




Pre-Kindergarten Handbook

2020-2021



CLARKSDALE MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

526 S Choctaw Street - Clarksdale, MS 38614

www.cmsdschools.org

Dear Parent(s),

We welcome you and your child to the pre-kindergarten program of the Clarksdale Municipal School District. The experience of this memorable year will be exciting and rewarding. We look forward to working with you as a team to support your child's social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic development.

The purpose of this handbook is to help you understand this unique educational initiative, to explain the goals and objectives of the program, and to offer suggestions that will help your child be successful in the pre-k program and throughout his or her educational career.

We also want you to know we value your input. Please contact your child's pre-k teacher and/or principal with any questions or comments. Best wishes for a successful school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Nelson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Joe Nelson, Ph.D.
Superintendent

MISSION STATEMENT

The Clarksdale Municipal School District will provide innovative and quality educational programs that focus on the individual development of every student.

District Goals

Goal 1: Student achievement will increase each year

Goal 2: There will be a safe and orderly school climate in every school

Goal 3: An increasing number of students will experience a positive K-12 education

Goal 4: The School District will maintain a sound financial fund balance

Clarksdale Municipal School District Elementary School Listing/Contact Information

Joe Nelson, Ph.D., Superintendent of Education
526 South Choctaw Street
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614
662.627.8500

Booker T. Washington International Baccalaureate Magnet School

Grades PK-4
Brenda Miller, Principal
1800 Sunflower Extended
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614
662.627.8567

George H. Oliver Visual & Performing Arts Magnet School

Grades PK-4
Shawneequa Beal, Principal
871 Ritchie Avenue
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614
662.627.8605

Heidelberg STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Math) Magnet School

Grades PK-4
Cornishee Bruce-Sims, Principal
801 Maple Street
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614
662.627.8577

Kirkpatrick Health & Wellness Magnet School

Grades PK-4
Adrienne Hudson, Principal
1101 Smith Street
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614
662.627.8588

Coahoma County Early Learning Collaborative

Toya Harrell-Matthews, Ph.D., Lead Partner
526 S. Choctaw
Clarksdale, MS 38614
662.627.8500

Peggy Hemphill, Lead Teacher

Learning Environment

The Clarksdale Municipal School District's pre-kindergarten program provides a learning environment that affords each child opportunities to develop:

- Self-confidence through successful learning experiences;
- Responsibility for one's own behavior;
- Positive attitudes toward learning;
- A sense of responsibility for completing assigned tasks
- The ability to share and cooperate with others;
- Language/literacy skills and strategies;
- Mathematical thinking about patterns and relationships, order and predictability, and logic and meaning;
- The ability to observe, explore, discover, predict, and solve problems through concrete learning experiences;
- An understanding of the many aspects of their cultural and environmental world;
- Health-promoting habits and routines;
- Physically through use of large and small muscle activities
- Aesthetic expression and appreciation through art, music and dramatic play;
- The natural curiosity young children use to make sense of their world;
- The early concepts and skills that build the foundation for the CMSD kindergarten curriculum

Goals of the Clarksdale Municipal School District's Pre-K Program

Clarksdale Municipal School District's Pre-K program provides appropriate activities and learning experiences that help prepare young children for school. For a child to be ready, it means they are socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively prepared for success in kindergarten. CMSD's Pre-K program helps children become independent, self-confident, enthusiastic learners. Participation in the program encourages children to develop good habits and daily routines.

CMSD's Pre-K program encourages teachers to adopt child-centered instructional practices based on the interests and the skill levels of each child. Research shows that children benefit most when instruction is child-centered. Child-centered instruction allows teachers to facilitate learning rich environment that fosters children's initiative, exploration, and collaborative interaction with other children and adults.

To ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten, families will be provided information and assistance in preparing for and gathering the documentation necessary for their child's enrollment in kindergarten. CMSD provides summer activity kits that will allow parents to continue preparing their children for kindergarten.

You are encouraged to become involved in what your child is learning and experiencing in Pre-K, because your participation contributes to your child's success in school. A parent is a child's first and most important teacher.

Safety and Security Information

Transportation

Transportation is provided by the Clarksdale Municipal School District. The buses also have the appropriate child restraints for each of the student riders. Students must be picked up at the designated bus stops based on their address.

Safety to and from School

Whether your child rides in a car or bus, be sure that your child is clearly aware of the safety rules associated with what type of transportation. Your on-going communication with your child regarding safety issues reinforces these important concepts.

Emergency Contacts

Every student must have emergency contacts on file indicating the names of persons who are authorized by the parent(s) to pick up the child. We must have a note from you telling us of any changes in plans for pick-up of your child, and the individual picking up the student must show valid identification.

Schedule

Pre-K classes meet daily from 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Photography

Photos and videos may be taken at school events for use by the school district. They will be used by the district for district publications. Signed permission forms for publicity must be completed for a student's likeness to be used.

Dismissal

Each pre-k class is dismissed at 2:00 p.m. daily. All students must be picked up on time each day so that teachers can prepare for the following day.

Additional Information

Attendance

Your child must attend class regularly for optimum learning. We request you call your child's school to inform them when your child will be absent from school. An absence will be excused if the school is notified via parent note or telephone call. To ensure that parent(s) have an opportunity to communicate informally with teachers daily about their child's development and learning, we ask that you sign your child in upon arriving and sign them out when departing school each day. Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom at anytime the child is present.

Food Services

The Clarksdale Municipal School District participates in the National School Lunch and School breakfast programs. For the 2020-2021 school year all students are eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch under the Community Eligibility Provision.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

A minimum of three (3) parent/teacher conferences will be offered to families during the school year. During this conference the CMSD Pre-K Progress report will be shared with families. While sharing the CMSD progress report with families, teachers will provide information about the child's performance in language/literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, social/emotional development, health and physical development, creative expression, approaches to play and learning, and cognitive processes.

Birth Certificate & Immunization

All students are required to have an original, certified birth certificate and a completed 121 form on file before being enrolled in a pre-k classroom.

Readiness Assessment (MKAS²)

The Pre-K Readiness Assessment will provide parents, teachers, and early childhood providers with a common understanding of what children know and are able to do upon entering school. This readiness assessment will also be used to measure how well Pre-K programs prepare four-year-olds to be ready for kindergarten based upon the Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Four-Year-Old Children.

Uniform Policy Grades Pre-K-12

General Guidelines

No students' appearance should cause a distraction to such an extent that it violates another student's right to an education. All students are expected to observe minimum standards of hygiene, sanitation, and personal appearance. All students are expected to be in uniform each day unless specifically instructed differently by the building principal. The Board of Trustees approved the following recommendations for clothing to be worn in elementary, middle, and high school of the Clarksdale Municipal School District.

1. Uniforms should be color-coordinated clothing.
2. The following regulations will be followed for shirts/tops:
 - A. Shirts/tops must be **light blue or navy blue** (*No Logos, stripes, or emblems)
 - B. Shirts/tops must have a collar.
 - C. Shirts/tops may not be sleeveless.
 - D. Shirts/tops must cover the body and be tucked in throughout the school day.
 - E. No shirt/blouses should be worn over the uniform shirt.
3. The following regulations will be followed for pants/skirts/shorts/skorts/jumpers:
 - A. Pants/skirts/shorts/jumpers may be **khaki or navy blue**.
 - B. No logos/emblems shall be on clothing.
 - C. Pants must be worn at the waistline and should not be worn below or on the buttocks or hip area. Sagging pants will not be tolerated! School officials may use fasteners and string to assist students in keeping pants at the waistline.
 - D. A belt must be worn if there are belt loops. The belt must be navy, khaki, or black in color.
4. No warm up pants, sweat pants, or wind pants are allowed.
5. No denim of any color is permitted.
6. Furthermore, the following general regulations apply:
 - A. Headwear should be as follows:
 1. Students are permitted to wear hats during inclement weather provided these hats are removed upon entering the building. No caps, hats or headgear shall be worn inside the building. (Penalty: Confiscation).
 2. Students will wear only plain white tee shirts or undershirts beneath their school uniform shirt. ((No black, red, or other colored t-shirts should be worn).
 - B. Due to safety concerns, proper shoes must be worn at all times. Only closed-toed shoes are permitted. Flip-flops are not considered proper shoes.
 - C. Immodest clothing will not be tolerated. Clothing must not contain holes, torn spots, or frays. **Students should not wear clothing that is too tight or too loose.**
 - D. Skirts and shorts should be of a length that when a student's arms are extended downward by the sides in a natural position and the shorts are at the proper position at the waist, the length of the skirt, shorts, etc. must be as long as the longest fingertip.
 - E. Any student who has a beard or mustache must keep it neatly trimmed.
 - F. Female students must wear age-appropriate undergarments and the front of the clothing should not be worn so that it becomes immodest.
 - G. Undergarments should not be visible at any time.
 - H. No halters or halter dresses may be worn.
 - I. Hair must be properly groomed.
 - J. Sunglasses will not be worn in the building by any student

No gang related clothing or jewelry shall be worn by any student.

Absolutely no body-piercings will be allowed (i.e. tongue, nose, lip, cheeks, etc) Small earrings worn in the ears by young ladies are the only acceptable form of body-piercing. Males are not allowed to wear earrings.

Any student who violates the uniform policy will be corrected upon entering the school building. If the student cannot correct his/her uniform before entering the school, his/her parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to bring the necessary clothing.

A Typical Day

Welcome/Arrival: Children are welcomed and then independently select activities as they arrive in the classroom

Circle Time: Your child joins with classmates to talk about the day. Students are engaged in writing, language, and mathematical instruction.

Work Time: Children choose from activities in the centers which include dramatic play, table toys, blocks, art, sensory table, library, and computers. Learning is child-centered through play facilitated by the staff.

Clean Up: Your child learns the importance of concluding activities, putting away materials and cooperating with others.

Small Group Instruction: Children receive intentional instruction on targeted objectives in a small group setting. Students are taught language, literacy, and mathematic concepts and skills through a variety of instructional strategies.

Outdoor Learning/Activity Room: Energetic outdoor play provides opportunities for children to develop large muscles, to engage in social interactions, and to experience nature. Children also learn self-management by following rules and safety guidelines.

Music and Movement: Your child will experience music and physical activities in the classroom, the activity room and on the playground. Learning to follow rules and safety guidelines as well as building large motor skills will accompany the fun students enjoy.

Story Time: Teachers read to children in both large and small groups. Reading enhances listening comprehension, stimulates thought-provoking questions and conversation, and develops concepts of print and vocabulary.

Dismissal: Children are encouraged to review the day's events and independently collect their belongings.

Mississippi Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Language and Early Literacy

During the pre-kindergarten years, children's experiences with communication and literacy begin to form the basis for their later school success. Given adequate opportunities to interact with responsive adults and peers in language and print-rich environments, young children develop vocabulary, extended language skills, and knowledge of the world around them. They develop listening comprehension and phonological awareness; understanding of the everyday functions of print; motivation to read; appreciation for literacy forms, and print awareness and letter knowledge. They learn what books are and how to use them. Understanding the value of literacy as a means of communication, as well as coming to enjoy reading, are accomplishments typical of a future good reader. These language and literacy accomplishments are best achieved through activities that are integrated across different developmental areas: cognitive development, fine and gross motor development, and social and emotional development. It is important to consider native language, augmentative communication, and sensory impairment in accomplishing these guidelines.

Pre-kindergarten educators should provide opportunities to promote language and literacy learning in children who speak a language other than English. The Mississippi Pre-kindergarten curriculum guidelines outline language and literacy accomplishments for four-year-old children in their native language. For students whose first language is other than English, the native language serves as the foundation for English language acquisition. Specific guidelines for the language and literacy development of pre-kindergarten children whose home language is not English in an English-only setting is addressed in the guidelines.

Mathematics

Mathematics learning builds on children's curiosity and enthusiasm, and challenges children to explore ideas about patterns and relationships, order predictability, and logic and meaning. Consequently, quality instruction occurs in environments that are rich in language, encourage children's thinking, and nurture children's explorations and ideas. These ideas include concepts of number patterns, measurement, shape, space, and classification, safety, hygiene, and physical activity that contribute to their well-being. Children's experiences with their health and discovery of ways to improve it enhance their desire and ability to make wise decisions for healthy living in the future.

Personal and Social Development

Pre-kindergarten children develop personal and social skills that enable them to function well within the social setting of the classroom. Children develop a sense of who they are and their capabilities, and establish positive relationships with others, which enables them to effectively participate in class and community and accomplish meaningful tasks.

Physical Development

Movement is at the center of young children's lives. Pre-kindergarten children participate in experiences that foster fundamental motor development skills, such as walking and running, which are necessary for participation in games and sports throughout life. They begin to develop gross motor skills that involve throwing, catching, and kicking, and fine motor skills that involve greater precision and accuracy of movement.

Technology Applications

Young children have much to gain from the use of technology. In pre-kindergarten, they expand their ability to acquire information, solve problems, and communicate with others. Regular access and exposure to computers and related technology can enhance this learning. Children use engaging, age-appropriate, and challenging software, and technology to extend their knowledge and to enrich their learning of curriculum content and concepts. These technologies serve as important learning tools and are integrated throughout the instructional program.

Children learn basic functions of the computer and related technologies. They develop techniques for handling and controlling various input devices, and become increasingly confident and independent users of age-appropriate software programs.

What Can You Do?

Ways for Parents to Support Learning

- Go to the library
- Read stories daily
- Go to the park or explore your backyard
- Do simple cooking projects with your child
- Give your child opportunities to help you at home
- Play with your child
- Limit TV and video games
- Teach your child to take good care of toys and put them away.
- Encourage good health habits (washing hands with soap, proper use of tissue, brushing teeth, etc)
- Eat healthy foods
- Schedule an appropriate bedtime
- Invite a friend to play
- Display your child's work
- Listen to and talk with your child
- Provide writing materials (crayons, markers, pencils, paper, cards)
- Show your child how you write to create lists and notes
- Encourage exploration of different art media (paint, play-doh, tissue paper, construction paper, glue, scissors)
- Attend parent education opportunities provided at each school

Parent Look Fors in Pre-Kindergarten Classes

The teacher....

Display

- Displays a daily schedule in the classroom (may be a picture) for children.
- Displays a lesson plan with the theme and activities for the week.
- Has the classroom rules posted
- Provides pictures/information regarding emotions and/or managing feelings
- Posts children's artwork throughout the classroom.
- References children's artwork and other materials posted throughout the classroom during conversation or for a lesson/teachable moment.
- Makes most, if not all, of the display for children at their eye level.

Teacher Interactions

- Greets children upon arrival and welcomes them into the classroom.
- Provides children with individualized attention throughout the day.
- Models appropriate behavior throughout the day.
- Helps children problem solve
- Focuses on children learning appropriate behaviors, rather than punishment for inappropriate behaviors
- Asks the children questions (open-ended and "how" and "why" questions) throughout the day to promote children's thinking and discussions
- Talks to children with respect, at their eye level, and with a positive tone.
- Greets children's questions with enthusiasm and responds in thoughtful ways.
- Engages in frequent conversations throughout the day with children.
- Uses questions to prompt children's reflections on their understanding and work.
- Consistently explains, re-explains, and implements procedures.
- Gives clear directions and expectations, written or orally. Multistep directions are broken down and presented visually.
- Works well with other teachers in the classroom and demonstrates collaboration and cooperation

<p>Classroom Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Arranges the classroom into learning centers (examples: art, dramatic play, blocks, writing, science, math, music/movement, library, quiet space). <input type="checkbox"/> Has theme/lesson plan aligned learning materials easily accessible to the children through the classroom <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a variety of materials for hands-on learning (rather than worksheets). <input type="checkbox"/> Creates a space that is welcoming to all children in the classroom (examples: has children's names posted in cubbies, displays/holds items at children's level, presence of soft spaces). <input type="checkbox"/> Designs the space to allow children to independently access materials, activities, personal belongings, and basic hygiene items (e.g., tissues) throughout the day. <input type="checkbox"/> Sets up the classroom with order and continuity.
<p>Daily Activities/Lessons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has daily activities and materials prepared and ready to use. No time is wasted throughout the day with preparation. <input type="checkbox"/> Provides different types of activities throughout the day (active, quiet, whole group, small group and/or individualized). <input type="checkbox"/> Uses learning centers to extend concepts taught in large/small groups <input type="checkbox"/> Promotes children working together-developing cooperation and friendship skills and also allows children to work independently when they need/want to be alone <input type="checkbox"/> Ensures transitions go smoothly, taking as little time as possible, and children understand what they should be doing. <input type="checkbox"/> Utilizes hands-on activities (rather than worksheets) as the primary method of teaching and learning <input type="checkbox"/> Individualizes teaching to meet different children's needs (examples: asks different types of questions to different children, provides movement activities for some children when together at whole group etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Makes modifications to the lesson as needed (example: While reading a book to the whole group, several children have difficulty participating, so the teacher stops and has the children sing songs and dance instead.). <input type="checkbox"/> Helps children understand the lesson by connecting to real world applications that are meaningful to the children's own lives.