-calming strategies we teach in the classroom. The Peace Corner is offered as a strategy, and children use it voluntarily either independently or with support from an adult, depending on their level of development. Our approach empowers the child to work with us in exploring their feelings, solving problems, and creating agreements. We aim to send the child the message, no matter the situation, that the love and commitment of trusted adults is unconditional.

Responding to Student Behavior

At times our youngest learners may demonstrate unsafe behaviors that impact their learning and the learning of others. Our staff will follow a progressive support/discipline model in collaboration with the teacher, parents, building support staff, specialist, and school administration when appropriate. We believe that kids do well when they can and will work with the family to develop supports, programming and schedules that best meet the needs of each individual child. We expect that the family is a critical part of this process and will communicate early and often to provide the support necessary for a smooth transition into pre-school and beyond.

Family Engagement

Communication

Communication is the key to a positive partnership between families and caregivers, and we value the relationships we nurture with each child and his/her family members. We work to communicate with families in the following ways:

- Individual orientation conferences before classes begin
- Daily communication with parents/guardians via digital communication system
- Family engagement surveys

- Formal conferences in December and March

In the Classroom

Preschool is often a child's first independent experience away from home, and we work hard to include families in the family center in our classroom through:

- Family-created "My Books"
- Family photos
- Hopes and Dreams display

Families are always welcome to visit and volunteer in the classroom. All volunteers must have an approved background check on file with the district office.

At Home

Families are encouraged to engage in their child's education at home through weekly family engagement bags. These bags provide resources for supporting your child's growth in social-emotional learning through game play and reflection. The bags also include a selection of books to read together throughout the week.

Family Engagement Events

We will hold three family engagement events throughout the year. These events will provide opportunities for families to engage together in activities supporting growth in social-emotional skills, math, and literacy. The content of these events will be designed around the results of the family engagement survey to provide support to families in a way that supports their needs for growth as a family.

Health and Wellness

Immunizations

Oregon law requires the following immunizations for school attendance. Parent/guardians must provide documentation from their health care provider that each child's immunizations are up-to-date. Exceptions are granted only with a signed medical/religious exemption form. To enter preschool, a student must have the following immunizations:

- 4 Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTaP)
- 3 Polio
- 1 Varicella (chicken pox)
- 1 Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)
- 3 Hepatitis B
- 2 Hepatitis A
- 3 or 4 Hib

Illness

We expect all staff, volunteers, and children to stay home if they are sick. If your child is ill or his/her fever is higher than 100.4, you should contact your health care provider for advice. If you need help in finding a healthcare provider, you may call your local health department or State of Oregon Health Plan (503-378-2422).

Head Lice

If you discover your child has head lice at home, please call the secretary if you need information on how to get rid of them and to alert us so we can check your child's fellow students. After treatment, school personnel will check the student upon returning to school, and families will be notified of any additional concerns.

Accidents and Illness During the School Day

In case of a serious accident to a child, we will first try to contact the parent/guardian after calling 911. If we are unable to reach the parent/guardian, we will call the emergency numbers listed in the child's file. If we are still unable to reach anyone, we will have the child transported to a hospital in accordance with the emergency medical technician's evaluation of your child's condition. No care beyond minimum first aid will be administered at school because we have limited health room facilities. Should a child become ill, we will contact the parent/guardian to send the child home.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS (CONT.)**Administering Medication and Sunscreen**

Students may be permitted to take prescription or nonprescription medication at school or at school-sponsored activities on a temporary or regular basis, when necessary.

District-Administered Medication Requests for the district to administer medication shall be made by the parent/guardian in writing. Please contact the school nurse at 503-738-5161 to arrange medication requests.

Families are encouraged to provide sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher for sunny days. Sunscreen may only be applied to a child with written parent/guardian permission.

Toileting and Toileting Assistance

Children will be provided with support and instruction on toileting and hygiene (i.e. washing hands) during their entry into the program and as needed individually.

Children will be encouraged to be independent to the greatest extent possible when using the toilet. Staff will work with parents to develop a consistent toilet training plan between home and school when a child is learning to be independent with toileting. We encourage a relaxed approach focused on success and growth in the process.

Families are encouraged to dress children in clothing that allows children to be successful in undressing and dressing to use the toilet.

At PRBS we realize that occasional accidents are a normal part of the toilet learning process. Children will never be punished for accidents, and staff will assist children with changing and clean up while offering reassurance and encouragement toward future success.

Children will be supervised as needed while toilet learning. Staff will not be left alone and out of sight or hearing distance of another staff member when with a child at any time.

Field Trips: Before leaving the preschool, children will be encouraged to use the toilet. When children need to use the toilet on a field trip, a staff person will always accompany children into off-site restrooms.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS (CONT.)

Screen Time

PRBS utilizes a very limited amount of screen time/electronic media for educational purposes. Screen time/electronic media includes, but is not limited to Video/DVD, electronic games, tablets, and computers. Screen time/electronic media is used intentionally to enhance the educational experience of children in our program. Screen time/electronic media is used to expand on topics the children are learning and is age appropriate. Screen time/electronic media may be included during times of the day such as free choice, small groups, group discussions, and stations. PRBS will encourage active child involvement by asking questions and providing additional information. If children choose not to participate in a screen time/electronic media activity, they may choose another activity (reading a book/coloring/drawing). Screen time/electronic media is limited to no more than 1 hour a day. Screen time/electronic media will be non-violent and culturally sensitive.

Safety

Emergency drills

Emergency, fire, lockdown and earthquake drills are held regularly throughout the year to instruct students in procedures that should be followed in the event of a real emergency such as a fire, earthquake or a lockdown. Each of these drills is approached in a developmentally appropriate manner with the focus being on learning the procedures.

School Closures and Delays

If the Seaside School District does not have school because of snow or ice, PRBS will not have school. If the District has a two-hour delay, PRBS will open for drop-off at 9:30 a.m. with class starting at 10:00. Please listen to the radio or TV newscasts for cancellation notices. Phone calls are made and emails are also sent so please keep your contact information current.

Asbestos

The district has complied with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) by having its buildings inspected by accredited inspectors and by developing a management plan for the control of this substance. The management plan is available for public inspection in the district office. The District Head Custodian serves as the district's asbestos program manager and may be reached for additional information at 503-738-5591.

Food

Breakfast and lunch are provided at no charge for every child in our program due to the federal meal program at our school.

Families may choose to provide their own meals from home.

If you bring in treats or snacks for class parties or birthdays, only commercially prepared healthy foods are allowed. Additionally, foods may not contain peanuts or be manufactured in a facility that processes nuts. We believe it is important to emphasize good health and to help students learn healthy eating habits. While there is a time and place for sweets, 25 birthdays per class per year is a lot of extra sweets. Please ask if you have questions or need suggestions for healthy snack choices.

Transportation

Transportation will be offered to all children enrolled at PRBS.

Questions regarding busing routes and schedules should be directed to Anna Borges, Director of Transportation, at 503-738-7150.

Children enrolled in PRBS will not be released from the bus without an adult present at the stop.

Each student will have a PRIMARY DESTINATION and METHOD of TRANSPORTATION after school: · The destination may be: home, childcare center, neighbor's house or other. · The method of transportation may be: parent/guardian pickup at school, other designated person to pick up at school, or ride the bus. Any changes to the PRIMARY DESTINATION must be made through the PRE main office.