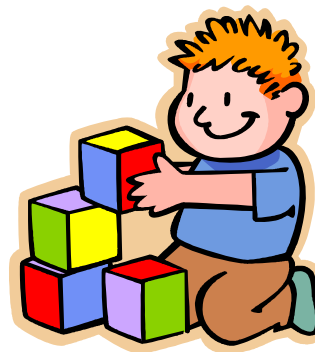


The preschool schedule follows the regular Middletown Schools calendar. Preschool operates five days per week from September thru June for a total of 180 days. You will be notified if there are any changes.

# Parent Handbook for Preschool Program

Middletown, Connecticut



2009-2010  
revised 6/09

**Sliding Fee Scale**

Parent /guardian fees will be calculated prior to enrollment using the current DSS School Readiness Sliding Fee Scale. Two recent pay stubs from all working members of the family and any other documentation of additional family income will be used to determine the family income and fee.

Fees will be re-determined every six months or when the family’s income changes, whichever occurs first. Updated documentation of income will need to be re-submitted at the time of re-determination.

Families who are eligible for the Care4kids state subsidy program must apply and will receive assistance in doing so.

Families receiving a Care4kids subsidy will pay the family co-pay as determined by Care4kids.

Staff will review the fee calculation with the family and obtain a parent signature. The parent will receive a copy of the fee calculation form.

Payment is due **on or before the first** of the month with no other options available. Payments that are late by 2 months will result in the child losing his/her place in the preschool. Reminders to make payments should not be expected. Upon making restitution, parents may request in writing to be placed on the waiting list and reapply.

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**Appendix J**

**Professional Development**

The preschool program recognizes the importance of ongoing professional development for staff and its positive impact on program quality. Teachers are required to develop professional development plans that meet School Readiness requirements and their individual growth needs, and are encouraged to participate in professional development activities that will advance their teaching practices.

**Information Page**

1. Your child's teacher is \_\_\_\_\_
2. The paraprofessionals are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The preschool coordinator is Ann Perzan phone # 638-1428
4. The school principal is \_\_\_\_\_
5. The school's phone number is \_\_\_\_\_
6. DATTCO's phone number is 860-635-8234
7. Your child begins school at \_\_\_\_\_ and leaves school at \_\_\_\_\_



## **Middletown Public Schools Preschool Program Statement of Philosophy and Goals**

The Middletown Public Schools Preschool Program is committed to providing a high quality preschool experience for all children it serves. We are sensitive to the social, emotional, language, cognitive, self-care, and motor needs of each child. We believe that children are best able to achieve their full potential through a positive self-esteem and a love of learning. We believe in the importance of providing a well-designed and safe facility; an environment that honors all ethnic groups, religions, genders, and abilities; and the vital role that parents play in their child's preschool experience.

The following goals guide us toward our vision of learning, growth, and fulfillment for all of our children:

1. Through the provision of a safe, caring, and supportive environment, our children will continue to develop in social, cognitive, language, motor, and self-help areas, with their current level of development serving as the focus of our beginning efforts.
2. Recognizing that language, speech, and all forms of non-verbal communication serve as the medium for learning, play, and social connectedness, developing communication skills will serve as a major focus of our daily activities.
3. In the classroom and on the playground, our children will experience school as an enjoyable activity, and will thus develop a life-long love of learning, inquiry, and play.
4. Through the total preschool experience, our children will become familiar with the routine and structured experiences of school and will thus become prepared for learning environments beyond preschool.
5. Staff and administrators will develop meaningful and supportive relationships with parents for the purpose of facilitating children's growth and learning at home and school.

Proper hand washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include:

- Moisten hands with water and apply liquid soap. Rub hands with soap and water for at least 10 seconds. Include between fingers, under and around nail beds, backs of hands and any jewelry.
- Rinse hands well under running water with fingers down so water flows from wrist to finger tips. Leave the water running.
- Dry hands with paper towel or approved drying device. Drying devices will not be used unless there is a faucet that does not require the user to touch the faucet after the hands are washed.
- Use a towel to turn off the faucet, if inside a toilet room with a closed door, use the towel to open the door. Discard the towel in an appropriate receptacle.

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement but not a substitute for hand washing in any situation listed above as requiring hand hygiene.

Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur. Staff clean and sanitize sinks used both for food preparation and other purposes before using these sinks to prepare food.<sup>[3]</sup> 2.

The use of alcohol-based hand rubs in lieu of hand washing is not recommended for early education and child care settings. If used as a temporary measure, sufficient product must be used to keep the hands wet for 15 seconds. Since the alcohol-based hand rubs are toxic and flammable, they must be stored and used according to the manufacturers. Antibacterial hand cleansers can be used when soap and water is inaccessible but should not be substituted for hand washing.

### **Application**

This policy applies to all teachers, children, volunteers, and families.

### **Communication**

This policy will be included in the teachers and parent manual and reminders about hand washing procedures will be posted at all hand washing sites.

### **Safety**

Procedures will be followed and periodically monitored.

## Child Care Policy--Hand washing

### Belief/Intent/Background

Proper and consistent hand washing is essential for maintaining a healthy environment and minimizing disease transmission. The hand washing policy is a guideline for teachers, children and families to promote proper hygiene in the child care program and to decrease transmission of infections.

### Procedure/Practice

1. Signs will be posted at each sink with the times when hand washing is required and the steps to follow.
2. Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are instructed in hand washing and are periodically monitored. All staff, volunteers, and children in situations require hand washing where hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others. Staff assists children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task. Children wash either independently or with staff assistance. Children and adults wash their hands
  - on arrival for the day;
  - after diapering or using the toilet (For infants, the use of wet wipes is acceptable.);
  - after handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit);
  - before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry);
  - after playing in water that is shared by two or more people;
  - after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals;
  - when moving from one group to another (e.g., visiting) that involves contact with infants and toddlers.

Adults also wash their hands

- before and after feeding a child;
- before and after administering medication;
- after assisting a child with toileting;
- after handling garbage or cleaning.

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Middletown Board of Education is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religious belief, age, handicapping condition, national origin, marital status, or gender in any of its educational programs, activities, or employment policies. All educational programs and offerings, including vocational education and extracurricular activities, are subject to this policy.

## Enrollment Policy

The Middletown Public Schools Preschool Program accepts three and four year old children who reside in Middletown without regard to their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or economic background. We enroll children who are not yet toilet trained and work together with the family to help the child acquire this skill.

### I. Introduction

Welcome to preschool!

This handbook is designed to help you and your child have a good year at school. With your help, your child will have many experiences that help to prepare her or him for kindergarten and beyond. The purpose of our preschool program is to help you and your child build a good educational foundation for kindergarten and beyond.

**PLAY IS IMPORTANT!** Play is a crucial way in which children learn and grow. Just as children sit before they walk, they must learn to use their hands, eyes, and ears in play before they can read and write. Play is an important part of the curriculum in our program. Other essential aspects of the curriculum include:

Singing	Cutting (and other fine motor activities, such as puzzles, blocks, tracing)
Painting	Science experiments
Coloring	Working with clay
Exposure to print, letters, numbers	Food preparation
Listening to stories	Sorting and matching
Calendar	
Counting	

These are all activities that help to prepare children for kindergarten. All materials are supplied by the preschool.

## II. Transportation

Transportation will be provided to students based on parent need. Only preschoolers will be on board the DATTCO carryall, and each carryall will have a monitor riding with the children.

Please be sure to have your child ready for school when the carryall arrives at your home. It is best to be waiting outside a minimum of ten minutes prior to pick up and drop off. Please remember that an adult must be at home to meet your child at the bus. Your child will be returned to school if no adult is at home during drop off times. It will then become the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up.

If you plan to bring your child to school, please do not arrive prior to the start time for your child's session. Parents who arrive early will be asked to wait outside the school's drop off location until school begins. When picking your child up at school, please plan to arrive five minutes before dismissal time. If you are dropping off or picking up your child during school hours, you will be asked to sign in at the school office.

Contact the Preschool Coordinator if you are moving to a new address. Please note that DATTCO needs five days to arrange for a change in pickup and drop off addresses.

A note must be sent in whenever someone other than the regular person will be picking up your child. Also, please send a note whenever someone other than the regular person is meeting your child at the bus.

## III. Attendance

It is important that your child attend school daily. If your child is sick, please keep her/him home until she/he has been **symptom-free for 24 hours**. Please call your child's classroom teacher, as well as the DATTCO Bus Company, to let them know that your child will not be attending. It is our policy to call parents when children are absent from school unless we have received prior notification. Students who are absent more than ten days of school in any month will lose their place in the preschool program unless there is verification of illness from a doctor. It is the parent's responsibility to communicate in writing any absences from school.

A student's place in the preschool will not be held if the child is absent for more than a month and has not attended at least one day of each month.

## Transition to Kindergarten

Parents will receive a flyer notifying them of the dates and times of kindergarten registration at their child's elementary school.

The preschool program will provide parent contact information to the receiving elementary school so that the parent can be invited to parent and child kindergarten orientations at their school.

The preschool program will provide the receiving elementary school with a transition form that shares developmental information about the child with the kindergarten teacher.

The preschool program will provide kindergarten transition activities for children such as reading books about kindergarten, visiting a kindergarten classroom and experiencing lunch in the school cafeteria.

## Referrals for Supportive Services

Families will complete the Family Intake Form at enrollment so that the program can identify individual needs and connect families to identified agencies that can provide additional services. Examples of such services and assistance are:

- Obtain medical insurance
- Secure a medical home, on-going well-child care, and/or immunizations
- Adult education programs
- Job training
- Public library services

Parenting education and support programs

Families will complete a nutrition questionnaire about their child's diet and eating habits and will be referred for assistance if needs are indicated or services are requested.

Vision, hearing and dental screenings will be offered and children will be referred to an appropriate service if need is indicated.

## “No School” Announcements

When there is inclement weather, announcements of delayed openings or school closings are normally carried on any of the major television networks including ABC, NBC, and CBS. Please note that “no school” and delayed openings are also posted on the district website: [www.middletownschools.org](http://www.middletownschools.org).

### Delayed Openings

In the event of a delayed opening, the following applies:

- No AM session.
- Extended day students have a 90-minute delay.
- Regular time for PM session.

### Early Dismissal

In the event of an early dismissal:

--*Student's Transported by Bus*

Students in the AM session who are transported by bus will be dismissed at approximately

11:00. This time may vary due to weather conditions. Parent should anticipate their child arriving home earlier than normal and appropriate accommodations should be made.

--*Parent Pick-Up*

Students who are picked up by their parent will be dismissed at 11:00.

--*No PM session.*

## IV. Home-School Communication

It is important that your child bring a backpack to school every day. An adult will check backpacks each day for notes from home. Parents should check their child's backpack each day for artwork and notices. Please read all notices that come home. All important information will be sent home in this way (such as trips, parent meetings, changes in schedules, etc.).

Two parent conferences (December and March) will be scheduled during the school year. Parents may also make appointments for additional conferences at any time.

Our program has an “Open Door” policy. Parents may drop in to observe their child's classroom at any time without notice. Please be aware, however, that there are occasions when students are not in the classroom, including outside recess, outdoor walks, and field trips. We recommend calling prior to your visit, if possible.

## V. Parent Participation

We invite you to participate in our program as much as possible. Working together, we can do the best job for you and your child.

These are some ways you can help:

1. Attend parent meetings.
2. Volunteer in the classroom.
3. Accompany class trips.
4. Join the PTO/PTA.
5. Volunteer to help the teacher on projects involving cutting, tracing, baking, etc.
6. Praise and display the papers your child takes home. Remember: a lot of effort has gone into this work.
7. If you have a special talent, such as music, art, creative dramatics, etc., please let the teacher know so that you may share this with the children.
8. If you have some ideas - PLEASE LET US KNOW!
9. Read the classroom newsletter.
10. Attend Family Nights. They are designed to provide information on a wide range of parenting topics and interactive literacy activities

Parents are also invited to attend Preschool Parent Collaborative Meeting scheduled twice a year. These meetings are an opportunity for parents to participate in reviewing the goals and improvement plan of the Preschool Program. Parents will be notified prior to the scheduled meeting and participation is voluntary.

Parent Advisory Council - All parents are invited to be members of the Parent Advisory Council which meets every other month to review the following:

1. Offer a parent perspective
2. Discuss new program ideas
3. Provide feedback on policies and procedures
4. Review information on program quality collected from many sources and engage in a reflective process to assess the effectiveness of the program as measured by N.A.E.Y.C. standards and State Dept of Education evaluation measures.

## Diaper Changing Procedures

1. Collect all supplies, but keep everything off the diapering surface except the items you will completely use up during the diapering process.
2. Prepare a piece of nonabsorbent paper to cover the diapering surface from the child's chest to the child's feet.
3. Always keep a hand on the child.
4. Avoid contact with soiled items. Anything that comes into contact with stool or urine is a source of germs. These items will have to be cleaned and sanitized after each diaper change.
5. Carry the child to the changing table, keeping soiled clothing from touching the caregiver's clothing. Bag soiled clothing and later tie the plastic bag to send the clothing home.
6. Unfasten the diaper, but leave the soiled diaper under the child. Hold the child's feet to raise the child out of the soiled diaper and use the disposable wipes to clean the child's diaper area. Remove stool and urine from front to back and use a fresh wipe each time. Put the soiled wipes into the soiled diaper.
7. Remove the soiled diaper, clean soiled surfaces, and then remove gloves, disposing of everything in a covered container.
8. Put on a clean diaper.
9. Clean the child's hands using soap and water or a disposable wipe
10. Take the child back to the child care area.
11. Clean and disinfect the diapering area. Dispose of the cover in the covered container. Clean any visible soil from the changing table. Disinfect the table per surface sanitizing procedure.
12. Wash hands thoroughly.

Staff will schedule at least one Nutrition/Food center activity each week. These activities will help children learn about good nutrition.

Staff will communicate with parents the specific lessons taught and provide take-home information as appropriate.

Middletown's Public Schools Preschool Program maintains a parent resource-lending shelf that includes information on child nutrition and developing healthful eating practices.

#### Communication and Implementation Plan

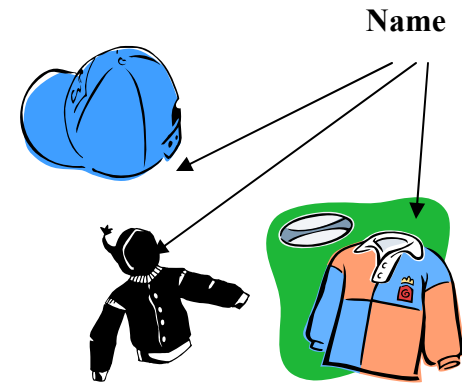
The Nutrition Consultant, Health Consultant, and Board of Directors will review food and Nutrition Policy

The director and/or nutrition consultant prior to implementing the Food and Nutrition Plan will provide education and training to staff and parents.

Copies of the new policy will be available for review in the Staff Training Manual and the Parent Information Guide.

Aspects of the policy that pertain directly to staff or parents will be included in the appropriate manual that must be reviewed and signed prior to participating in Middletown's Public Schools Preschool program.

## Please Label All Loose Clothing With Your Child's Name



### VII. Keeping the School Informed

It is important that the preschool is able to contact you at all times. If any of the information on your child's emergency card changes, please contact your child's classroom teacher or the Preschool Coordinator immediately. This includes any changes in your home phone number, address, or medical issues. The Preschool Program must have an active phone number to contact parents at all time.



### VIII. Snack Time

Snack time is an important part of the preschool program. A uniform snack and drink will be provided daily to each child. On the first day of each week, please send a \$5.00 snack fee in an envelope marked with your child's name. This fee is also used to defray the costs of field trips and other special events. (Please note: parents of children in School Readiness slots do not pay this fee, because they are already paying for their child's participation based upon a sliding scale formula). Please do not send any food unless arrangements have been made with the teacher in advance.

Please let us know of any food allergies your child may have or if your child has specific dietary needs/restrictions.

## IX. Preschool Curriculum

The Middletown Preschool Curriculum aligns with both the *Connecticut State Frameworks and Benchmarks for Preschool Children* and Middletown Public School's Kindergarten Curriculum. The Assessments of all standards are guided by the principles outlined in the *Connecticut State Department of Education Preschool Assessment Framework*.

The curriculum emphasizes important developmental concepts in physical, creative personal/social, and cognitive domains. Objectives have been written to articulate a developmental sequence and to facilitate connections between the student's immediate environment and the learning process. The core of the learning principle is that students will learn with understanding and develop skills that will foster life-long learning.

<b>Creative Expression</b>
<b>Content Standard</b> <b>Creative Expression</b>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to create works that express or represent experiences, ideas, feelings and fantasy using various media.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to exhibit curiosity about and explore how materials function and affect the senses.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to represent fantasy and real life experiences through pretend play.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to engage in musical and creative movement activities.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to describe or respond to their own creative work or the creative work of others.</i>

### \*Parties and Celebrations

Parents who would like to provide a special treat on the day of their child's birthday should choose foods that fall within the *Encouraged* list above.

Written menus of the snack foods served by Middletown's Public Schools Preschool Program will be sent home in the teachers' daily notices.

\*Middletown's Public Schools Preschool Program will offer foods that represent cultural diversity especially the cultures of the students we serve.

\*Parents are encouraged to work with staff to present healthful foods from other cultures along with the stories and food ways they represent.

Mealtime Setting: To help children develop fine motor skills, mealtime manners, and appropriate social interactions with their peers.

\*Staff will serve snacks family style and assist children with serving themselves.

Mealtime equipment, including serving bowls, utensils, dishes, tables and chairs are appropriately sized.

\*Styrofoam plates and other containers are not allowed as they pose a choking hazard.

\*At least one classroom staff person will participate fully in each eating opportunity with the children.

Staff will ensure that mealtime distractions and noise not associated with the meal are minimal.

Staff will initiate mealtime conversation that includes all of the children and stimulates pleasant interaction

Staff will assist children in learning to pass and serve food, and coping with successes of failures.

\*Staff does not encourage or discourage children from eating. They will not praise children or punish them for the quantity or variety of foods eaten. Children will be encouraged to sample a variety of snacks but ultimately the child's choice will be honored and an alternative snack will be provided.

\*Staff will ensure that every child has adequate time to eat.

\*Nutrition Education: Nutrition education is included in our preschool curriculum specifically with the Captain 5-A-Day and the Nutrition Activities for Preschoolers programs. Nutrition and food knowledge are also fostered throughout the curriculum as appropriate.

Grains: At least half of the grain foods offered will be whole grains.

Dairy/calcium: yogurt without candy, cheese, and substitutes

Fruits and vegetables: All fruits and vegetables are encouraged.

Protein: Lower fat and lower sodium protein foods are encouraged. See also Foods that Pose Choking Hazard below.

#### Foods Not Allowed

**\* Children who are sent to Middletown’s Public School’s Preschool Program with the following food items will not be allowed to consume them.**

\*Beverages other than those listed above will not be allowed.

\*Dessert-type snack foods such as cupcakes, cookies, chocolate, donuts, anything with frosting, etc. If you are unsure whether a food falls into this category, please do not send it. The classroom teacher must agree upon exceptions. Please note that an alternative health snack will be offered.

\* “Fruit” snacks that do not contain real fruit, jelly beans, and other gummy-type snacks will not be allowed. Fruit leathers are allowed if they contain 100% fruit. These should not be offered every day as they can contribute to dental caries.

**Foods that Pose a Choking Hazard:** The following foods pose a choking hazard to preschool children: Hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts; popcorn, hard pretzels, raw peas, spoonfuls of peanut butter, and chunks of raw carrot or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

Hot dogs will not be allowed even if they are cut. Other foods will be allowed if cut to the appropriate size.

Parents will send appropriately sized foods.

Staff will serve appropriately sized foods.

Children with special dietary needs will be accommodated with consultation from family/physician.

\*All staff and administrators will adhere to the foods not allowed policy in the classroom. Personal foods or beverages that do not fall within the guidelines may be consumed during break time in the staff area only.

<b>Physical</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Content Standard</b> <b>Physical Development</b></p> <p><i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to engage in a wide variety of gross-motor activities that are child selected and teacher initiated.</i></p>
<p><i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to engage in a wide variety of fine-motor activities that are child selected and teacher initiated.</i></p>
<p><i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to practice basic hygiene and self-help skills.</i></p>

<b>Personal-Social Development</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Content Standard</b> <b>Personal/Social</b></p> <p><i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to exhibit curiosity, creativity, self-direction and persistence in learning situations.</i></p>
<p><i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to describe themselves using several basic characteristics.</i></p>
<p><i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to demonstrate awareness of one’s own and others’ feelings.</i></p>
<p><i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to participate in and exhibit self-control in group situations.</i></p>

<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to interact appropriately with peers and familiar adults.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to use age appropriate conflict resolution strategies.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to recognize similarities and appreciate differences in people.</i>
<b>Cognitive</b>
<b>Content Standard</b> Logical-Mathematical/Scientific Thinking
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to express wonder, ask questions and seek answers about the natural world.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to recognize and solve problems through active exploration, including trial and error and interacting with peers and adults.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to organize and express their understanding of common properties and attributes of things.</i>
<b>Content Standard</b> Language and Literacy
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to communicate their experiences, ideas and feelings by speaking.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide opportunities to exhibit interest in reading.</i>
<i>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to listen with understanding to directions, conversation and stories.</i>
<i>Preschool will provide children with opportunities to exhibit interest in pre-reading skills.</i>
<i>Preschool program will provide children with opportunities to use different forms of writing.</i>

The Middletown Public School complies with all Federal and State nutritional and food safety mandates. Policies meet USDA and CACFP requirements.

#### Children with Special Dietary and Feeding Needs

Parents will assist Middletown's Public Schools Preschool Program in communicating with the child's health care provider to obtain an individualized care plan.

Staff will adhere to the individualized care plan in consultation with parents and health care provider.

\*Children with life-threatening food allergies can be seated at allergen-free tables or if needed the classroom can be designated allergen-free. Additional precautions may be established on a case-by-case basis.

\*Parents of other children in the classroom will be informed (without revealing which child has an allergy) of any food allergies in the classroom and provided with suggestions for appropriate foods that could be shared in the classroom.

Parents of child who require specialized food requirement may be asked to provide their child with alternative snack options.

Parents are asked to give consent to post the child's dietary restrictions or allergies in areas where food is stored or prepared and as appropriate in other areas of the classroom.

Nutrition Standards: All meals and snacks served shall offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with USDA nutrition standards (CACFP) and the Dietary Guidelines (which focus on increasing fruits, vegetables and whole grains).

#### Meal Pattern

- Foods prepared by Middletown's Public Schools Preschool Program or sent in by parents will meet the serving size and food group recommendations according to the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines.

#### \*Foods Allowed and Encouraged

The foods served by Middletown's Public Schools Preschool Program and foods brought from home for a child's lunch will meet the following criteria:

- Beverages: Only unsweetened milk (skim, 1%, 2%, or a suitable† non-milk substitute), no more than 4 ounces of 100% fruit juice per day, and unlimited drinking water

† Suitable substitutes include vitamin & mineral fortified soy, rice or other grain beverages that are plain or vanilla flavored

## Policies:

\*Hunger. No children attending Middletown's Public School's Preschool Program will go hungry while in our care.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) is/are sent to school with an appropriate quantity of healthful foods. Parents who are having difficulty are encouraged to speak confidentially with the director or staff who will refer to appropriate agencies to provide food assistance.

Middletown's Public Schools Preschool Program staff will identify families who might need help with getting enough food, refer families to CAHS Food Stamp Outreach workers, Amazing Grace Food Pantry, WIC, or other agency that can provide food assistance.

\*Classroom Rewards. With the exception of students with special needs whose educational program requires edible reinforcers, food is not used as a reward in any way at Middletown's Public Schools Preschool Program. Children are rewarded in various ways as appropriate for the child and the situation.

\*Classroom Discipline. Food is not used to coerce children or as a tool to manage a child's behavior. ("If you don't behave, you can't have snack.")

Food Safety. Food-borne illness can be serious in young children. Middletown's Public School's Preschool will, within our ability, ensure the safety of food eaten by children in our care.

Parents will notify staff upon arrival of any foods brought from home that require refrigeration.

Staff will store all food at the appropriate storage temperature and in the appropriate containers.

Staff will ensure that proper hand washing occurs according to the Hand Washing Policy, Appendix G.

Staff will ensure that the food-safe sanitation practices are adhered to according to the Sanitation Schedule. This includes clean surface, utensils, serving equipment, etc.

Foods that pose a choking hazard to preschool children are detailed below and will not be served.

Foods brought from home that will be shared among the class must meet nutrition requirements and/or be commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed packages.

## XI. How You Can Help Your Child And The Teacher

1. Listen to your child.
2. Give your child time to respond.
3. Allow your child to make decisions.
4. Read to your child often.
5. Take trips to explore people, places, and things.
6. Encourage your child to recall and tell events, stories, and special news.
7. Let your child see you reading, writing, and organizing your thoughts on paper.
8. Involve your child in your cooking projects.
9. Play board and card games.
10. Make things with your child (color, cut, and paste).



### Parent Responsibilities

1. Send your child to school every day. If your child is ill and cannot attend, please call your child's teacher to let her know that your child won't be in. Also, please call **DATTCO** at 635-8234 to cancel transportation.
2. Send your child to school with a backpack every day. When your child comes home, check his/her backpack for schoolwork and/or notes from the teacher.
3. Put your child's name on all personal belongings.
4. Have your child ready and on time for the bus every day. Your child should be waiting outside for the bus a minimum of ten minutes prior to pickup and drop off times.

5. Be waiting for your child when he or she arrives home from school. The bus drivers will not drop your child off unless an adult is there to receive him or her.
6. If your child is entering her/his second year in the program, please note that the yellow Health Assessment Record (physical exam form) must be completed by your child’s physician annually and returned to school just as in the previous year.
7. Call your child’s teacher if you have any questions or problems.



OFF TO A GOOD START!

## Food and Nutrition Policy Middletown’s Public Schools Preschool Program

**Purpose** of the Food and Nutrition Policy: To promote the health and development of the children in our care by providing nutritious foods, teaching appropriate health and eating behaviors and encouraging families to do the same.

Rationale: Healthful eating and physical activity positively influence a child’s ability to learn and develop. <sup>1</sup> Even mild nutritional deficiency can impair a child’s cognitive development especially early in life. Children who consume too much juice, sweetened beverages, and candy-type food develop early tooth decay that further inhibits their ability to consume healthful foods and take in the nutrients they need for good health and development <sup>2</sup>. In addition, healthful eating practices are learned very early in life and are learned from adults who make healthful choices for the children in their care as well as themselves <sup>3</sup>. Healthful eating practices lead to a lifetime of good health.

Healthful eating practices include being confident in her/his ability to try new foods, eating a wide variety of healthful foods, eating slowly and in response to internal hunger cues rather than environmental influences and emotion. A healthful diet is one that includes lots of fruit and vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, has a good source of calcium such as low fat dairy, and mono and polyunsaturated fats. A healthful diet is limited in saturated fat, trans fat and sodium.

Families are the primary care givers and teachers of their young children. Middletown’s Public School’s Preschool Program supports parents in their efforts to help their children develop healthful eating habits and therefore must abide by stricter policies and procedures than parents might have for heir home. Middletown’s Public Schools Preschool Program strives to provide a pleasant eating environment for children and staff. We recognize that it is the school’s role, as part of the larger community, to model and actively practice, through policies and procedures: the promotion of family health, physical activity, and good nutrition.

<sup>1</sup>Fact Sheet – Nutrition, Physical Activity and Achievement, Action for Healthy Kids, 2004: [http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/newsroom\\_facts.php](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/newsroom_facts.php)

<sup>2</sup>Position of the American Dietetic Association: Dietary Guidance for Healthy Children Ages 2 to 11 Years. J Am Diet Assoc. 2004; 104:660-677.

<sup>3</sup>Birch LL, Fisher JO. Development of eating behaviors among children and adolescents. Pediatrics. 1998;101(3suppl);539-49

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Please refer to Board of Education District Policies for additional information.

[www.middletownschools.org/policies](http://www.middletownschools.org/policies)

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## Appendix A

### Child and Family Outcome Statement

The Middletown Public Schools Preschool Program works toward providing programming that welcomes and serves the needs of our preschool community. All children including their families will have access to a supportive network that works collectively toward fostering the individual growth of our students. Families are offered opportunities to become actively involved in their child's educational progress, transition, and overall personal development.

It is our intention that families will develop positive home/school connections through continual and active collaboration. By establishing an environment of trust, we anticipate that parents' involvement will continue to grow throughout their child's educational career. As a result of our commitment toward working with families, it is our goal that each child will receive a well-rounded program that acknowledges students as individuals. This includes providing an environment that fosters students' self-image, curiosity, respect for others, love of learning, and school readiness skills.

### Referral for Diagnostic Assessment

Teachers who maintain outstanding concerns regarding individual students development (despite the implementation of instructional strategies and modifications) are encouraged to refer students to the districts 4-Step referral process. Refer to district's Special Education Manual.

#### Confidentiality

The Middletown Public Schools' PreK-Program complies with the state and federal regulations regarding confidentiality and success to and amendment of student records.

#### Confidentiality of Records

- Each person who has access to student records is responsible for ensuring personally identifiable information is protected from disclosure at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages.
- Student records are not public records and any disclosure other than to persons authorized to receive the records without prior parent consent violates the law and Board policy, except as permitted by federal and state statutes.

#### Access to Student Records

- Parents of currently enrolled or former students who wish to access student records which are maintained by the school system may make requests for access in writing to the building principal.
- The Board will make records available for review by parents within a reasonable time, but in any event, no more than 45 days from receipt of written request.

#### Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

- The right to inspect and review student's education records within forty-five calendar days of the day the District receives a request for access.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the parent believes are inaccurate or misleading or otherwise violates the student's privacy rights.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

- ◆ *Confidentiality:* Teachers and support staff will have primary access to assessment information. Please refer to section on confidentiality/Board Policies.
- ◆ *Family Involvement:* Parents will be invited to participate in a parent conference at a minimum of twice a year. A parent meeting may also be conducted at the request of either the parent or teacher.
- ◆ *Communication:* Conferences will include a written report of students’ strengths, weaknesses, and areas of development. Parents will have the opportunity to participate in setting individual student goals and planning. Parents will also be encouraged to provide input from a family/home perspective.
- ◆ *Methods to Communicate Information:* Parents will participate in a family Preschool Assessments orientation night during the month of October/November. Families will also receive written copies of student’s Narrative Summary and Family Conference forms during scheduled Parent Conference meetings. Refer to PAF Manual
  - \* *Narrative Summary Sheet* includes: Examples to share with family, Notes on family Conference, Goals and Plans for Home and School
  - \* *Family Conference Sheet* includes: Examples to share with family, Notes on Family Conference, Goals and Plans for Home and School

**Diagnostic Assessment**

Special Education students whose disabilities are not accommodated through the use of the PAF or general screening process will be evaluated utilizing standardized testing and/or the criterion set by student’s individual Education Plan (IEP). The Planning and Placement Team will determine testing instruments, timeline, and evaluation criterion.

- *Timeline:* Determined by PPT. Refer to district’s Special Education Manual.
- *Confidentiality:* Teachers and support staff will have primary access to assessment information. Please refer to section on confidentiality/Board Policies.
- *Family Involvement:* Parents/Guardians are invited to participate in correlation with Special Education Federal and State guidelines. Refer to district’s Special Education Manual.
- *Communication:* Communication of the results of testing will be conducted in compliance with Special Education Federal and State guidelines. Refer to district’s Special Education Manual.
- *Method to communicate information:* Information will be communicated to parents/guardians in compliance with Special Education Federal and State guidelines. Refer to district’s Special Education Manual.
- *Services:* If a child is determined to be eligible for special education services, they will be provide for that child by certified staff on-site.

**Standards of Staff Child Interactions**

- ◆ Teaching staff recognizes and upholds the dignity and worth of students as individuals and therefore deals justly and considerably with students.
- ◆ Teaching staff nurture student’s image of themselves and others regardless of race, origin, disability or religion.
- ◆ Teaching staff remains steadfast in guaranteeing equal opportunity for quality education for all children.
- ◆ Teaching staff foster children’s physical and emotional well-being by:
  - demonstrating respect for children
  - creating a positive emotional climate
  - interacting with children in a warm caring manner
  - maintaining consistent and predictable interactions
  - recognizing and encouraging children’s work and accomplishments
- ◆ Teaching staff are sensitive and responsive to children’s individual needs by:
  - varying their responses to accommodate student needs
  - fostering student independence
  - responding promptly and in a developmentally appropriate way
- ◆ Teaching staff to help children practice social skills by:
  - actively listening and fostering communication skills
  - assisting children to resolve conflicts
  - facilitating positive peer interactions
- ◆ Teaching staff are sensitive to children’s cultural identity by:
  - treating all students with respect and consideration
  - building positive self-image
- ◆ Teaching staff to respond to children with challenging behavior by:
  - foster children’s social skills
  - supporting children’s communication skills
  - never using physical punishment, threats or derogatory remarks
  - modeling appropriate skills
  - using environmental modifications

## Conflict Resolution for Children

The Middletown Public Schools Preschool Program utilizes the *Second Step* program as the primary instructional method to advance student's social skills. Children are taught to interpret internal cues, external social cues, and generate possible solutions. The use of *Second Step* methodologies are supported and used in the school environment to resolve student conflicts. Teachers work to facilitate and enrich student's level of empathy, knowledge of emotion-management, recognition of their own feelings and ability to problem solve strategies.

### Teacher Procedure

- ◆ Teachers model social-emotional skill.
- ◆ Teachers provide children with opportunities to practice the skill in new appropriate situations.
- ◆ Teachers offering specific positive reinforcement for children's skill use.
- ◆ Teachers use incidental teaching as opportunities to support skill use, provide coaching, constructive feedback, and positive reinforcement to children to support skill use during real-life situations.

### Student Procedure

- ◆ Children practice identifying nonverbal, verbal, and situational clues such as: happy, sad, angry, surprised, scared, disgusted, and worried.
- ◆ Children practice management strategies: deep breathing, doing calming activity, thinking calming thoughts, and reframing stressful situations by focusing on the positive.

### Five Step Resolution Plan

- ◆ Step 1 - Identify the problem
- ◆ Step 2 - Brainstorm possible solutions
- ◆ Step 3 - Evaluate each solution by asking three questions:  
How might I feel? What is the problem? What can I do?
- ◆ Step 4 - Select, plan, and try solution
- ◆ Step 5 - Evaluate whether the solution worked and switch to another solution if needed

## Assessment Plan

### Screening

Students attending the Middletown Public School's preschool program are screened upon entry into the program. Screening is conducted for the purpose of identifying student's individual strengths and weaknesses. Information gathered during student screenings is used as baseline information to support teacher's instructional planning, as well as, assisting in developing individualized instructional support/strategies.

- ◆ *Timeline:* Screenings will be conducted on all students (with the exception of students identified with special needs) within the first three months of entry.
- ◆ *Confidentiality:* Teachers and support staff will have primary access to assessment information. Please refer to section on confidentiality/Board Policies.
- ◆ *Family Involvement:* Parents/Guardian will be involved in the screening process through the use of parent interview/questionnaire. Parent will be asked to share: information about their child's development, family culture, language dominance, interest and needs.
- ◆ *Communication:* Parent will receive information regarding the screening process during the application process of enrollment.
- ◆ *Method to Communicate Information:* Information will be conveyed to parents through written letters.

### Preschool Assessment Framework

The PAF will be used in all preschool classrooms as the primary assessment tool for determining and monitoring student growth. Students' developmental progress and learning will be monitored on a developmental continuum with benchmarks ranging from 2.5 years to 6 years. The primary purpose of the PAF results is to identify students' strengths and weakness to drive teachers instruction. Teachers will utilize assessment results to individualize instruction to support students' individual development. Teachers will use the PAF manual for additional strategies for improving curriculum and adapting teaching practices and environment.

- ◆ *Timeline:* Each student will be evaluated on all 30 standards identified in the PAF at a minimum of two marked periods. Parent conferences will be conducted to review student performance during the months of December/January and March/April.