



ALEXANDRIA

Public Schools

Rich tradition. Bright future.

Student Handbook

Preschool/Early Education

2023-2024

School/Department	Principal/Administrator	Telephone
Community Education	Lynn Jenc	320-762-3310
Early Education/ECFE	April Larson	320-762-3305
Early Childhood Screening		320-762-3305
Food & Nutrition Services	Janeen Peterson	320-762-3315

Alexandria Public Schools: Mission

Our mission is to achieve educational excellence and to inspire a life-long passion for learning.

Alexandria Public Schools: Vision

Our vision is to be an extraordinary school district that tailors learning for all, by working together.

Table of Contents

Attendance	3
ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE	3
Before and After School Care	3
Birthdays	3
Bullying	3
Bus Information	3
Census Information	3
Child Abuse/Mandated Reporters	4
Class Lists	4
Comprehensive Curriculum & Assessments	4
CURRICULUMS	4
ASSESSMENTS	4
Conferences	4
Custody	4
Daily Schedules	5
Discipline	5
Drills	6
Enrollment	6
Field Trips	6
Harassment Policy	6
Health Services	6
Lost or Damaged Library Books	7
Lunch Program	7
Parent Advisory Council	7
	1

Parent Aware	7
Payment	8
Pets	8
Recess	8
School Supplies	8
Snacks	8
Special Education	8
Student Photographs and Names	8
Student Pick-Up	9
Student Records	9
Teachers	9
Tobacco-Free Environment	9
Toys (Electronic Toys, Devices and Personal Belongings)	9
Visitors	9
Volunteers	10
Weather	10
Weapons	10

Attendance

Consistent attendance contributes to the healthy development of your child by allowing them an opportunity to practice transitions, gain self-management skills and benefit from the consistency of a predictable schedule. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/guardian to ensure their student attends school regularly, to inform the school in the event of a student's absence and to work cooperatively with the school and the student to develop consistent attendance patterns.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

If a student is/will be absent or late to school, the parent/guardian must notify the school.

Before and After School Care

Students may register with the Compass program for before and/or after school care relating to their preschool class times. An authorized adult is required to sign the child in or out upon drop-off or pick-up.

Compass also offers non-school day and summer programming. Compass provides a warm, relaxed and caring environment where children have the opportunity to pursue their own interests, develop friendships and grow in confidence, independence and respect for themselves and others. For more information and to enroll, contact Community Education at 320-762-3310 or visit

www.alexschools.org/sacc.

Birthdays

Students with birthdays may bring purchased snacks to share with their class. Students are not allowed to hand out party invitations at school. Classroom treats should be consistent with the District-wide School Wellness Policy ([Policy 533 - School Wellness Policy](#)).

Bullying

[Policy 514 - Bullying Prohibition](#)

Bus Information

Transportation for students attending the Early Education Center is not provided by the Alexandria Public Schools busing system. Changes to student transportation plans, times and authorized pick-up individuals should be communicated to the front desk staff or classroom teacher. Rainbow Rider may be an option at parent expense. When using the Rainbow Rider service, parents are expected to communicate transportation plans and changes directly with Rainbow Rider.

In some circumstances, students attending preschool at Carlos Elementary School may be able to ride the district bus to and from school. Questions concerning transportation routes should be directed to the Transportation Director at 320-762-3317.

Census Information

If you are new to town or your family has a change of address, phone number, number of children in the family, marital status or other pertinent information, please notify the District Office at 320-762-2141 or the individual school office so that our student records are kept up-to-date.

Child Abuse/Mandated Reporters

Minnesota State Law requires that school employees, as mandated reporters, report to Douglas County Social Services any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Interviewing of Students by Outside Agencies - Students may not be interviewed during the school day by persons other than the student's parents, school district officials, employees and/or agents except as otherwise provided by law.

Class Lists

Class lists including directory information regarding a student are public information under State and Federal law. Directory information as defined in district policy ([Policy 515 – Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records](#)) includes, but is not limited to, a student's name, address, telephone number, photograph, attendance dates and grade level. It also includes the name, address and telephone number of the student's parent(s). A parent/guardian may refuse to have any or all of the directory information made public by notifying the program coordinator in writing at enrollment.

Comprehensive Curriculums & Assessments

Young children's learning is driven by curiosity and social connection. A large portion of a child's preschool experience is the learning that naturally unfolds through play with the support of highly-trained and engaged adults. Teachers share the responsibility to help students meet the common set of developmentally appropriate expectations detailed in the MN Department of Education's Early Childhood Indicators of Progress - Minnesota's Early Learning Standards.

CURRICULUMS

- **Scholastic's PreK On My Way:** Comprehensive literacy, math and science
- **Handwriting Without Tears:** Handwriting, letter naming and letter sound support
- **Behavioral Support (core behavior skills):** Social/emotional support in initiative, attachment and self-regulation

ASSESSMENTS

- **Observation Assessments:** Academic, Social/emotional
- **Scholastic's PreK On My Way:** Letter naming, letter sounds, number recognition
- **Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA):** Social/emotional

Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year in the fall and spring. A mid-year check in will occur in January.

Custody

If custody changes after enrollment, documents should be provided to the school as soon as possible after the change. The school will follow court orders that specifically authorize or direct custody or related custodial issues. The school system will give non-custodial parents, upon request, duplicate

school information about their child unless prohibited by court order. A certified copy of that order must be on file at the school. The school should also be made aware of any unusual situations that might require a heightened need for greater security for your child.

Daily Schedules

Early Education programming dates follow the Alexandria Public Schools district calendar. Full-day students attending classes on scheduled late start dates should arrive 2 hours after their normally scheduled arrival time. Morning classes are canceled on scheduled and unscheduled late starts. Start times for afternoon classes are unaffected on late start days. Full-day students registered for before school care may come at their *regularly scheduled* times, as early as 6:30 am.

Discipline

It is the responsibility of the Early Education Center staff to safeguard the physical and emotional health and safety of each student and staff. All staff undergo training in core behavior skills and coaching for positive behavior support of students. We strive to meet the needs of all students promptly, positively and safely. Behavior support and disciplinary action are needed when students demonstrate any of the following behaviors:

- Failure to follow District Code of Conduct and the policies laid out in this handbook
 - *The Code of Conduct emphasizes the following:*
 - **Respect:** Be considerate of self, others, their beliefs and property
 - **Honesty:** Be truthful
 - **Kindness:** Be caring, friendly and helpful
 - **Responsibility:** Be dependable and accountable
 - **Fairness:** Be committed to the just treatment of others
- Actions that cause destruction, damage to or misuse of property
- Behaviors that directly or indirectly threaten students or staff (e.g. hitting, pushing, spitting, throwing objects, verbal threats, etc.)
- Aggressive acts, derogatory remarks or harassment of any kind toward students, staff and/or self
- Behaviors demonstrating lack of self-control (e.g. anger/outbursts, disrespect or refusal to follow directions, leaving the group or property without permission)
- Behavior that comprises the physical and emotional safety of employees and students
- Behavior that could be perceived as sexual harassment or intimidation (e.g. verbal language, gestures, physical contact, etc.)
- Other emotionally or physically harmful statements, behaviors or acts

The building administrator(s) or designee will make a determination of consequence/disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis. All actions by an administrator/designee are solely with the discretion of Community Education Administration. Students may be required to change or cease programming when accommodations to meet their needs fundamentally alter the program or when programming is determined to be inappropriate for the child and circumstance. Examples of disciplinary actions include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Verbal warning/loss of privileges/time away from the group
- Written discipline report and/or verbal communication with parent/guardian
- Parent conference

- Removal from program or change in schedule
- Parent pick up may be requested
- Staff may consult with other Alexandria Public Schools professionals for input

For ongoing behavior concerns within Alexandria Public Schools, a determination may be made that a student is not eligible to participate.

Drills

As per Minnesota State Law, the following drills will be held annually:

- **Fire:** Five fire drills each school year.
- **Tornado/Severe Weather:** One tornado drill in conjunction with the State of Minnesota's Severe Weather Awareness Week.
- **Lockdown:** Five lockdown drills.

Enrollment

A child must be at least three years of age on or before September 1st of the current school year to enroll in preschool - an optional early childhood program of Alexandria Public Schools. Documentation of receiving state required immunizations must be provided prior to attending. Participation in an Early Childhood Screening within 90 days of starting is a mandatory requirement of the Minnesota Department of Education. A \$35.00 non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of registration.

Field Trips

Parents/guardians will receive notice of field trips in advance. If you do not want your child to participate in the off-site activity, please contact the front desk staff in advance and the school will provide an alternate activity.

Harassment Policy

Alexandria Public Schools further commits to ensuring a safe learning and working environment by prohibiting religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence.

The district will investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of harassment or violence and take appropriate action against any student or school personnel found in violation of the policy. ([Policy 413 – Harassment and Violence](#))

Health Services

The school nurse serves all students of Alexandria Public Schools. Please communicate all health and medication needs to the front desk.

- **Immunization Program:** Requirements may be waived only if a notarized medical or conscientious exemption form is filed with the school. For your child to enter school, it is mandatory that an immunization form be completed, signed and on file during registration. (Immunization Requirements)

- **Health Conditions:** New/updated health forms are required each school year at least 2 weeks prior to the start of school. (Health Conditions Form)
- **Illness/Emergency:** A child will be required to go home for the following symptoms within 24 hours of school: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green discharge from nose, sore throat, undiagnosed rash and/or non-treatment for lice.

If a child becomes ill or injured at school:

- Child may rest in quiet area
 - First Aid will be administered
 - Parent/Guardians or emergency contacts will be required to pick up child
 - When necessary, 911 will be contacted to assist
- **Medication:** Students will be given medication by trained and authorized staff only if a student would not be able to be in school without it. The Authorization for Dispensing Medication must be completed for oral medication, inhaler or Epi Pen, etc. (Authorization for Dispensing Medication)

Lost or Damaged Library Books

The Early Education Center will provide students in the 4- and 5-year-old classes with library books and other resource materials to meet the learning expectations and standards to enhance student learning opportunities. The books and materials will be provided at no cost to the students. Students are expected to maintain the books and materials during their use and return them at a time to be determined by the school. A student and his/her family will be responsible for payment for any lost or damaged books or materials with the cost to be determined by the program coordinator depending on the value of the books and/or materials.

Lunch Program

Lunches are available daily to all-day students. Families may purchase lunch through the Food and Nutrition Services lunch account system or bring lunch from home. Meals may be free according to local and state provisions. Please contact the Food and Nutrition Services Department with questions.

Free and reduced meal forms are available at the Early Education Center office, the District Food & Nutrition Services Department or online on the district website. ([Policy 534 – School Meals](#))

Parent Advisory Council

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to become actively involved in the Parent Advisory Council. This organization provides opportunities for parents/guardians and school staff to work together for the betterment of the school and its students. Call your school office for meeting schedules.

Parent Aware

The Early Education Center is a four-star Parent Aware rated program - the highest possible - and is committed to maintaining the highest standard of excellence in programming, staff training and family support.

Payment

Preschool at Alexandria Public Schools is an optional, fee-based program. Payment is due on the first day of the month, unless an alternate payment plan is scheduled. Limited scholarships may be available to families who qualify according to income of up to 50%, as funds are available. Scholarship funds must be requested in writing with the current Scholarship Application available at the front desk and cannot be used for before or after school care. A \$20.00 late fee will be applied to overdue payments. The Early Education Center reserves the right to send unpaid charges to a collections agency for payment.

Pets

No pet of any kind is to be brought to school without prior permission from the teacher and administrator.

Recess

Parents are responsible to ensure that students dress appropriately for all weather conditions.

School Supplies

School supplies will be provided to students through a community supply model. \$20 charge will be applied in August to all family accounts for supplies to be purchased in bulk at reduced rates. A list of school supplies is provided to families prior to the start of school. Purchased items are thoughtfully chosen to provide optimal tools to support developmentally appropriate experiences. Families unable to contribute to the community supply model should make a request to have the charge removed by the program coordinator. Families wishing to provide more than what is listed are welcome to contribute additional items such as play dough ingredients (flour, salt, cream of tartar or alum, vegetable oil, food coloring), new or gently used children's books or toys and art supplies (pipe cleaners, popsicle sticks, pony beads, Q-tips, cotton balls, dot stickers, paper plates, coffee filters, etc.).

Snacks

All students will receive milk at their designated morning or afternoon snack times. Students are asked to bring a healthy classroom snack periodically throughout the year. Classroom teachers will provide snack guidance with classroom allergies and health needs in mind. All food must be purchased; we are unable to serve homemade items. Food and snacks must be brought to school in unopened packages if they are to be shared with others.

Special Education

Alexandria Public Schools provides services in a variety of disability areas when a student has been through the referral process and meets criteria for additional support. With parent/guardian permission, special education services are integrated into their child's school day according to the details in a child's Individualized Education Program.

Student Photographs and Names

Student pictures and identifying names will be printed on a class photo and given to local news media

when warranted. Parents/guardians may request that their child's picture NOT be published in the media or used for marketing purposes. Such a request must be made in writing to the program coordinator. This does not cover pictures taken by the news media of school events.

Student Pick-Up

Parents/Guardians will drop off their child in their classroom. Children should not be dropped off earlier than 10 minutes prior to class start time. Students should be picked up promptly after class. Students repeatedly picked up late will be charged at the current rate for after school care. To ensure the safety of students, individuals may be asked to show identification (e.g. driver's license) when picking up a student.

Student Records

A cumulative record and folder is started for each child as he/she enters school. This information follows each student throughout his/her stay in school. The cumulative records include:

- Student name, number and address
- Names and ages of brothers & sisters
- Health record
- Standardized assessment results
- Special Education files (if appropriate)

All student records and data are private and cannot be shared without parent/guardian permission.

Teachers

Teachers at the Early Education Center hold a current MN Teaching License and are specially trained and coached in core behavior skills to support young children's social and emotional well-being. ([Policy 404 - Employment Background Checks](#))

Tobacco-Free Environment

Use of tobacco or tobacco-related devices in public schools and vehicles or on public school property is prohibited.

Toys (Electronic Toys, Devices and Personal Belongings)

Toys and other distracting personal belongings such as electronic games and trading cards may not be brought to school unless the student's classroom teacher has given prior permission.

Visitors

Parents and community members are always welcome at our school. As a school safety measure, and in compliance with school board policy, all visitors should enter through the main front doors and sign in to receive a visitor's badge. ([Policy 903 - Visitors to School District Buildings and Sites](#))

Volunteers

Parent and community volunteers play a very important role in the educational experience in Alexandria Public Schools. For the safety of our students, and pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 123B.03, Alexandria Public Schools require background checks on all volunteers who are in regular direct contact with students.

Weather

Cancellation or Early Dismissal: Throughout the year, there may be times when school will be delayed or called off due to inclement weather or some emergency. Official announcements for unscheduled delayed starts and school closings may be heard over radio - KXRA (1490AM), KX92 (92.3FM), KIKV (100.7FM), Z99 (99.3FM) and KSAX/KRWF-TV. Weather related announcements are also posted on the Alexandria Public Schools website at www.alexschools.org. Parents that have current phone numbers on file with the District will also receive a phone call and text from our automated calling system.

Weapons

The purpose of this policy is to assure a safe school environment for students, staff and the public. ([Policy 501 - School Weapons Policy](#)) The school district will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer or member of the public who violates this policy.