



Parent Handbook

2018-2019 School Year

Waconia Community Education
Waconia Wildcat & Waconia Family
Preschool



Waconia Enrichment Center
Early Childhood Office
520 Industrial Blvd. Waconia, MN
(952) 442-0613

Community Education Office (952) 442-0610

www.waconiacommunityed.org

Welcome to Waconia Wildcat and Waconia Family Preschool

Waconia Community Education connects, empowers, and enriches lives through lifelong learning and service to our community. Early Childhood Education is a core component of Community Education where families and young children begin their relationship with Waconia Schools. We recognize that every student has unique needs. It is our goal that we offer the best learning environment for your child. Academic and support specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to deliver classroom instruction. This collaboration is designed to support each child who comes through our door to reach his/her full potential.

Waconia Wild Preschool and Waconia Family Preschool provides innovative classrooms where creativity and imagination flourish. Our inclusive programs help all children discover a joy of learning. Your child will be immersed in a stimulating environment that encourages physical, intellectual, and emotional development through play based investigation, purposeful questioning and exploration for deep learning and a seamless transition to kindergarten.

There are other preschool options available in Waconia, but our preschool is the only preschool that aligns with the Waconia School District curriculum and the overall K-12 system. We work closely with Early Childhood Special Education and kindergarten teachers to foster a successful transition from preschool to kindergarten.

Greetings,

Waconia Community Education is excited to welcome you and your family to Waconia Wildcat and Waconia Family Preschool. We are dedicated to providing a great learning experience for your child. Our staff will be working hard to inspire your child and meet their individual learning needs.

This handbook is intended to be a resource for you as we progress through the school year. We have included important contact numbers, descriptions of services and policies that apply to students and families. If you have further questions, we welcome you to contact our office.

Thank you for choosing Waconia Wildcat and Family Preschool for your child's early learning!

Sue Forster
Early Childhood Program Supervisor

Waconia School
Community Education
(952)442-0610
www.waconiacommunityed.org
516 Industrial Blvd.
Office Hours: 7:30 am-4:30 pm

Early Childhood Office
952-442-0613
520 Industrial Blvd.
Office Hours: 8 :00am-4:00 pm

Preschool Location
Waconia Enrichment Center
520 Industrial Blvd.

District 110 Preschool Teachers:
Mary Weber
mweber@isd110.org
Sara Linsley
slinsley@isd110.org
Cheri Parkinson
cparkinson@isd110.org

Early Childhood Program Supervisor
Sue Forster
sforster@isd110.org

Community Education Director
Tiffany Nelson
tnelson@isd110.org

Additional Resources
Early Childhood Special Education
952-442-0600

About Waconia Wildcat and Waconia Family Preschool

At ISD110, our mission is to allow students to explore their passions and create success. In early childhood we give children a high quality preschool experience in partnership with parents. We strive to educate, collaborate, challenge, empower and support families, nurture development and treat all with respect. We believe:

- Parents are children's first and most important teachers.
- Licensed teachers can provide nurture and structure to support young learners and parents.
- Research based curriculum embedded with standardized goals will provide learning to ensure kindergarten readiness.
- Classroom environments should be carefully designed to support developmentally appropriate exploration for preschool children.
- Play opens the world of learning for the preschool child.

We are a Pyramid Model School

Pyramid model is a social and emotional framework incorporated into the classroom to ensure high quality classrooms for all students. Teachers are supported in implementing this framework through the Minnesota Centers of Excellence. Children will benefit from this program through learning life long skills such as: friendship, self regulation, problem solving and learning about emotions. We are so excited about rolling this program out this year!



Academic Success

Waconia Schools is committed to the academic success of all students. We know you have entrusted your student's education to us, and we promise to work hard to educate each child in a caring and safe environment. District 110 Preschools believes that curriculum and instruction should be driven by the developmental needs of the children in class. We strive to meet children where they are, as individuals and as a group. We help each child to reach challenging and achievable goals that contribute to his or her ongoing development and learning.

About the Staff

Waconia Wildcat and Family preschool teachers are highly trained in best practices and assessment. Teaching staff are licensed by the MN Dept. of Education. We also employ support staff for students, teaching assistants and parent educators. Continuing education and staff in-services are available throughout the school.

Back To School Checklist

Check off the items to be sure you and your child are off to a good start to the school year!

- Attend Early Childhood open house, August 30 from 5:30-7:00 pm
- Turn in your child's immunization forms to the office
- Fill out an emergency information card at open house
- Make sure payments are up to date and electronic payment forms have been turned in

For more information contact:

Waconia Wildcat Preschool - Shar
952-442-0610

Waconia Family Preschool - Brenda
952-442-0613

Parent Aware

Waconia Family Preschool earned a Four Star Parent Aware Rating and we are working to add Waconia Wildcat Preschool to this rating. Parent Aware Star Ratings help parents find programs that go above and beyond to prepare children for school and life. To earn this top rating, a program must demonstrate the following:

- Exemplifies a truly engaged school readiness program for parents
- Conducts ongoing assessment of student's progress
- Continually adapts lesson plans and goals to meet individual needs
- Regularly updates parents on child's progress
- Has staff trained on children's developmental disabilities
- Communicates across cultures
- Provides staff with annual professional development on relevant early childhood topics



Program Information

Tuition

Waconia Wildcat Preschool monthly tuition should be paid **on or before the 1st of each month** by cash, check or credit card and submitted to the Community Education office.

Waconia Family Preschool monthly tuition should be paid **by the 10th of the month** or the first parent day of the month by cash, check, credit card and submitted to the Early Childhood office. The billing policies are as follows and are the participants responsibility to be paid on time.

- **Please note** that you **will not receive a monthly invoice**.
- Electronic payment is available! If you are interested in this option, please contact us
- All preschool classes will be charged a registration fee, payable at the time of registration
- Tuition credit or refunds will not be given for school holidays, school cancellations due to inclement weather or other emergency closings, vacations or illness

Children currently enrolled will be given a priority registration date for the next school year. Registration will be held in January.

Scholarship Information

Individuals or families who live in School District #110 and meet certain income eligibility guidelines may qualify for a 50% or 75% fee reduction on their Wildcat and Family Preschool tuition. Scholarship forms are available at the Community Education and Early Childhood Offices. Free tuition through a Pathway grant is available for Waconia Family Preschool participants who meet income guidelines and complete an application. Please contact the Early Childhood office for guidelines and application forms.

Past Due Tuition Policy

Parent/guardian will be notified of the past due tuition via the following methods:

1. email
2. phone call
3. invoice

Continued late payments or failure to pay will result in a hold on future community education registrations and may result in discontinuance from the preschool program. Please talk with the program supervisor if you are having a hardship and together we will work to find a solution.

Cancellation Policy

Notice of cancellation needs to be received two weeks prior to withdrawal or participant will be required to pay the difference. The registration fee is non-refundable. The supply fee that applies to your session is refundable until July 27, 2018.

Waconia Wildcat Preschool Calendar

Generally follows the District #110 School Year Calendar; however, some adjustments may be made. A google calendar is located on the school website with calendar information for Waconia Wildcat and Family Preschool.

Open House

All families should plan to attend open house on Thursday, August 30th. Open house times are from 5:30-7:00 pm. This is an excellent time for the parent and child to meet and connect with the teacher, explore the facility, and connect with other preschool families.

Weather Emergencies

Any changes made to planned school hours will be posted on the school District's main page. www.isd110.org. Local news broadcasts will scroll the information at the bottom of the screen or could provide a text, email or call if changes are made to your designated school district. A 2-hour delay to our school cancels morning preschool, afternoon preschool classes will be held. The schools weatherline 952-442-0640 provides a recorded message.

Attendance Expectations

Attendance is important! Please make an effort to get your child to school every scheduled day. If your child is unable to attend class please call or email your child's teacher. Family preschool incorporates a family day for sessions 1 and 2, which is modeled after traditional ECFE. Parents, guardians or practitioners are expected to attend these days, unless arrangements have been made with the classroom teachers.

Dismissal

Please arrive promptly at dismissal time to pick up your child from preschool. Arriving late causes unnecessary worry for many children. Our teachers have tight schedules and must be allowed time to prepare for their classes. In the case of emergency please call the Early Childhood Office at 952-442-0613 to let us know what is happening.

Pick Up

Children are required to be escorted by an adult into the building and dropped off with the classroom staff. We will release students to their parents unless documentation is provided enforcing a court order to the contrary. If you need to have a different person pick your child up we encourage you to list them on the emergency card. Please tell the staff in person, by note or by phone who your child should go home with. These people should be prepared to show an ID. Parking lots can be a vulnerable place for small children we encourage parents to teach their children how to safely move through the parking lot with an adult, holding hands.

Key Cards

Doors are locked at the preschool entrances(back of the building) at all times, so you will need a key card to enter the preschool doors. Parents participating in Waconia Wildcat Preschool will be issued one key card per family for entry into the building. Additional cards can be purchased for \$10 each. Key cards must be returned at the end of the school year. If at any time you lose your key card, you can obtain a new one for an additional \$10.

Behavior Guidance

Most children do very well in the preschool environment; our licensed teachers understand the developmental level and needs of children and have appropriate expectations for young children. They are attentive to children and give verbal and often visual cues to teach children about behavior expectations. Teachers positively reinforce helpful behavior, acknowledge feelings, use tools and strategies to teach self regulation, and provide a framework for problem solving. If behavior escalates, parents will be informed and consulted about the issue, and a behavior plan developed.

Parent Communication

Communication is important for a successful year and is two way between school and home. We want to partner with you and understand you have valuable information about your child. We will communicate our classroom activities and want to hear from you anytime you feel it is necessary.

- Calendars will and posted on the district website www.isd110.org
- Emails will be sent from the children's teacher with special updates and alerts.
- Monthly and/or weekly newsletters will be shared electronically. If you prefer a paper newsletter please let your teacher know.

Conferences

Conferences are held two times a year. This is a wonderful time to connect with your child's teacher and share about social, emotional and academic achievements for your preschooler. During these conferences teachers will share observation notes and samples of each child's work. We strive to provide communication to all families in a sensitive manner.

Our preschools use the OWL assessment tool as well as success criteria selected through the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress. Teachers will continuously monitor and support every child's development.

Parenting Resources

We have access to many resources and information to support families with a wide variety of needs and would be happy to connect you. IDS110 employs parent educators who can lend support to parents. Home and center based visits, email, Q&A and phone conversations are available to all preschool families. To schedule an appointment please email cpedretti@isd110.org.

Early Childhood Advisory Team

This is a group of parents and staff that meet five times during the school year to support, advise, and take action on behalf of Waconia Early Childhood Programs. If you are interested in joining this group please contact Sue Forster.

Classroom Visits

Waconia Wildcat Preschool: Parents are welcome to visit any day, however if your child is experiencing a separation issue it might be best that you wait until your child has attended preschool for at least 6 weeks as this will allow for him/her to adjust to their new environment. We encourage parent engagement in our

classrooms. There are several opportunities to volunteer, be guest readers or join in classroom events throughout the year.

Waconia Family Preschool: Parents are welcome to visit our classroom at any time. There are several ways for parents to be involved in their child's preschool experience including parents join in the classroom on parent days for Sessions I and II

Parents in Session III participate in 2 home visits, evening events, and conferences. Parents volunteer to chaperone for field trips.

Snack Time

Our program includes snack as an important time in our day. Nutritious snacks will be provided by the program for children. Celebration foods like birthday treats, may be brought to be shared with the class. Please let staff know in advance. All food brought to school for children is required to be commercially prepared or it can be fresh produce. We encourage you to bring nutritious options. The children's classroom is peanut free, please refrain from bringing anything into that classroom that has peanuts listed on the ingredients list. Individual teachers may have special guidelines due to allergies and you will be notified in that case.

Allergies

We work hard to make our school a safe environment for every student. Please inform the staff of any allergies so that we can take appropriate precautions to prevent exposure. You will be provided a form to fill out giving our staff instructions on how to proceed if your child comes into contact with those allergens. We are able to store epipens you provide if needed for your child

Pet Visits

We do allow occasional visits from pets and other animals to our classroom. All visits must be cleared with the teacher in advance.

Emergency Cards

Every child attending Waconia Wildcat Preschool needs to have a current emergency card filled out in its entirety, and kept at school. These will be provided at our open house in the fall or on your child's first day of school. In the event of an accident at school parents will be notified by phone or told of the incident at the end of class, an accident report will be shared with parents as needed. In the event that your child needs immediate medical attention we will call the ambulance and route your child to the hospital listed on our emergency card. You will be notified immediately.

Health Policy

How to know when you are too sick to be at school:

- a fever over 100 degrees
- vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- undiagnosed rash; (not including known, recurrent, non-communicable skin conditions)

- red, crusty, weepy eyes until antibiotics have been started
- yellow discharge, crusty noses that you are not able to manage
- undiagnosed or communicable coughs until doctor clears you for school (not including allergies, asthma, non communicable ongoing conditions)
- when your child is not feeling well enough to function and learn at school

Immunizations

State law mandates that an immunization record be kept on file for each child in our program. The immunization form is due before the start of class. A notarized immunization form must be on file with our school for conscientious objectors. We have two certified notaries employed in the district who can help with this requirement. Free or reduced cost immunizations for children are available through Carver Co. Public Health at 952-361-1329.

Toilet Training

We believe toilet learning is a skill that children are still developing at age 3. Please communicate with your child's teacher if your child is working to learning this skill.

Dressing for School

We ask that you dress your child comfortably for play. It is our desire that children participate fully in large muscle opportunities as well as paint, sensory play, science experiences and nature play, which can be messy. Please supply jackets, snow pants, boots, mittens, and hats as needed. You may also want to apply sunscreen and bug repellent to your child before school. Please provide a backpack or school bag for your child to bring each day. Inside the backpack, please provide a full change of clothes for your child in case of potty accidents or spills. Consider sending two changes of clothes if your child is struggling to complete the toilet learning process. A gallon ziplock bag works well to store the extra clothes. **Please check and empty the backpack daily.**

Backpacks

Children are requested to bring a school-sized backpack to each class. They will receive a school folder that should be returned each day in their backpack.

Literacy

Literacy is an important focus at school, but it starts with you. We encourage reading together at home and offer scholastic book order opportunities each month. Reading to your child is the best way to ensure literacy skills will develop.

Field Trips

Field Trips are planned throughout the year. Typically we will use a school bus for transportation. All field trips will have a sign up for parents to chaperone if you are interested in attending with us. All field trips are scheduled to fit within regular school hours.

Nature Play

We believe children need to connect with nature to support healthy development. Wildcat Discovery Park is designed to be a place where children can connect with trees, shrubs, perennials, vines and edible gardens for children's enjoyment and healthy development. This outdoor classroom space will be used often in all seasons.

Holidays

We find that secular remembrance of certain holidays throughout the year can be a fun way to enhance our daily curriculum. Please be open with concerns you have about what might be included in these days and potential conflict to your personal beliefs. With open communication we have found solutions to make activities work for all of our students. If you have information about celebrations that you would like to share with the class, please let the children's teacher know to see how we might share those ideas.

Transportation Services

Bussing is available for qualified families and/or for a fee. Koch Bus Company provides mini vans to transport children. Children who will be riding the bus, please be ready and waiting at least 5 minutes before the pick up or drop off times. We must see an adult at drop off to ensure the safety of the child. If an adult is not present the child will be brought back to school and parents will be notified. A fee for extended care may be assessed in this situation.

Special Education Services

Extra help is available for students that need it. Our school works in full partnership with the district's Early Childhood Special Education program. Qualifying children will receive extra support and services to help them succeed at school.

Early Childhood Screening

Early Childhood Screening is a free, developmental check required by the State of Minnesota for all preschool-age children who will be attending kindergarten at a public school. Screening appointments:

- Last approximately 60 minutes with parent observation during the entire screening
- Are best when complete at the age of 3.6 - 4

- Check your child's height, weight, hearing, vision, and immunization record, coordination, large muscle and small motor skills, speech, learning development, and social/emotional skills.
- Involves playful activities that make it an enjoyable experience for your child, while providing valuable information to ensure development is on track
- Are not tests. Screening simply helps identify any needs that may require additional support before your child enters kindergarten. Studies show that early intervention can make the biggest impact on development.
- Your screener will discuss the results of the screening with you immediately and answer any questions you may have

Class Photos and Video

We take photos in class . A portion of these photos are used in class as part of our curriculum and classroom management. Other photos are used in promotional literature or on our programs Facebook page. Others will be shared with you on a private platform via the internet. If for any reason you are not comfortable having your child's photo taken in class for these purposes please let a staff member know so that we can offer you an opt out form. In addition, professional photos will be taken of every child in the fall. Purchase of these photos is optional

