



HAMILTON
LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PK/Preschool
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2020-2021

***“Improving Achievement through
Total Accountability and High Expectations”***



Hamilton Preschool
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Dear Parents and Guardians,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to the Preschool/Prekindergarten program at Hamilton Local Schools. We believe it is our job to nurture the learner in every child by providing a staff committed to providing the highest quality education for all of our students. At the center of that commitment are the following core values, which are vital to the life of Hamilton's Preschool program.

- Clear and Consistent Expectations in all four areas of development: Academic, emotional, behavioral, and social.
- Accountability and support for these expectations.
- A positive and safe environment to meet expectations.
- Communication among all stakeholders.

Our students receive a Pre-Kindergarten educational experience. In order to firmly establish a foundation for learning, all students are required to attend school each instructional day, participate in classroom activities, and follow all school policies, guidelines, and procedures. Enrollment in Hamilton Preschool is a great opportunity, and we want each child to fully benefit from this educational experience. Throughout the year you will hear us interchange the terms Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten (PK) because both terms apply to our program.

We look forward to working with you throughout the school year and wish you all the best. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jan Strahm, Coordinator
Hamilton Preschool
491-8044 ext 1231

Superintendent's Message

To all of our Rangers,

On behalf of the members of our Board of Education, district administrators, along with our faculty and staff, I would like to welcome you to a new school year in the Hamilton Local School District.

As we make our way through this school year, I ask that you push yourself to do your best everyday. It is up to you to give your best effort, show kindness to your classmates and teachers, and have a positive impact while you are in our schools.

Trust the process. Stay engaged. Stay involved. There are many opportunities throughout the year for you to learn and grow as a student through classroom lessons, during district sponsored extracurricular activities, or by being involved in community service initiatives. It is my hope that every student takes full advantage of programming offered in each of our schools.

Finally, I want to ask that when you have a question or need assistance with something in our district, please communicate with us directly. We are here to help and serve our community. Contact your teacher, building secretary, building principal, or district administrator with any questions or concerns so we can provide the answers directly.

I hope you have a great school year. Go Rangers!

Sincerely,
Mark Tyler, Superintendent

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ASSESSMENTS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

AEPS (Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming)

Preschool students will be administered an Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System based on the curriculum, teaching units, and the new Ohio Pre-Kindergarten Standards. This assessment will be administered four times per year and is ingrained in our current progress report. The program assesses and monitors six key developmental skills in young children: fine motor; gross motor, cognitive, adaptive, social-communication, and general social skills. The assessments are age appropriate for children 3 to 6 years of age.

ELA

All students will be administered the ELA assessment in the fall and spring. The Ohio Department of Education developed this test with the purpose of identifying literacy skills in order to inform instruction. It also provides a measurement of growth in reading readiness skills. Results are shared with parents on the progress reports and during conference times.

Progress Reports

Each nine weeks you will receive a progress report based on the Pre-Kindergarten Standards for the State of Ohio. These reports are a continuum of your child’s growth in Preschool. Every child progresses at different rates and these are just one reflection of your child’s growth. Parents also receive a letter explaining the grading system and age appropriate skills. We use the same grade card for student’s ages 3 to 5.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND TRANSPORTATION

Daily Schedule

School doors open at 8:45 a.m. **because there is no staff supervision until this time; please do not drop your child off earlier than 8:45 am for AM student and all day students, 12:40 pm for the PM students. The doors will remain locked until 8:45 and 12:40.** After school, children must return home and cannot linger to play on the school grounds unsupervised. This is a safety issue for your children

2020-2021 Hamilton Preschool Daily Schedule

Session Title	Arrival Time	Dismissal Time
All Day	8:45 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
A.M.	8:45 a.m.	11:25 a.m.
P.M.	12:40 p.m.	3:20 p.m.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

The Hamilton Local Schools have adopted the Alert Now phone notification system to inform all district parents of closings, cancellations, unexcused absences, and any other emergency alert information concerning our district buildings or property. Local radio and TV stations will also carry this message. Parents should have a plan worked out for the supervision of their child in these situations. In the event that school is delayed more than one hour, there will be no A.M. Preschool class. There will be P.M. and ALL Day Preschool on late arrival days due to weather.

DISCIPLINE

The Hamilton Local School District provides a safe and nurturing environment by use of such techniques as positive reinforcement, praise, and redirection. If needed and necessary, the child's team will work with the family to develop a consistent plan for behavior modification. Discipline plans vary based on individual student and classroom needs. In an order to create a safe and structured environment for every child, we follow these guidelines.

- A staff member in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.
- Constructive and developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques will be used at all times and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from the problem area, talking with the child about the situation, and praise for appropriate behavior.
- A parent will be contacted in situation that warrants a phone call or conference.

There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting. No discipline shall be relegated to any other child. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding the child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control. No child may be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle. No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, and derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child. Discipline shall not include withholding food, or toilet use. Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.

The staff members shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

By order of the Hamilton Local School District Board of Education in compliance with Ohio Revised Code 3313.66 and 3316.661 and as adopted by the Hamilton Local School District Board of Education: All violations of school rules and regulations, during the time a student is properly under the auspices of school personnel or involved in any school activity, may result in disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to, school buses and property under the control of district authorities, and while at interscholastic competitions, extracurricular events, or other school activities.

The administration of Hamilton Local School District reserves the right to prohibit and discipline any behavior or conduct that is not consistent with a safe, non-distracting educational program that may or may not be contained in this policy.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING

As required by law, all school employees must immediately report any suspicions of abuse or neglect to Franklin County Children Services.

CHILD CUSTODY/DIVORCED PARENTS

The school wants to cooperate with the parents, but we must do so according to Ohio laws. If custodial arrangements have been made through court action, **a copy of that order must be on file in our office.** This court-issued document directs the school, not necessarily the wishes of one parent or the other. Parents have an obligation to inform the school anytime the custody of a child changes and provide the new court order for the office file.

CLASS ROSTERS

A listing of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of students in your child's class must be kept on file.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Hamilton Local School Board of Education defines the following information in the student's record as "directory information": name, address, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, and other information. Student records are confidential and are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Only the school staff and the child's natural parents or legal guardians have access to the records. Directory information on the child is not protected by FERPA

Fees

Hamilton Preschool uses the Federal Poverty Guidelines to determine fees for families.

We operate on a sliding fee scale:

100% Poverty-No Charge

110%-200% Poverty -\$75.00 a month

At anytime if your income changes we can adjust your fees.

Proof on income will be requested at the time of registration.

MISSION STATEMENT

To educate all children to their fullest potential, utilizing an innovative staff to provide rich experiences in an appropriate, well-equipped and positive environment.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

The Hamilton Local Preschool Program recognizes parents and families as valuable resources in each child's education. Parents are encouraged to be active in the educational process. They are invited to be involved in classroom activities and to conference with staff periodically and as needed. Utilizing classroom notebooks, newsletters, phone contacts, and personal conversations establish communication. Regularly scheduled parent meetings are provided by staff and are intended to meet the needs of the families and students enrolled.

PARENTS ACCESS TO RECORDS

Parents requesting access to their child's records must be granted access within 14 days of the request. Parents have the right to receive copies of their child's records. The school may charge for the actual cost of duplicating the records. Parents have the right to a response from school officials to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of those records. Parents have the right to an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the contents of those records.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS ACCESS

A divorce or change in custody does not change the rights of a natural parent to their child's records. A non-custodial parent may request and receive a copy of the child's report card, the permanent record, and the opportunity to hold a teacher conference. Only the custodial parent has the right to make educational decisions requested by the school. Stepparents have no rights to records, reports, or conferences unless the custodial parent grants these rights.

PHOTOGRAPHIC NOTIFICATION

Periodically, candid group photographs of student activities are taken. If you do not wish to have your child included in such photographs, please note this on the form that we send home within the first week of school regarding photographic permission.

PRESCHOOL DRESS

1. The child should be dressed cleanly, neatly, and practice good personal hygiene.
2. The preschool program involves lots of indoor and outdoor play. Practical shoes are very important. **Please do not send your child in flip-flops, thongs or sandals. No tank tops, midriffs, or spaghetti straps are permitted.**
3. Parents should have a spare set of clothes that can be left at school.

SAFETY PLAN

The protocols in our Comprehensive School Safety Plan are the result of a procedure designed to comply with Ohio Revised Code 3313.536. This plan contains protocols for emergencies that may develop in our school. Each staff member is issued a Comprehensive School Safety Plan at the beginning of each school year. These plans are located in each classroom and throughout the building. Administrators, staff, and students are instructed on the various procedures to follow in the case of an actual emergency. Our Comprehensive School Safety Plan includes the following protocols: Tornado/Severe Weather, Hazardous Materials, Fire Emergency Evacuations, Hostage Situations, Weapons, Medical Emergencies, Child Abuse, Building Security, Unauthorized Person, Student Runaway/Abduction, Student Disorder, Utility Emergency, and Bomb Threat/Explosion.

HOMELAND SECURITY RED ALERT INFORMATION

As defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, a Threat Level of Red is declared when there is a severe risk of terrorist attacks. Under most circumstances, the Protective Measures for a Severe/Red condition are not intended to be sustained for substantial amount of time. If the Franklin County Red Alert School Team determines that the threat is a potential danger to Franklin County, the following procedures will be followed:

If Red Alert is issued before or after school hours: Then, normal school operations will cease based upon the Red Alert School Team's recommendations and will remain closed until advised by the Red Alert School Team to reopen. All school activities and events scheduled will be cancelled until notified by the Red Alert School Team

If a Red Alert is issued during school hours: Then, school buildings will be secured and remain open until regular dismissal time, unless otherwise advised by the Red Alert School Team. Students will be sent home by normal transportation means or released to parents pursuant to district policy. All after-school activities and events will be canceled, unless otherwise advised by the Red Alert School Team.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

Hamilton Local Schools operates and maintains a website as a valuable information resource for students, parents, and community members. Please visit our website at www.HamiltonRangers.org. From there, you can access an individual building or teachers' web pages.

SLIDING FEE PAYMENT

We have a sliding fee scale for our ECE PK program that is based on income.

100% Poverty=No Payment

101%-200%-\$75.00 a month

Please see Mrs. Strahm if you have any questions or concerns with payment.

SNACKS

We support the belief that strong nutritional habits are formed at a very early age. We seek to give children an opportunity to experience wholesome, satisfying, nutritional foods. A “nutritious snack” means a snack, which provides nutritional value in addition to calories and contains one food from each of two of the basic food groups. We seek to give the children and their families an opportunity to learn about the basic food groups found in the pyramid, which are: (1) fats, oils and sweets, (2) milk, yogurt, and cheese, (3) meat, poultry, fish, egg, dry beans, and nuts, (4) vegetables, (5) fruits, and (6) bread, cereal, rice and pasta. We will study each food groups; for example: What foods are included in each group? Where are they grown? Does it come from plant or animal? What does it feel or taste like?

We seek to make good nutrition a value in our program and hope that each family will want to create, as much as possible, this value within the home. We want to support you and ask for your support as we establish healthy nutritious habits with our daily snacks. We understand that this takes extra time on the part of all of us; however, our children are definitely worth the time and energy.

Our snack program incorporates this value toward good nutrition. Snacks will be an important part of the daily routine. As we plan our snacks, please let us know if your child has any food allergies. If your child requires a special diet, you may be asked to supply his/her snack.

SPECIAL NEEDS STAFFING

Related services are frequently provided as part of the student’s center-based preschool program. As students are evaluated for eligibility for the program, they are evaluated for eligibility for the related services.

Related service may include Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Therapy, and Physical Therapy. Related services are primarily provided in the classroom setting with typically developing peers, whenever possible. This approach assists the student in generalizing acquired skills to other settings. Contact information for each specific staff member will be given to the parents of Special Education Students.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

All Hamilton Local School District students are expected to be in school and to attend all assigned classes. Any attendance pattern contrary to this will be investigated. Parents or guardians of students who are truant or habitually tardy from school may be required to attend a parent education or training program.

In the event that a student must be absent from school, the parent or guardian is required to contact the school, either by phone or in person during the first two hours of school. Absences of students, which are verified by parent contact with the office within three (3) days, will be viewed as excused. A student’s absence from school is excused by parent notification for a maximum of ten (10) days. Once a student reaches 10 absences, excused or unexcused, doctor verification is required for additional absences to be considered excused. If a student’s absences are not excused after three days, they will receive a phone call from the teacher. After 10 days a letter will be sent and the office will make a phone call.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME

The below symptoms/conditions may mean the start of a communicable disease or nuisance condition that could affect many of the other students in your child's class. Also your child may be too sick to learn in school that day.

- Diarrhea-within the last 24 hours
- Severe Cough
- Severe Cold
- Undetermined Rash
- Temperature of 100 or higher within the last 24 hours
- Sore Throat-difficulty swallowing
- Red-Watery Eyes
- Vomiting with the last 24 hours
- Lice
- Exposure to communicable disease
-

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your son or daughter during the school year, please notify the school office and the classroom teacher at least five days in advance. This gives the school an opportunity to prepare documents necessary for transfer and allows school loaned materials to be collected. It will be necessary for you to complete a withdrawal/release form.

VISITATION POLICY/PARENT PARTICIPATION

The Hamilton Local Schools recognizes parents and families as valuable members of each child's educational team. There are many opportunities to be involved in our program such as:

Open House - Held before opening of school, a great chance to meet your child's teacher, complete needed paperwork, and tour the building.

Parent/Teacher Conference - Conferences are held twice a year, in the fall and spring. Parents are always welcome to request a conference with their child's teacher through out the year.

Special Events/Celebrations - Many family field trips and activities are planned for the school year. Information will come home with you child explaining details for each event. These are always a great time for the kids, parents and teachers.

Classroom Log - Notes coming and going with your child's teacher will be kept in our communication log. This log will be kept in your child's folder.

Classroom Visits - We would love to share our classroom with you. However, due to the needs of some of our students and staff planning for the day, visitors may be a distraction in some cases. To keep disruptions at a minimum, please use the following procedures when asking for a visit. All visits must be arranged and approved by the building administrator.

- Arrange the visit with the building administrator and your child's teacher.
- Sign in at the front desk and follow procedures for a visitor.

If you plan to come into regular contact with students during your visit to the school, you will need to complete a BCI background check prior to your visitation. This work can be completed at our central office. The contact number is 491-8044. The building coordinator must approve special circumstances for “one time” visitations for classroom parties etc ahead of time. State law requires that any person visiting the school report directly to the school office. Once the visitation has been approved, each visitor must sign in and will be given a visitors badge that must be worn at all time.

MEDICAL PROCEDURES

ACCIDENTS, ILLNESS, AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

If a child has an accident or becomes ill at school, a parent will be notified to come and get the child. If a parent cannot be contacted, the alternate person on the emergency card will be notified. Any student who has a fever of 100 degrees or greater, vomiting, diarrhea, or signs and symptoms of a possible communicable disease will be sent home. Please keep students with a possible or known communicable disease home until they are symptom-free or have been treated for at least 24 hours. **Only the persons whose names appear on the emergency card will be permitted to sign out a child from school.**

CLINIC/NURSE/SPECIFIC HEALTH CONCERNS

Parents are responsible for informing the school each year of their child's specific health problems, especially life-threatening asthma, bee stings or food allergies. This includes medications that are not taken at school especially if they are important to your child's well being. Parents are required by Ohio Law to complete and sign an emergency medical card for their child. This card is kept on file in the main office in case we cannot contact you in an emergency. The district nurse is on call at any time when an emergency may arise.

Updating the health records is, by law, a function of the school nurse. Therefore, it is quite possible that she could communicate with the home concerning this information. **All children must have an up-to-date medical form signed by their doctor. This medical form must be updated each year. This form is required by the OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

EMERGENCY CARDS

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by a parent or guardian and filed in the office. **A student may be excluded from class until this requirement has been met.**

Parents are responsible for informing the school of emergency medical treatment they desire for their child. This includes the name of the doctor they wish to treat the child and the hospital they wish to care for the child in an emergency. This card also has the names of alternate persons for the school to notify if an emergency occurs here at school. Please remember to contact the school to update your card if any information changes. It is critical that we have up to date contact information for you in the event an emergency arises with your child here at school.

Please inform your child's teacher and the office immediately of any changes in phone numbers or address. This is necessary to maximize the safety of your child.

MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

Medications may not be taken at school unless certain procedures are followed.

If your child needs medication at school we will use the following procedures.

A signed medication form must be completed and include the following information:

- Student's name and address
- The school and class the student is enrolled
- The name of the drug and dosage
- The time and intervals at which each dosage of the drug is to administered
- The date on which the administration of the drug is to begin
- The date on which the administration of the drug is to cease
- Any severe adverse reactions which should be reported to the physician and one or more phone numbers at which the person who prescribed the medication can be reached in case of an emergency
- Specific instructions for administration of the drug, including sterile conditions and storage.
- All medication must be in its original container. Pharmacists can make a duplicate bottle for school.

New request forms must be submitted each year and whenever there is any change in the medication order (i.e. an increase or decrease in dosage).

The medications and the signed forms must be brought to school by a parent or guardian. Students are not permitted to carry medication with them on a school bus, or walking to school. Forms can be faxed from home or the physician's office to school. A student may not self-administer his/her own prescription medication unless under the supervision of the appropriate school personnel.

Parents are responsible for picking up unused medication at the end of the school year.

Medication will not be sent home with the student.

A trained staff member will administer all Medication at the preschool.

IMMUNIZATIONS

In compliance with the Ohio Compulsory Immunization Law, no pupil shall be admitted to school unless he/she presents written evidence that they have received the required immunizations by such means as approved by the Department of Health, Ohio Immunization law (ORC 3313.67) requires that all students produce an acceptable record of immunization or written evidence of medical exemption to immunization.

However, if an outbreak occurs, the student maybe excluded from school. All new students entering the district from a foreign country are required to have a TB test. Both the Franklin County Health Department and the Columbus Health Department provide immunization clinics for a nominal fee.

Hamilton Preschool Health Screening Policy

The parent shall provide, prior to the date of admission or not later than thirty days after date of admission, and every thirteen months from the date of examination

thereafter, a medical statement affirming that the child is in suitable condition for enrollment in the program. "Prior to the date of admission" means:

For children four years old or older at the time of admission, the examination shall occur within twelve months prior to the date of admission.

A preschool child with a disability shall not be excluded from the program for lack of a medical statement until the team responsible for the individualized education plan (IEP) established pursuant to Chapter 3301-51 of the Administrative Code reconvenes; exclusion from the program until the IEP is revised may be a denial of a free, appropriate public education.

The medical statement shall be provided by a physician, physician's assistant, clinical nurse specialist, or certified nurse.

The program shall secure and have on file all required information no later than the first day of attendance unless otherwise required.

PHILOSOPHY

It is the philosophy of the Hamilton Local School District Pre-Kindergarten Program to facilitate children's development in communication, social and play skills, cognition, motor skills and the development of a positive self-concept. Our preschool classrooms provide an active, safe, and nurturing environment in which children interact with peers, adults, and materials to achieve individual goals and objectives while utilizing developmental and age appropriate practices to meet the needs of each child.

We believe that children construct their own understanding of the world through active involvement with materials, people, and concepts. The staff's role is to facilitate children's understanding of their world by creating opportunities for them to undertake self-planned activities and to facilitate each child's reflection of his/her activities. The staff supports children's exploration by providing appropriate materials, planned spaces and a consistent daily routine based on developmentally appropriate practices.

We believe that children develop a greater understanding of their world when given the opportunity to model and interact with typically developing peers. The goal is for each classroom serving special needs students to have a ratio of eight children with identified handicaps with eight typically developing peers.

We believe that families are the child's first and most important facilitator. Family support is provided through parent meetings, parent education, and classroom newsletters.

All classrooms are licensed by the Ohio Department of Education. The reports compiled by the licensing consultant are available at all times in each classroom. These reports will be made available for parental review upon request to the classroom teacher. In addition, we strive to maintain open communication with staff and parents. If a concern arises, please discuss it with the staff first. If additional assistance is needed, contact the

Preschool Coordinator (Jan Strahm). As a final option, the Ohio Department of Education Preschool License posts the ombudsman's number in each classroom

PROGRAM GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The Hamilton Local School's Preschool Program is designed for children ages 3 – 5. At least two responsible adults shall be readily available at all times when twelve or more children are present in the program. One adult shall be a staff member. The second adult shall be available within the building used for the preschool program or in the adjacent outdoor area; be available to be summoned by the staff member without leaving the group alone or unsupervised; and be able to react in response to such summons to reduce risk to children during an emergency circumstance.

- Our goal is to provide children with opportunities in:
 - Fine motor
 - Gross motor
 - Language development
 - Social/emotional skills
 - Increased self-esteem

Quality instruction is provided with an emphasis on the individual needs of the child and his/her parents. The curriculum is based on the Ohio Pre-Kindergarten Standards and is developmentally appropriate for the preschool aged child.

Classroom activities include the use of a variety of age and developmentally appropriate equipment and materials. Individual, small, and large group instruction is utilized to develop and promote age appropriate skills.

The opportunity for parent involvement is available through communication with the classroom staff, newsletters, parent meetings, and additional resources.

Therapy services are provided based on the individual needs of the child and are incorporated by related service personnel. Services may include speech/language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and behavioral intervention.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Transportation will be provided for preschool students. It is the parents/guardian responsibility to be at the bus stop at pick up and drop off times.

Transportation will begin once a bus request are completed and turned in to the office. Failure to be at the bus stop at drop off and pick up may result in your child being withdrawn from the Preschool program.

EXPECTATIONS

Many of our students are transported to and from school by bus. Our primary concern is the **safety** of all students. All students will be assigned a seat, and as they board the bus, they are to go directly to their seat, **SIT DOWN, KEEP THEIR HANDS AND FEET IN THEIR OWN SPACE**, and **TALK QUIETLY** with whom they are sitting. If all students follow these procedures, there should be no problems and the bus ride should be safe for all children.

If your child's behavior is inappropriate, you will be notified of the problem. If the problem persists, your child will lose his/her privilege to ride the bus. Transportation will then become the parents' responsibility. For your child's safety, please encourage him/her to follow these simple rules and always be polite and courteous with the bus driver.

BUS STOP RULES

- A) Students should arrive at the bus stop **no more than five (5) minutes** before the bus arrives.
- B) Students should wait in a safe location for the bus to arrive (as directed by the parent). Students should not play games while waiting for the bus to arrive, run through yards, throw any objects, push or shove each other, etc.
- C) When the bus arrives, students should form a line to board. Students should never run alongside the bus while in motion or push/shove while boarding.

CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL

A bus form must be completed before any changes can be made to a student's transportation schedule by the transportation office.



“Nurturing the Learner in Every Child”