

# Blair Community Schools

## Early Childhood Preschool Parent Handbook

2019-2020



Located at Deerfield Elementary School  
1100 Deerfield Blvd.

**Preschool Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Preschool Office      402-427-2715**

**Bus Barn                402-426-4509**

[www.blairschools.org](http://www.blairschools.org) (District Website)  
[www.ps.blairschools.org](http://www.ps.blairschools.org) (Preschool Website)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>District Information</b> .....	<b>3</b>
School Administration, Mission Statement, Belief Statements, Nondiscrimination Statement, Section 504 District Coordinator, School Messaging System, School Closings, Safe School Plans and Drills, Home-School Transition	
<b>Welcome to Preschool</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Purpose & Philosophy	
<b>Classes and Calendar</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Preschool Classes, Preschool Calendar	
<b>Enrollment Information</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Required Paperwork	
<b>Attendance Information</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Reporting Your Child’s Absence	
<b>Home and School Partnerships</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Home Visits, Home School Communication, Parent Volunteers, Family Activities, What Families Can Do	
<b>Health and Medical Information</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Preschool Immunization Record Requirement, Student Health, Communicable Disease Chart, School Health Screenings, Medication at School	
<b>Nutrition Information</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Nutrition Guidelines, Meals, Meal Cost & Free and Reduced-Priced Meals, Nondiscrimination Statement – Federal School Lunch Program	
<b>Program Information</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Curriculum, Daily Activities, Assessment and Reporting Progress, Social and Emotional Development: The Pyramid Model, Supply List, Celebrations, Birthdays, School Pictures, Media Release, Field Trips, Gifts to Staff Members, Student Insurance, Student Legal Name, Student Placement, Visiting Preschool	
<b>Transportation &amp; Arrival/Dismissal Procedures</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Bus Transportation, Preschool Parking, Preschool Entrance, Arrival & Dismissal Time, Changes in Transportation Arrangements	
<b>Tuition</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Preschool Tuition, Tuition Payments	
<b>Handbook Signature &amp; Media Release Permission Form</b> .....	<b>17</b>

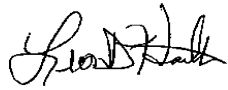
July 1, 2019

Dear Preschool Families,

We welcome you and your child to the Blair Community Schools center-based Early Childhood Preschool program. The experience of this memorable year will be exciting and rewarding. We look forward to working as a team to support your child's development.

We have prepared this handbook to share some basic information about our early childhood preschool program as well as some suggestions that can help you and your child as you begin the school year. Best wishes for a successful school year. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Mr. Leon Haith  
Director of Student Services

## DISTRICT INFORMATION

### School Administration

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Randy Gilson  
Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Dani Ladwig  
Activities Director, Dustin Penas  
Senior High Assistant Principal, Mark Gutschow  
Middle School Assistant Principal, Kyle Johnson  
North & South Primary Principal, Amy Rogers  
Transportation Director, Bill Brown

Director of Student Services, Leon Haith  
Business Manager, Tom Shearer  
Senior High Principal, Tom Anderson  
Middle School Principal, Dr. Chris Stogdill  
3-5 Intermediate Principal, Laura Jackson  
Deerfield Primary Principal, Leon Haith  
Technology Director, Mark Dickinson

### Blair Community Schools Mission Statement:

Blair Community Schools . . . Where All Students Learn!

### Blair Community Schools Belief Statements

We believe the following:

- Each child is unique with special talents.
- Human diversity is recognized and respected.
- Each student will achieve proficiency of essential content and skills.
- Change is necessary for continued growth.
- Efficient and effective use of technology will improve student learning.
- Frequent and varied assessments are essential for effective education.
- A supportive environment nurtures, challenges and encourages student to reach their full potential.
- A safe and secure environment, including mutual respect and self-discipline, is essential for student learning.
- A partnership with the community, home, school and student is necessary for student success.
- Thinking and problem solving skills are essential for student learning.

### Nondiscrimination Statement

Blair Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability or age in admission or access to, or treatment of employment in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints, grievance procedures, or the application of these policies of nondiscrimination:

Title: Director of Student Services – Leon Haith  
Address: 1100 Deerfield Blvd. / PO Box 288; Blair, NE 68008  
Phone: 402-427-2711

### **Section 504 District Coordinator (Grades K-12)**

Blair Community Schools designates the following employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended:

Leon Haith, Director of Student Services, 402-427-2711, leon.haith@blairschools.org

The Director may, at his discretion, delegate this responsibility to an appropriate staff person.

### **School Messaging System – Telephone, Email, Text**

Blair Community Schools uses a messaging service to notify parents via telephone, email and text regarding academic progress, school information, or school and/or district activities. Parents may choose to opt out of messaging services. Please contact your child’s school for more information.

### **School Closings**

Cancellation of school takes place only during circumstances of extreme weather conditions, equipment failure or public crisis. The school board and administrators are aware of the hardship caused by an abrupt cancellation.

Therefore, school is not cancelled unless a significant risk has been created by unusual circumstances.

If school is canceled, delayed or dismissed during the day, information is communicated directly to parents through the school messaging system using phone call, email or text as well as announced on radio and TV stations (KFAB 1110 AM, KMTV Channel 3, WOWT Channel 6, KETV Channel 7, FOX Channel 42).

During preschool enrollment, parents/guardians will provide information that advises us about the procedure to follow if an emergency dismissal occurs during the day.

If weather conditions persist, students would not be released from school until conditions have improved. When conditions are favorable, students are released to parents/guardians or the adults listed on the Family Information form.

In the event of a late start due to weather, preschool classes will still be held and will begin when school opens. No breakfast will be served in the event of a late start due to weather.

### **Safe School Plans And Drills**

Drills are conducted periodically during the school year to prepare staff and students for emergency situations. Evacuate, Shelter, Hold, Lockout and Lockdown are examples of such drills. Hold and Lockout are safety procedures that keep students in their assigned classroom for a period of time. A Lockdown is a more restrictive safety procedure. In a Lockdown situation, the building is locked down and students and staff follow procedures designated for student safety.

### **Home-School Transition**

The information in this handbook contains information related to policies and procedures for our preschool program. The goal of the Blair Community Schools is to provide quality education for all students. This can only be accomplished through school effort and parent/guardian interaction and support. Therefore, we invite your questions and encourage your interest.

## **WELCOME TO PRESCHOOL**

We are pleased that you have chosen the Blair Community Schools Early Childhood Preschool program for your child and your family. We recognize the importance of a high quality early childhood experience for all children and we also value the partnership with families. We realize that children learn both at home and at school, therefore our program is inclusive and family focused to facilitate child learning in all developmental areas

(cognitive, language, physical, adaptive and social/emotional) and content areas (literacy, math, social studies, science, and the arts).

### **Purpose And Philosophy**

The purpose of the Blair Community Schools Early Childhood Preschool Program is to provide a high quality early childhood experience for your child in a safe, supporting and stimulating environment where children develop and progress in a fun, developmentally appropriate classroom. One of the main goals of the preschool program is to prepare children for Kindergarten. Your child will participate in a preschool curriculum that promotes learning through play and discovery, as teachers support children's pre-academic progress, while respecting the ways they grow and develop. Parental involvement is an integral part of the preschool program.

## **CLASSES AND CALENDAR**

### **Preschool Classes**

The Blair Community Schools Early Childhood Preschool program for the 2019-20 school year will include five classrooms – two 3-year old classrooms and three 4-year old classrooms.

#### **Half-Day Preschool Classes for 3-year olds:**

8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (Monday – Thursday)

This class will not meet on Fridays.

Classroom A2: Mrs. Carly Miller

Classroom B1: Mrs. Brooke Roach

#### **Extended Day Preschool Classes for 4-year olds:**

8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (Monday – Thursday) and 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (Fridays)

Classroom A5: Miss Lauren Diffey

Classroom B2: Mrs. Lauri Schlachter

Classroom B3: Mrs. Krissy Anderson

\*NOTE: The late start on Fridays is for all Blair Community Schools buildings to allow time for PLC (Professional Learning Community) teacher meetings.

Breakfast (except for Fridays) and lunch are provided and are part of the daily schedule and activities in all five classrooms.

Additional classroom support will be provided by:

Paraprofessionals in each classroom

Angie Soukup, Speech Language Pathologist; Nicole Knight, Occupational Therapist; Matt Wood, Physical Therapist  
Office Staff: Karen Green, Preschool Secretary; Jane Prieksat, Family Service Coordinator

### **Preschool Calendar**

An Early Childhood Preschool calendar has been developed for the 2019-2020 school year. While the preschool calendar mirrors the district calendar as closely as possible there are 3 Preschool Teacher Inservice days when preschool students will not be in session, but older students in the district will have school. Preschool Teacher Inservice days for 2019-20 are: September 9, October 11, & April 16. Please mark your calendars for these dates.

## **ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

Children enrolled in preschool must be at least 3 years old on or before July 31 of the year attending preschool and not turn 5 years old on or before July 31 of the year attending preschool.

#### **1. Certified Birth Certificate.**

In accordance with state guidelines, we must have a copy of the Birth Certificate before your child can attend our preschool program. This must be the original Birth Certificate with the raised seal. The certified Birth Certificate must be brought to the Preschool Office prior to the first day of preschool. Upon review, we will make a copy of the Birth Certificate and return the original to you.

2. **Preschool Enrollment Form for children NEW to preschool or Family Information Form for children who are returning to preschool**  
Parents should include current phone numbers and 3 emergency contacts (other than the parent)
3. **Immunization Record**  
A copy of your child's up-to-date immunization record from your child's doctor is required. Your child's immunizations must be up-to-date before he/she can attend our preschool program. It is not necessary for returning students to turn in an immunization record unless there has been an update to the immunizations since last year.
4. **Health Screening Update**  
Information about your child's current health status.
5. **Child Information Form –**  
The information you include on this form helps your child's teacher to know your child's interests and most current developmental levels.
6. **Free & Reduced-Price Meals Application – (ONLINE)**  
This application is required in order to be considered for a special consideration that may reduce preschool tuition, depending on qualification.
7. **Transportation Application (Only necessary for children who qualify for transportation.)**  
Children receiving special services qualify for bus transportation to and from school. Children who live outside the city of Blair and live on an established bus route qualify for MORNING transportation only.

## **ATTENDANCE INFORMATION**

### **Reporting Your Child's Absence**

Your child must attend class regularly for optimum learning. Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in school. We encourage you to take vacations and trips during school holidays or during the summer. When at all possible, we ask that doctor and dental appointments, as well as any other appointments for your child, be scheduled for times when preschool is not in session.

**If it is necessary for your child to be absent, please call the Preschool Office at 402-427-2715 as soon as possible prior to the start of class.** Leaving a voicemail is acceptable. If your child is a bus student, please notify the Bus Barn of your child's absence. If your child is not in attendance and if no parent reports the child's absence to the Preschool Office, we will contact you to inquire about your child's absence.

Teachers begin their school day promptly in order to maximize the instructional time. When your child arrives late it requires one member of the teaching team to interrupt classroom instruction to assist your child, which disrupts their learning and the learning of others.

If your child has excessive absences (more than 5 unexcused absences in a quarter), we will schedule a meeting between the family and the preschool staff to discuss your child's absences and support needed for regular preschool attendance.

*If, after 15 minutes from dismissal, your child has not been picked up and no contact has been made with the parents, we will attempt to contact your child's designated emergency contacts. In the event that we cannot reach emergency contacts, we may contact the Blair Police Department.*

## **HOME AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Home Visits**

Home visits are required in order for our preschool program to be in compliance with requirements from the Nebraska Department of Education. These visits also allow families and staff to support one another during the preschool years. The Preschool Secretary will contact you in late July/early August to schedule the first home visit. During the school year your child's preschool teacher will contact you to schedule the additional 3 or 4 remaining visits. Teachers may schedule these as home visits or as conferences at school. You can typically plan for these

visits to last 30-60 minutes. Preschool teachers and families will need to work together to find a mutually agreed upon time for each visit.

Home visits:

- promote a strong relationship between families and teachers
- build strong connections between home and school that support a child's success
- provide an opportunity to discuss the teacher's goals and the family's expectations for the child
- set goals for your child
- create an opportunity to discuss any needs families may have
- allow educational efforts to continue by bringing learning activities, books, or other suggestions to the family.

### **Home – School Communication**

Your child's teacher will provide a School-to-Home folder as a means of communicating information.

We ask that families review this information daily and return it to school the next day.

### **Parent Volunteers**

Parent participation is an important aspect of the preschool program. You are a necessary contributor to your child's learning process. We encourage parent volunteers in our preschool program. The following are some ways a parent may help in the preschool program:

- Share your special talents - teach a dance or song, play a musical instrument, share a special collection
- Save "throw-away" items for use in the classroom (e.g., buttons, ribbons, toilet paper/paper towel rolls, material scraps, yarn, egg cartons, shoe boxes)
- Read a story
- Prepare classroom materials (e.g., cutting out items, hanging student artwork)
- Help children with routine tasks.

If you would like to volunteer in your child's classroom, please speak with your child's teacher. School-issued ID badges are not required as long as a teacher is present in the classroom at the time you are volunteering. However, we ask that you stop in the preschool office, sign in and get a Visitor sticker.

### **Family Activities**

Family involvement in school activities promotes student success and is an important component of our preschool program. Research shows that the most effective Early Childhood Programs are those that involve parents in meaningful ways. Throughout the school year, a variety of family involvement activities are planned. Specific information will be shared with you ahead of the activities. We encourage you and your child to attend these activities. Individuals needing special accommodations for attendance at preschool activities should contact the Director of Student Services at least two days before a preschool activity/event.

### **What Families Can Do**

We value the important role that parents play in their child's education.

Some ways for parents to support learning are:

- Go to the library with your children.
- Read stories daily.
- Go to the park or explore your backyard.
- Do simple cooking projects with your child.
- Give your child opportunities to help you at home.
- Play with your child.
- Limit screen time – TV, tablet, phone, video games.
- Teach your child to take good care of toys and put them away.
- Encourage good health habits (washing hands with soap, proper use of tissue, brushing teeth)
- Eat healthy foods.
- Schedule an appropriate bedtime.
- Invite a friend to play.

- Display your child's work.
- Listen to and talk with your child.
- Show your child how you write to create lists and notes.
- Encourage exploration of different art media (paint, Play-Doh, tissue paper, construction paper, glue, scissors).
- Provide writing materials (crayons, markers, pencils, paper, cards).

## **HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION**

### **Preschool Immunization Record Requirement**

Students are required to be immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, rubella, polio, varicella, polio, haemophilus B, and pneumococcus. The day, month, and year of each immunization must be recorded on school records before the student enters school.

Minimum requirements for children ages 2 through 5 years enrolled in a school-based program not licensed as a childcare provider:

- 4 doses of DTaP, DTP, or DT
- 3 doses of Polio vaccine
- 3 doses of Hib vaccine or 1 dose of Hib given at or after 15 months of age
- 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine
- 1 dose of MMR or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age
- 1 dose of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age.
- Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted.
- 4 doses of pneumococcal or 1 dose of pneumococcal given on or after 15 months of age.

Students not in compliance will not be permitted to enter school. Only the following exceptions apply:

1. Medical exceptions for health reasons substantiated by a signed statement from a physician.
2. Religious conflict substantiated by the parent or legal guardian and notarized.
3. Student has begun the required immunizations and continues to receive the necessary immunizations as rapidly as is medically feasible substantiated by a signed statement from a physician.
4. Documented history of varicella disease from a parent or health care provider with year of infection constitutes evidence of immunity to varicella.

### **Student Health**

Regular attendance is desired; however, a child who is ill or has symptoms of illness should be kept home until the parent/guardian is sure he/she is well enough to attend school.

**Children should be fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Children with diarrhea or vomiting should be kept home.**

Please call the Preschool Office (402-427-2715) as soon as possible if your child will be absent due to illness. Leaving a voicemail regarding the absence is acceptable if calling before 7:30 a.m.

If a child shows signs of illness (e.g. fever of 100.0° or greater, vomiting, diarrhea, rash) during the school day, the parent/guardian will be contacted to come pick up the child from school. Parents/guardians must list three emergency contacts when enrolling in preschool who can assume responsibility for the sick child if they are not available. These individuals should (preferably) live within the Blair School District.

After having a communicable and contagious disease or condition (see chart below), a child must see the school nurse or have written approval from a doctor before returning to school. A recurrence of a communicable disease



(or condition) may result in a child being excluded from school until there is evidence the condition has been treated or eliminated.

### **Communicable and Contagious Diseases**

Children showing any signs or symptoms of a contagious or infectious disease will be evaluated by a school nurse and upon consultation with a parent/guardian, may be sent home. If a child has an illness that keeps him/her out of school for more than three days, the child should be under the care of a physician. The chart below outlines common childhood illnesses and diseases. For further information, please contact your child’s school nurse or family physician.

<b>Disease</b>	<b>Usual Incubation Period</b>	<b>Minimum Period of Exclusion</b>
Meningitis	2-10 days	Exclude for duration of illness.; return with documented physician approval.
Step Infection, Strep Throat, Scarletina, Scarlet Fever	1-3 days	Exclude until fever-free and under treatment for 24 hours.
Chicken Pox	2-3 weeks	At least 5 days after the first eruption appears or until vesicles become dry.
German Measles	14-21 days for no less than 4 days	Exclude for duration of illness and after onset of rash.
Measles	10-14 days	Exclude for duration of illness and for no less than 4 days onset of rash.
Mumps	2-3 weeks	Exclude until swelling has subsided.
Fifth Disease	6-14 days	Exclude until fever and malaise are gone. May return with rash with documented physicians approval.
Impetigo	4 – 10 days	Exclude until brought under treatment and acute symptoms resolved.
Scabies	Infection caused by mites. Lesions symptomatic after 4-6 weeks.	Exclude until the day after treatment is started.
Pediculosis (Lice)	Eggs hatch 1 week; mature in 2-3 weeks	Exclude until after appropriate treatment is started (and no live lice are found).
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	24-72 hours	Exclude while symptomatic. May return when eye appears normal or with documented physician approval.
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	7 days	Exclude until physician approves return with written documentation.
Enterobiasis (Pinworm)	Life cycle about 3-6 weeks.	Exclude until treated as documented by physician.
Hepatitis A	15-50 days	Exclude for no less than 7 days after onset of jaundice. Return with documented physician approval.
Influenza	24-72 hours	Exclude for duration of illness.
Diphtheria	2-5 days	Return with documentation.

### **School Health Screenings**

As part of the Preschool enrollment process parents/guardians fill out a Health Screening Update. The school nurse also conducts a health screening at the beginning of the year. If the need arises during the year, the school nurse examines individual students.

## **Medication at School**

For the safety of all students, the following regulations will be enforced for medication at school:

### **All Medications:**

All medications brought to school, whether prescription or over-the-counter, must have a Medication Permit form filled out and signed by the parent or guardian. These are available in each school office or online at the Blair Schools web site. All medications, whether over-the-counter or prescription, must be kept in the nurse's office. Medications brought to school in containers other than the original prescription or commercial container, or without a proper Medication Permit, will not be administered to the student at school. Such medication will be returned home at the end of the day and the parent will be notified.

### **Prescription Medication:**

- Prescription medication should be transported to and from school by the parent/guardian. In all cases, such medication is to be brought directly to the office for the principal or nurse to document and secure.
- All prescription medication must be in the prescription bottle and properly labeled by the pharmacy, with the student's name and directions for administration.
- Medications brought to school are limited to a 30-day supply or 30 pills only.
- Only the amount of medicine prescribed by the physician will be dispensed at any one time. A note from the physician, or an updated prescription bottle that is properly labeled by the pharmacy with the student's name and directions for administration, is needed to change the dose given.

### **Over-the-Counter Medication (OTC)**

- OTC medication such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or other OTC medications for minor health issues may be brought to school for student use, but must be brought directly to the office for the principal or nurse to document and secure.
- OTC medications must be in the commercial container. OTC medication sent to school as individual loose doses/pills or in baggies, envelopes, or other containers not original to the OTC medication will not be given to the student.
- Expired OTC medication will not be given, and will be sent home.

### **Asthma or Anaphylaxis Medications and Diabetes**

In 2006, the State of Nebraska passed legislation providing for student possession and self-administration of prescription asthma or anaphylaxis medication, and for student self-management of diabetes at school and school-related activities. The school district has developed procedures and forms to implement the self-management plans, and these are available through the Director of Student Services office. Please contact your child's school nurse or principal for more information.

## **NUTRITION INFORMATION**

### **Nutritional Guidelines**

Children in each preschool classroom will receive breakfast and lunch each day (except no breakfast is served on Fridays due to late start). Meals are required to meet the Meal Guidelines established for Child and Adult Care Food Program by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service.

Breakfast contains: one milk, one fruit/vegetable, and one grain/bread

Lunch contains: one milk, two fruits/vegetables, one grain/bread, and one meat/meat alternate

**Meals** - Breakfast and lunch are served family style in each classroom. Family style meals:

- allow children to identify and be introduced to new foods, new tastes and new menus
- allow children to choose the amount of food they wish to have on their plates
- provide an opportunity for children to practice good table manners and social skills
- create opportunities for children to learn and practice new skills with their hands and fingers
- engage in communication activities with their peers and adults in the classroom

### **Meal Cost & Free and Reduced Price Meals**

The cost of breakfast and lunch in the preschool classrooms is included in the preschool tuition. While there is no cost for meals, qualifying for Free and Reduced Price meals status is one of the Special Considerations that will reduce preschool tuition. (Refer to PRESCHOOL TUITION section in the Handbook.)

- Families who want to apply for free or reduced price meal status must complete the Free & Reduced Price Family Meal Application before school begins.
- A new application must be submitted each year.
- Only ONE application per family is needed.
- Please include ALL children in one family on the application.
- The application is an online application and available after July 1, 2019. Look for a link on the Blair Schools website.

**Until a family has been determined to meet the guidelines for free or reduced price meals, this information cannot be used to reduce preschool tuition.**

If your family does not qualify for free or reduced price meals at this time, but a parent or guardian becomes unemployed or has a change in employment that results in the household income dropping below the income limit, the family should contact the Director of Student Services (402-427-2711) to inquire about eligibility.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement – Federal School Lunch Program**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the Agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust) and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410  
Fax: (202) 690-7442 Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **Curriculum**

The preschool program uses a comprehensive and integrated early learning curriculum designed to ensure success for today's preschool-aged learners. The program is research-based and helps teachers build a community of learners. Through the use of comprehensive and thorough lessons with high interest activities, children are engaged with a flexible instructional plan that allows them to learn and explore at many different levels.

### **Daily Activities**

A variety of developmentally appropriate activities occur daily in your child's preschool classroom.

Activities in your child's day include:

- Large group opening activities
- Breakfast and lunch

- Calendar and communication activities
- Work time/centers (choice)
- Rest period (for children in classrooms extending beyond four hours a day)
- Closing and wrap up activities.
- Small groups
- Gross motor/outdoor play

Children will have gross motor time and activities daily. Gross motor time is important because children need daily opportunities to exercise large muscles, run in open spaces, and practice gross motor skills. It is important for children to be engaged in gross motor play safely. Children are required to wear footwear that is appropriate for daily gross motor play.

When weather conditions permit, daily gross motor time will occur outside. **Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather.**

### **Assessment and Reporting Progress**

Every child in our program is an individual with different interests, skills, strengths and needs. Our goal is to get to know as much as possible about each child so that we can guide learning and plan experiences. To do this, we use an authentic, ongoing, observation-based assessment system to gather information on each child's development and learning, known as Teaching Strategies GOLD.

The children are assessed two times each year (fall and spring) utilizing Teaching Strategies GOLD, which includes on-going observations, samples of classroom work and family input. Home visits are conducted at least two times during the school year to encourage parental involvement and discuss each child's current performance and progress.

Teaching Strategies GOLD meets the Nebraska requirements for Results Matter, a comprehensive project that assesses child progress and collects longitudinal data and measures program quality of preschools.

### **Social And Emotional Development: The Pyramid Model**

The Early Childhood Pyramid Model provides a framework of evidence-based practices that promote young children's social-emotional competence, and prevent and address challenging behaviors.

The model was designed as a promotion, prevention and intervention framework and is built on the foundation of a high quality workforce.

The three tiers of the Pyramid Model include:

1. high quality learning environments that have positive behavior expectations and predictable routines
2. the intentional teaching of social-emotional strategies such as play skills and emotional regulation
3. individualized interventions for children who need a positive behavior support plan

### **Supply List**

The most important items we ask parents to supply are:

- A Backpack - large enough to hold 8.5 x 11 folder
- Extra set of clothes – include shirt, pants, underclothes and socks. This is not only in case of an accident, but may also be necessary when dry or clean clothing might be needed after water play or active play when conditions warrant a fresh change of clothes. As seasons change, please remember to send an extra set of clothing that is appropriate for the weather.

Supplies we may at times request are:

- 1 box of tissues
- 1 set of 8-count watercolor paints (Crayola or Rose Art brand)
- 1 box of Ziploc bags
- 1 container of Clorox wipes
- 1 package of glue sticks
- 1 container of baby wipes

We may need craft or other classroom items periodically. When items are needed, we will include a call for items in our monthly communication sheet and post it on the parent information boards. If you are able to donate any requested items, please send them to preschool with your child.

### **Celebrations**

Our program believes that parents are the child's most important teachers. We believe that parents should teach their children about their culture, their values and their faith beliefs. Our classroom activities are developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive, and inclusive of all children and families. Our classrooms may include celebrations of:

- Milestones - learning to whistle, telling a story, zipping a coat
- Points of learning - the number 5, the color red, a favorite story
- Events in the world - the first snow, puddles, a new president
- Time with families - nutritional food experiences, creative activities, activities to promote health and wellness, math and science projects.

### **Birthdays**

Your child's birthday will be acknowledged, but classroom birthday parties will not be held. Students may bring an inexpensive and healthy treat for classmates. If parents would like to do something special to acknowledge your child's birthday in preschool, they may:

- Donate a book and on the inside cover write your child's name and the date it was donated
- Read a book to your child's preschool class
- Share an activity with your child's preschool class
- Provide a small, commercially prepared, and individually wrapped treat
- Provide a small novelty item (eraser, notepad or other novelty prize type item) for your child's classmates

If parents send an edible treat (it must be commercially prepared and individually wrapped) or a small novelty item, those items will be left in the Preschool Office and delivered to the classroom at the end of the day or during outdoor play.

***Students are not permitted to hand out birthday invitations at school. Please keep in mind it is not necessary to send anything such as balloons, flowers, or treat arrangements to the classroom for your child's birthday.***

### **School Pictures**

Blair Community Schools contracts annually to have pictures taken of school children early in the school year. Information regarding prices, times, and days are distributed by communications from your child's preschool teacher. Preschool students will not be included in the yearbook.

### **Media Release Permission**

In accordance with Board of Education policies, student names, photographs, and other work (ex: artwork, writings, etc.) may be used in school publications or released to news media outlets. School publications may include: district website, classroom social media, district newsletters/reports. News media outlets may include: local newspaper, regional newspaper, or regional television stations.

The District understands that some parents may not wish for names, photographs, and other work to be used in school publications or released to the news media outlets.

Please indicate your choice by completing the "Media Release Permission" section at the bottom of the Handbook Signature Page. Please understand that your consent is voluntary and can be revoked at any time.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips, which are within the city limits, require written notification to the family. Occasionally, a parent/guardian may be asked to accompany the preschool class on a field trip; however, certain limitations may

apply. Since a field trip is an extension of the school environment, it is important for the parent/guardian to know ahead of time what is expected:

- Only children who are members of the preschool class can participate in the field trip;
- Only the parent/guardian of the preschool child may accompany the class;
- Only a limited number of parents/guardians are able to accompany the class;
- Parents/guardians who participate in the field trip are expected to follow the teacher's directions, support the educational goals of the field trip, and comply with classroom and bus rules and expectations; and
- Parents are not required to have a background check and ID badge as long as they will be with the classroom teacher. Parents will need to stop in the office to sign in and receive a Visitor tag or sticker.

### **Student Gifts to Staff Members**

School Board policy states, "Students shall be discouraged from the routine presentation of gifts to school employees. When a student feels a spontaneous desire to present a gift to a staff member, the gifts shall not be elaborate or unduly expensive. The Board shall consider the writing of letters to staff members expressing gratitude or appreciation more appropriate."

There shall be no collection of money in school, or outside of school, at any time of the year, by children or parents/guardians, for the purchase of gifts to be presented to school personnel. Exception to this policy may be in case of some personal misfortune or in case of a special honor to school personnel, pupils, or to parents/guardians of school children.

### **Student Insurance**

Blair Community Schools offers parents the opportunity to purchase group accident insurance for their child through a third-party company. This insurance is available to all students at a nominal cost. The forms are available from the Administrative Offices located at Deerfield School, 1100 Deerfield Blvd, Blair, NE 68008. Please use the Administrative Entrance on the south side of the building.

### **Student Legal Name**

The student's legal name is to be used on all official school information, student records, and cumulative files. This policy does not apply to names on assignments or student's desks.

### **Student Placement**

Enrollment and class placement of students is the responsibility of the Director of Student Services.

### **Visiting Preschool**

Visitors must use the Preschool Entrance (Door Q). For the safety of the students and the staff, ALL doors remain locked at all times. Visitors are required to stop in the Preschool Office to sign in and obtain a Visitor sticker before going into a classroom.

After the first month of school, parents/guardians are encouraged to visit their child's preschool classroom. However, a visit should be arranged in advance with your child's teacher and be limited to less than an hour. Parents/guardians are advised to make other arrangements for younger children, as they can be distracting in the classroom.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

### **Bus Transportation**

The district will provide door-to-door bus transportation for morning and afternoon only for students who are eligible for transportation based on receiving special services. Parents must complete a Preschool Transportation Application for this service.

In addition, any preschooler who lives outside the Blair city limits and is currently on an established bus route can ride the bus to school. This means that your child will travel by large bus from the established bus stop to the high

school bus loop and then will transfer with other children to the Deerfield bus (a large bus). This is available for morning transportation only and requires the parent to complete a Preschool Transportation Application.

If you have questions about bus transportation, please call the Bus Barn at 402-426-4509, or the Preschool Office at 402-427-2715.

### **Preschool Parking**

If you are bringing your child to school and/or picking him/her up, adherence to the procedures below help to maintain an efficient drop off and pick up for all preschool students. Please be patient and cautious at arrival and dismissal times for the safety of adults and children.

- Parents and caregivers should use the north parking lot on the side of the school with the flagpole. It is possible you may need to circle around as you wait for an open parking spot.
- Please use the crosswalk to walk to/from the Preschool entrance. Upon entering the building stop in the Preschool office to sign in for both arrival and dismissal & pick up a visitor tag.
- Classroom doors open at 8:20. Please do not arrive earlier than 8:10. You are welcome to wait in the office until classroom doors open.
- Please do not park along the curb. Parents of elementary students will be using the drop-off lane, and a parked car blocks the elementary drop-off traffic flow.
- We highly recommend not arriving before 8:20, if possible.

### **Preschool Entrance**

The Preschool entrance is separate from the main Deerfield entrance. Families of preschoolers should use the Preschool Entrance door. This entrance is marked with a blue sign on the north end of the building and is labeled "Door Q". An intercom system is available and families should use it to announce their arrival.

When you enter the building to drop off or pick up your preschool child you are considered a visitor in the school building. Please stop in the Preschool Office (Room A4) to sign in and pick up a Visitor tag. Upon exiting the school, please return the Visitor tag.

Preschoolers are not permitted to use any other entrance at Deerfield School. If you have other business with the K-2 office/teachers or Administration Staff, please exit through the Preschool Entrance and re-enter the building through the K-2 main entrance or the Administration Entrance. You are not permitted to continue down the hall past the preschool rooms and into the rest of the Deerfield building.

### **Arrival & Dismissal Time**

We ask that you and your child arrive no earlier than 10 minutes prior to the classroom start time/dismissal time. This allows staff members to continue preparing for your child's day or finishing up classroom activities at the end of the day. Please wait in the preschool office until the preschool teachers to open their classroom doors.

***Staff will not release a child to any person who has not been authorized by the parent/guardian to pick up the child. Persons unknown to staff may be asked to provide photo identification to establish identify prior to a child's release.***

### **Changes in Dismissal Transportation Arrangements**

If you need to make a change in your child's dismissal (e.g., another adult will be picking the child up from school or the child will be picked up from school rather than ride the bus), please contact the Preschool Office (402-427-2715) at least 45 minutes prior to dismissal. For students who are on a bus route, any changes must also be communicated to the Bus Barn (402-426-4509) no later than 45 minutes prior to dismissal.

## PRESCHOOL TUITION

Blair Community Schools’ preschool program is funded through various funding sources. At this time, there is a minimal cost to families for children to attend our preschool program. Tuition is collected and used to cover the costs of meals and services to children and families and to help defray costs for our comprehensive program. Information provided on your child’s preschool application is used to determine your tuition.

The Blair Community Schools will implement the following Sliding Scale for Preschool Tuition for the 2019-2020 school year:

Tiers	Fees
Tier I – Full Tuition	\$ 200.00 per month for 10 months (August – May)
Tier II – One Special Consideration* OR students who qualify for REDUCED meals	\$ 100.00 per month for 10 months (August – May)
Tier III – At least two Special Considerations* OR students who receive Special Education Services OR qualify for FREE meals	\$ 0.00 per month

\*Special Considerations:

Financial scholarships are based on the following factors:

- Child has special education verification (has an IEP)
- Qualification for the free or reduced price meal program
- Mother under 18 years of age at child’s birth
- Home language is a language other than English
- Child’s birth weight under 5 pounds at birth (doctor verified)
- Child is in foster care or ward of the court (legal documentation required)
- Child lives in a single parent home

Please note: If your child’s preschool application indicated that your family is eligible for free or reduced price meals, you are required to complete a Free/Reduced Price Meals Application for 2019-2020 school year in order to determine if your child is eligible for reduced tuition. If you are not sure of your status, you may complete a Free and Reduced Price Meals Application to determine your eligibility.

### **Tuition Payments**

For families paying full or reduced tuition, the tuition is due by the **25th of each month (August through May)**.

When making your tuition payment:

- We prefer payment by check. Make check out to: Blair Community Schools. Please include your child’s name on the check memo line.
- A check sent from your bank is an acceptable form of payment. Please use this address: Blair Community Schools; PO Box 288; Blair, NE 68008. If you are able to add a memo to the check, please add “Preschool”.
- If you need to pay with cash, please make sure you receive a receipt for the payment.
- You can drop off your payment with the Preschool Secretary in the Preschool Office, or you can put it in an envelope and send it to school in your child’s folder, or you can send your check via US Mail to: Attn: Preschool; Blair Community Schools; P.O. Box 288; Blair, NE 68008
- At this time we do not have an online payment system for preschool tuition.



## **Handbook Receipt & Media Release Permission Form**

### **Preschool Parent Handbook Availability & Receipt**

The 2019-20 Preschool Parent Handbook of Blair Community Schools is available on the school website. Please go to the preschool webpage at [www.ps.blairschools.org](http://www.ps.blairschools.org) and click on the Parent-Student Handbook under the Parent/Students menu. A paper copy of the handbook is available by request. Please check the box below to request a paper copy.

- I will review the 2019-20 Preschool Parent Handbook online.**
- I have received & will review a paper copy of the 2019-20 Preschool Parent Handbook.**
- I am requesting a paper copy of the 2019-20 Preschool Parent Handbook.**

Parent or legal guardian's signature acknowledges receipt of the 2019-20 Preschool Parent Handbook of Blair Community Schools. This receipt also serves to acknowledge that it is understood that the district's policies of non-discrimination and equity and that specific complaint and grievance procedures exist in the handbook that should be used to responding to harassment or discrimination.

**Drug-Free Schools Statement:** Receipt shall also serve to demonstrate that you as parent or guardian of a student attending Blair Community Schools have received notice of the standards of conduct of this district expected of students concerning the absolute prohibition against the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as a part of any of the school's activities as described in board policy or administrative regulation. This notice is being provided to you pursuant to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Law and 34 C.F.R. Part 86, both federal legal requirements for the district to obtain federal financial assistance. Your signature on this receipt acknowledges that you and your child or children who are students attending this district fully understand the district's position absolutely prohibiting the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and the possession, use, or distribution of alcohol or tobacco on school premises or as a part of the school's activities as herein above described and that compliance with these standards is mandatory. Any non-compliance with these standards can and will result in punitive measures being taken against any student failing to comply with these standards.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Printed** - Parent or Legal Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** - Parent or Legal Guardian Name

### **Media Release Permission for 2019-2020 school year**

In accordance with Board of Education policies student names, photographs, and other work (ex: artwork, writings, etc.) may be used in school publications\* or released to news media outlets\*. The District understands that some parents may not wish for names, photographs, and other work to be used in school publications or released to the news media outlets. Please indicate your choice by checking the box below, sign, and return to the school office.

\* School publications may include: district website, classroom social media, district newsletters/reports. News media outlets may include: local newspaper, regional newspaper, or regional television stations.

- I give permission** for my child's name, photograph, and other work to be used in school publications and released to news media outlets.
- I do not give permission** for my child's name, photograph, and other work to be used in school publications and released to news media outlets.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** - Parent or Legal Guardian Name