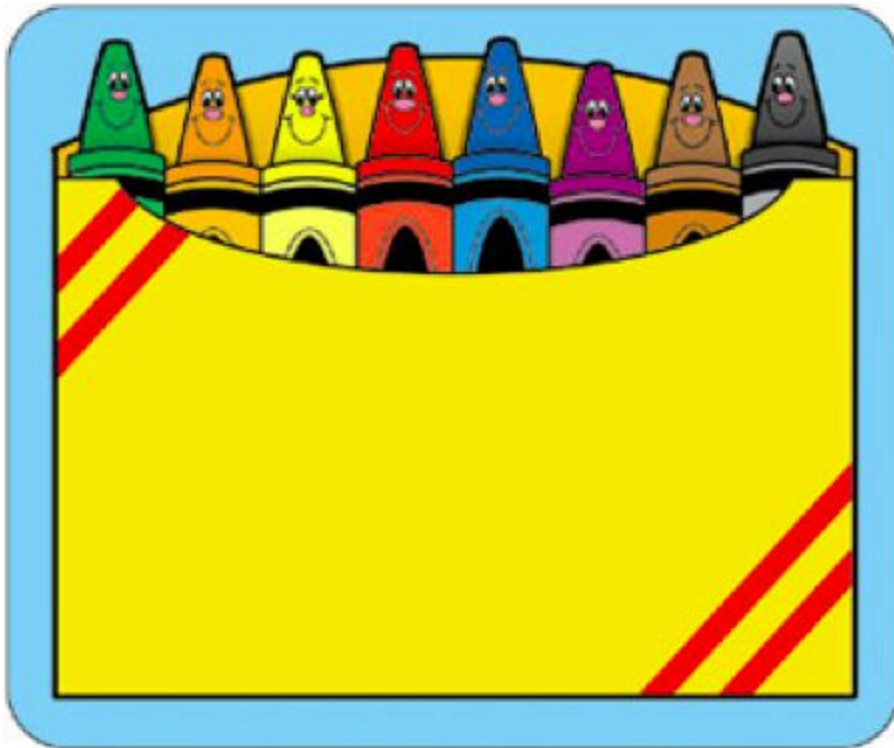


O'Neill Elementary School

Preschool Handbook

2017-2018



**O'Neill Elementary School
O'Neill Public Schools
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Staff

Teacher	Mrs. Chelsea McIntosh
Paraprofesional	Ms. Shay Spady
Special Education	Mrs. Lori Mathews
Speech/Language	Mrs. Mary Jo Benson
Principal	Mr. Jim York
Assistant Principal	Mrs. Jill Brodersen

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of O’Neill Public Schools

Our mission is to provide engaging learning experiences in a safe and respectful environment where all students are expected to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to be independent, collaborative, and productive citizens of an ever-changing world.

Preschool Philosophy

O’Neill Elementary Preschool uses developmentally appropriate practices to provide a learning environment that encourages all children to learn and develop through a curriculum that is aligned with all state standards. Our highly qualified staff will provide a safe environment where children feel safe, secure and cared for. Children will have the opportunity to participate in active learning experiences to build their readiness for the Kindergarten level. Instruction will work on all skills from educational fundamentals to social skills and relationship building. With a partnership with the families as another key element of the program we want to foster that relationship and will support families throughout all aspects of the preschool program.

Goals

- To provide an environment that is welcoming and nurturing to all children
- To encourage growth in our students in all developmental areas
- To provide an environment where students gain independence and self-esteem
- To prepare students for the academic, social and developmental needs of Kindergarten

Curriculum

O'Neill Elementary Preschool uses The Creative Curriculum, a research-based curriculum that fosters growth and development through a project-based approach. The curriculum is designed to create an environment for children where they have the opportunity to grow and develop at their own pace. The Creative Curriculum focuses on the whole child through small and large group activities.

The preschool will utilize the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines as a source of educational guidelines. These guidelines will help teachers plan learning activities, improve the knowledge of child development, provide parents with information regarding their child's development, guide assessments, and set goals for children.

Creative Curriculum can be seen by the company at the following web address:

<http://teachingstrategies.com/national/creative-curriculum-preschool-system-balls-study-video.html>

Assessment

The GOLD Assessment will be utilized as directed by the State of Nebraska. This assessment will give our program the guidelines of what is to be assessed through the course of the school year. Teachers will observe children throughout the day in order to plan and organize daily activities. These observations also give teachers an idea of how to support each individual child's learning and development.

Family Participation

Family participation can exponentially increase a child's learning and development. We want to have a strong partnership with our student's family. O'Neill Elementary Preschool welcomes families as part of the educational team and encourages our parents/guardians to increase the learning and development of their children in the following ways:

- Read to your children- hearing an adult read increases vocabulary and language acquisition skills
- Spending quality time with your children- the attention of a loving adult is essential in the emotional development of a child
- Listen to what children are interested in- being involved in a child's interests shows them that what their interests matter and can foster creativity and imagination

Families are welcome into the preschool throughout the school year. Families may make arrangements with preschool staff to visit, volunteer, and help in other ways if as they wish.

Daily Schedule

Morning Session

7:50-8:00	Arrival
8:00-8:20	Morning Meeting
8:25-9:25	Choice Time/Snack
9:30-9:50	Small Group Work
9:55-10:25	Large Motor Play
10:30-10:45	Read Aloud
10:50-11:00	Closing Meeting
11:05-11:30	Lunch
11:30	Dismissal

Afternoon Session

11:50-12:00	Arrival
12:00-12:25	Lunch
12:30-12:50	Afternoon Meeting
12:55-1:55	Choice Time
2:00-2:20	Small Group Work
2:25-2:55	Large Motor Play
3:00-3:10	Snack
3:15-3:30	Read Aloud
3:30	Dismissal

Arrival/Dismissal

Preschool students are to only arrive during their arrival window (7:50-8:00 am for morning and 11:50-12:00 pm for afternoon) and through the preschool door, which is located on the South Side of the building through the fenced playground gates. Dismissal will be done through the same doorway during each dismissal window as well. Parents are to come pick up their children from the same entrance/exit as they are brought to at the beginning of the day.

If you are bringing your student to school, or need to pick up your child outside of their original arrival/dismissal window you will need to check them in/out through the main office with the school secretary prior to them joining/leaving class.

Preschool students will not be released to anyone that has not been approved by parents or guardians upon enrollment. If someone different will be picking up a preschool student, written notification must be sent with the child, or the O'Neill Elementary School office must be contacted by the parent or guardian prior to pickup. Children will be signed in and out each session by parent, guardian, child care provider or other noted family member. A record of this will be kept in order to track attendance.

Absences

Absences occur from time to time. If you are aware that your child will be missing school before it occurs please notify the teacher ahead of time. In the occurrence that your student becomes ill overnight or other events that require an absence, please notify the school office on the day of the absence. The elementary school office begins taking phone calls at 7:15 am. Please notify the office with the child's name, reason for absence.

School Closing and Weather

Delayed openings or canceled days are announced on local radio station KBRX, the O'Neill Public Schools website, the O'Neill Elementary School facebook page and the school district's auto dialer system. Parents are requested not to call preschool staff with information or questions regarding a delay or cancellation. The preschool will follow the O'Neill Public School policy.

If a late start is called due to weather, there will be NO morning or afternoon preschool. If school dismissal is announced before the arrival of the afternoon

session then that session will not be held. The school district will make early dismissal decisions involving weather with the arrival time of the afternoon preschool students as a contributing factor.

Yearly Calendar

O'Neill Elementary Preschool will follow the O'Neill Public Schools holiday and break schedule. However, start and end dates may vary from year to year. Please make sure your family has the Preschool calendar on hand with the unique school days that are different from O'Neill Elementary. The Preschool calendar will be attached at the end of this document in Appendix A.

Meals

Each student enrolled in the preschool, both morning and afternoon session, will be served lunch in a family-style setting. In addition to meals, children will learn about nutrition, good eating habits, and table manners in a group setting. If substitutions need to be made based on a food allergy, please make arrangements with the teaching staff as well as the school nutritionist.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Please label all of your child's personal belongings with his/her name. The preschool and O'Neill Elementary is not responsible for any lost items. We ask that you do not send toys, money or food (unless previously arranged with the teacher) to school.

During the preschool day, we will do lots of painting, playing outside, and other activities so proper clothing is requested. Each family will need to provide an extra set of clothes for their student. This will be kept in their personal area. This is also necessary if a child were to have a toileting accident, food spill, etc.

If during the day a child has a bathroom accident at school, the staff will help him/her change into clean clothes. If there are no clean clothes available in their cubby, staff will contact parents to bring clean clothing to the child.

Field Trips and Classroom Visitors

O'Neill Elementary Preschool will participate in field trips throughout the school year. The staff will send home notes informing families of any upcoming field trips. All children will be involved in field trips, unless noted by parents/guardians (the notes will provide this option).

During the course of the school year, the preschool may have classroom visitors to share their knowledge and expertise about a topic they are studying. Parent/Guardians may be asked to be an expert visitor on a topic of study if applicable. If there is ever an expertise that you would like to share with the preschool, please discuss this with the staff and they can find a related topic of study.

Transportation

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian, unless authorized through special education. Please pay close attention when dropping off and picking up children from the school. There are many other children coming and going during these times. Please follow specific traffic routes and parking areas when bringing students to their classroom.

Medication

Any parent who wishes school personnel to administer medication to his/her child during the school day must comply with school district regulations.

1. Medication must be left at the school office accompanied by a permission form signed by a parent/guardian. These forms are available from the school nurse or secretary.
2. All prescription medications must be in a container properly labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, medication name and directions for administering. Ask your pharmacist for an extra bottle for your at-school prescriptions.
3. Over the counter medications must also be checked in with the school nurse and have the accompanying form completed before medication can be administered.

Immunization Policy

Nebraska law requires that all children who attend preschool programs be adequately protected against specific childhood diseases through immunization. Parents or guardians of each child are required to submit one of the following when enrolling in preschool.

1. Proof that the child is protected by age-appropriate immunization against:
 - a. 4 DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)
 - b. 3 Polio
 - c. 1 MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
 - d. 3 HIB (haemophilus, influenzae type B)
 - e. 3 Hepatitis B.
 - f. 1 Prevnar (pneumococcal)
 - g. 1 Varicella- Chickenpox (1 dose or documented history of disease); or
2. A certificate from a licensed medical professional stating that immunization is not appropriate and describing the medical reason

Home Visits/Conferences

Staff will be conducting parent/teacher conferences and home visits throughout the school year. Each family will receive two home visits and/or two parent/teacher conferences each school year. Home visits are typically done in the home. However, if you would like to have your home visit elsewhere, arrangements may be made with the staff. Parent/Teacher conferences will be done in accordance with the O'Neill Public Schools calendar. Parents/guardians will receive information relating to these conferences through the year.

Home Visits consist of:

- Getting to know families and children
- Set goals for the school year
- Discuss information regarding your child

Parent/Teacher Conferences:

- Talk about child's progress
- Discuss assessments and any screenings
- View samples of child's work

Child Abuse and Neglect

All O'Neill Public Schools faculty, including preschool staff, is required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. Anyone working in public is a mandatory reporter and these guidelines have been shared with all staff in the school district.

Communication

Children will receive communication from their teacher in regards to what is taking place in the classroom. Newsletters will include course of study, items they are learning, areas of development, ideas for activities to do at home, etc. School related news will also be available on the O'Neill Public Schools website, and other news outlets.