# Sioux Center Community School District
# Preschool Program

**Little Warrior Preschool**

**Stepping Stones Preschool**

Preschool Learning Center
Discovery Campus
1124 7th Ave. NE
Sioux Center, IA  51250

# Preschool Policies and Procedures

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## I. WELCOME TO SIOUX CENTER PRESCHOOL *QPPS 10.1*

Sioux Center Community School District applied for, and was awarded, the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program in the spring of 2013. The program's goal is to provide a high quality preschool program meeting each child's needs, including children with disabilities and those from a diverse background. The preschool provides a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. This is an opportunity for all four-year-old children to take part in planned, active learning experiences to build their readiness skills. The preschool program has adopted and meets the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, administered by the Iowa Department of Education. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are used to guide expectations for the children and instructional practices.

## II. MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND GOALS *QPPS 10.1*

### *Mission:*

The mission of Sioux Center Community School District, "Educating the Whole Student for a Whole Lifetime" provides the basis for early childhood education in the community of Sioux Center.
The Sioux Center Community School District, Dordt College, Sioux Center Health, and Mid Sioux Opportunity have collaborated to create a professional learning environment for the whole child.

### *Philosophy*

The Preschool Learning Center (PLC) strives to provide a stimulating and enriching experience for each child. By using developmentally appropriate activities, we will focus on the emotional, mental, social, and physical needs of each child in a caring and loving classroom environment. By creating purposeful and productive learning experiences, we will assist parent(s)/guardian(s) in nurturing their children's love of learning.

### *Goals for Children:*

*Following the Creative Curriculum Philosophy*

- Children will show competence in social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development skills.
- Children will be enthusiastic and curious learners.
- Children will be safe and healthy.

### *Goals for Families:*

- Families will feel welcome in the classroom and school.
- Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help their children be better prepared to learn to read and write.
- Families will advocate for their children.

## III. ENROLLMENT

## Equal Educational Opportunity

It is the policy of the Sioux Center Community School District not to discriminate in its education programs or educational activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, marital status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status. Students are educated in programs, which foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, as well as men and women, to society. Students who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to report it to the school district Affirmative Action Coordinator, Julie Oldenkamp, and she can be reached at 712-722-2981. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the Region VII Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education, 310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Ste. 800, Milwaukee, WI, 53203-2292, (414) 291-1111, or the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, (515) 281-5294. Procedures and levels are outlined in district policy for resolving complaints and are available upon request from the curriculum director's office.

## Eligibility

Children must be four years of age prior to September 15th of the current school year.
Pre-registration will begin in the spring of the year. Registration materials are available from the Preschool Learning Center office or online at www.siouxcenterpreschools.weebly.com. Final registration will occur in the fall. Children that are three years old and have a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are eligible for educational programs at the Preschool Learning Center.

## Programs Offered

**4-year-old preschool, Sioux Center Preschool Program**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time:** | 8:10-11:10 am, Monday – Thursday, no class on Friday or Late Start Days.<br>12**:**15-3:15 pm, Monday – Thursday, no class on Friday. |
| **Classes Offered:** | One class with a maximum of 15 students. |
| **Cost:** | ½ day program is offered at no cost. |

**4-year-old preschool, Stepping Stones Preschool Program**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Time:** | 8:30-11:30 am, Monday – Thursday, no class on Friday or Late Start Days. First half hour is faith based and is optional, SWVPP starts at 9:00.<br>12**:**15-3:15 pm, Monday – Thursday, no class on Friday. First half hour is faith based and is optional, SWVPP starts at 12:45. |
| **Classes Offered:** | One class with a maximum of 18 students. |
| **Cost:** | ½ day program is offered at no cost. |

## Hours

Classes meet for a minimum of 10 hours each week. Please contact the preschool of your choice to learn more about their schedule. The schedules are also listed on the registration forms.

## General Information *QPPS 5.1 10.4*

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. If these documents are not received before

the six week period the child may have privileges to attend the program suspended until the documents are received by the district.

The maximum class size is 20 children in each session. A teaching staff-child ratio of at least 1:10 will be maintained at all times to encourage adult-child interactions and promote activity among children. Should one of the teaching staff need to temporarily leave the room, the teacher will call the PLC office to arrange for coverage of the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio. ***QPPS 10.4***

### Inclusion

The preschool program provides for all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. The staff is aware of the identified needs of individual children and is trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families. The preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements. ***QPPS 9.10***

## IV. A CHILD'S DAY

### Who Works In the Preschool Classroom ***QPPS 10.2***

Program Administrator- Little Warrior Preschool is administered by Jared Ackerman. Stepping Stones Preschool is administered by Christy Hulstein. Both of the administrators meet all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

Teacher - A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an early childhood endorsement is assigned to each preschool classroom. ***QPPS 6.3***

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessional in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The paraprofessional will have specialized training in early childhood education. All paraprofessionals will meet the qualifications of "highly qualified" under NCLB. ***QPPS 6.4***

School Nurse

The preschool will have the assistance of the school nurse. The current nurse is a certified RN, and is recertified every three years. ***QPPS 10.10***

Support Staff

NWAEA support staff provide resources and assistance to the teacher and classroom upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist or others.

### Daily Activities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities with solitary time,

indoors with outdoors, quiet play with noisy play. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities:

<table>
<tr><td>Large and Small Group Activities</td><td>Self-directed Play</td><td>Snack</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Examples of Learning Center Activities:<br>Art, Science, Writing Table, Games and Put together toys, Book Center, Blocks and Wheel Toys, Pretend Play, Computer</td><td>Story Time</td><td>Music</td></tr>
<tr><td>Outdoor Activities</td><td>Individual Activities</td></tr>
</table>

Lesson plans for each week are posted in the classroom showing how these activities are incorporated into the daily schedule. Weekly notes will be sent home to families in children's backpacks and/or electronically, if parents desire.

## Curriculum ***QPPS 2.1 - 2.3***

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. It is a process by which learners obtain knowledge and understanding, while developing life skills. It is continually revised and evaluated to make learning fun and exciting.

It is the policy of this district that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, marital status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socioeconomic status. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society. ***QPPS 1.7***

The preschool program uses the *Creative Curriculum*, a research and evidence based comprehensive curriculum designed for three and four-year-olds. It addresses all areas of early learning: language and literacy, math, science, physical skills, and social skills. The Creative Curriculum for Preschool provides teachers with a clear and concrete way to apply child development and learning theories to their everyday work with preschool children. Its underlying philosophy draws from widely accepted research and theories of child development and learning. While other developmentally appropriate curriculum models rest on these same theories, The Creative Curriculum for Preschool applies them to an environmental framework that focuses planning around indoor and outdoor interest areas, and clearly defined logical goals and objectives. Because of its practical approach, teachers find it easy to understand and to implement.

Teachers using The Creative Curriculum for Preschool are able to meet the needs of children with a broad range of abilities--a strong selling point with special educators. Children with different learning styles and needs are able to function together in a well-organized environment. The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum helps teachers focus on the sequence of the development of skills and learning to help all children grow and develop.

With an understanding of content and how children learn it, teachers can expand the opportunities they offer children to acquire knowledge and understand concepts. They can make a direct link between the preschool curriculum and what children will learn in elementary school. When the content of the curriculum is taught with children's development in mind, children are more likely to be successful learners who feel excited about and challenged by what they are learning. ***QPPS 2.1, 2.2***

## Child Assessment *QPPS 4.1, 4.2*

*Guiding principles:*

It is the school district's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. The results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. A family's culture and a child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child's growth and development. All results will be kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and stored in a secure filing cabinet.

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- *Creative Curriculum Progress Report* is modified to align with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. It records student progress in all developmental areas at the beginning, middle and end of the year.
- Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities and is collected through the Teaching Strategies Gold program.
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data, and child work samples collected on an on-going basis.
- Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress at home visits and at scheduled parent teacher conferences. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

Below is an overview of the assessment plan for the preschool programs.

| Assessment | Purpose | When | Where | Who will administer |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ELORS | Quick overview of child performance at beginning of year | Beginning of school year | At home and at school | Parent and teacher |
| Home visit survey | Input from family about child's needs and interest | Home visit before school | Child's home | Teacher/para |
| IEP Goal data | Meet IEP goals and to guide and inform individualized instruction | Ongoing with bimonthly monitoring | Online tracking provided by child's performance in the child's environment | ECSE teachers |
| Gold | To guide and inform curriculum, understand student growth and development | Ongoing, all children scored at checkpoints; 11.16, 2-22, 5-24 | All classrooms and child environments | All staff, teacher ultimately responsible |
| Parent survey | Get family input of child growth in past year | End of school year | Online or take home survey | Classroom teachers |

The information from the chart is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences for them;
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones;
- To indicate possible areas that require additional assessment.

***QPPS 7.3, 7.5***

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Parent Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring semesters. In addition, the *Creative Curriculum Progress Report* and reports from the Teaching Strategies Gold will be shared at checkpoints throughout the school year with a summative assessment at the end of the school year. The preschool teacher will communicate weekly regarding children's activities and developmental milestones. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time.

If, through observation or information on the *Creative Curriculum Progress Report*, Teaching Strategies Gold data, or the teacher feels that there is a possible issue related to a developmental delay or other special need, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The teacher requests assistance from the NWAEA Team as an early intervention process. This team engages in problem identification, plans interventions, provides support, and makes outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance. The NWAEA team is available and functional for all students and teachers in the building.
- A request made to Northwest Area Education Agency for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing.

The preschool teacher would assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated. ***QPPS 7.4***

If a child is determined to need special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom.

## Program Assessment

The Preschool Learning Center implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. A verification visit from the Department of Education occurred during the 2014-15 school year to confirm meeting these standards. Administrators, families, staff, and other routinely participating adults will be involved annually in a program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. The annual evaluation process includes gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

## Supervision Policy ***QPPS 9.2***

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teacher will complete the following safety assessment indoor and outdoor:

- All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children reach and are stored properly.
- Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
- Supplies checked - first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
- Daily monitoring of the environment - spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to the head custodian.

- Upon arrival, each child is observed by the teacher for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate in the daily activities.

No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check every two to three minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently)

## Child Guidance and Discipline *QPPS 1.11*

Teaching staff will equitably use positive guidance, redirection, planning ahead to prevent problems. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property, and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

*Challenging Behaviors* ***QPPS 1.2, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 3.8***

The teaching staff in the preschool is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors teachers promote prosocial behavior by:

- Implementing PBIS strategies
- Interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
- Modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors
- Helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials.
- Engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- Encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed

Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationships to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

*Permissible Methods of Discipline:*

*For acts of aggression and fighting* (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may:

1. Separate the children involved
2. Immediately comfort the individual who was injured;
3. Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident
4. Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident;
5. Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

Notification of the behavior will be made through a behavioral report form used by the PLC. These reports are a communication tool used to inform families of student behavior and as a way for the district to collect behavioral data.

*Prohibited Practices*
The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

1. Harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
2. Physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
3. Any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
4. Withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

*Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Physical Confinement and Detention*
State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. Additionally, school employees may use "reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain" to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property.

State law also places limits on school employees' abilities to restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child's parent.

If you have questions about this state law, please contact the school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education's website: www.iowa.gov/educate.

## Water Activities *QPPS 5.9, 9.15*

We have a water table in the classroom for children to stand and play with their hands in the water. During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children will wash their hands prior to and after participating in water play activities. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

## Snacks/Foods and Nutrition *QPPS 5.12- 5.21*

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate that their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form.

A snack is served during each preschool class. Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in USDA guidelines. A written snack menu is posted in the classroom and available to families. All menus are kept on file for review by a program consultant. The preschool serves a wide variety of nutritional snacks, and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered.

All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. Program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes when any child with a disability has special feeding needs and provide parents with that information.

High risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. For children younger than four years, these include hotdogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonful of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

The PLC does not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

## Outside Play and Learning *QPPS 5.5, 5.6 9.5-9.7*

Children will have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the weather air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. The PLC use the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

In cases when children cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

In order to make sure that your child can play comfortably outside it is important to dress him according to the weather. When it is cold outside he needs a warm coat, mittens or gloves and a hat (labeled with the child's name). For the warmer days dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in between days dressing the child in layers is a practical idea.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. The PLC encourages parents to bring a hat or other clothing for their child to wear as another protection from the sun. Sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher will be applied to the child's exposed skin (only with your written parental permission to do so) if they are outside 30 minutes or more. The PLC will also use an insect repellent containing DEET (only with your written permission) no more than once a day to protect your child from insect bites when the public health authorities recommend its use.

Program staff will complete the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance Checklist on a weekly basis.

## Clothing

The child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. The child should wear comfortable, washable clothing. While the PLC encourages the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, there is no guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal, or disruptive in nature. Families may be asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with the child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

## Toilet Learning *QPPS 5.7*

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

1. Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area. The PLC will use disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has medical reasons to not permit their use. For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.
2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7:
    - Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
    - Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
    - Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
    - At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
    - Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
    - Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
    - Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.
3. Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.
4. All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

## Objects from Home

Because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for the child, the PLC asks that toys not be brought from home. If the child brings an "attachment" item from home, the PLC asks that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

## Weapon Policy

No student shall carry, have in his or her possession, store, keep, leave, place or put into the possession of another student any real weapon or a look-alike weapon on any school premises, in any school vehicle or any vehicle used by the school or for school purposes, in any school building or other buildings or premises used for school functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions. "Lookalike weapon" means any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. *The Sioux Center CSD has policies regarding dangerous weapons (real or toy) in effect; i.e., guns, squirt guns, water rifles or pistols, slingshots, toy guns, toy grenades and other similar items knives, etc. Violation may result in a student suspension/expulsion.*

## Classroom Animals and Pets *QPPS 5.26*

If a parent or legal guardian would like to bring the family pet to share with the child's classroom prior permission is required. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets and therefore will not be allowed to be shared with the class. The preschool teacher ensures that the animal does not create an unsafe or unsanitary condition. The animal would appear to be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animal is fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and suitable for contact with children. The teacher would ensure staff and children practice good hygiene and hand washing when coming into contact with the animal and after coming into contact with the animal. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals.

Any children allergic to the pet will not be exposed to the animal. The classroom teacher is responsible for checking requirements have been met.

### Birthdays *QPPS 5.13*

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, students who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. Those who have summer birthdays are welcome to choose a school day to celebrate with their class.

## V. COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES *QPPS 1.1, 7.5*

The program will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informal conversations or e-mail. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information so all the staff who work with the child can share the parent's communication. Teaching staff will write notes for families no less than weekly. Staff will use these notes to inform families about the child's experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child's development and well-being. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs - email, in person, notes, or phone calls.

### Arrival and Departure of Children *QPPS 10.11*

When bringing the child to school, the car should be parked in the parking lot and the engine turned off before entering the building. Parents or designated adults must either accompany children to the classroom at the beginning of the day or leave their child in the care of one of the teaching staff. No child will be permitted to leave the building without an adult. Arrangements can be made with teaching staff to have an older sibling or student drop off or pick up a child.

Other than parents or a legal guardian, only persons with prior written authorization (Parent Consent Form) will be allowed to pick up a child from the school.

In the interest of students' safety, parents/guardians/authorized individuals are requested to report directly to the office when picking up their child, other than drop off and pick up times, rather than going to the child's classroom. Likewise, when a student returns to the building following an absence during the school day, the adult should stop in the office and sign the child in.

If your child rides the school bus to school, the teaching staff will go to each bus as it arrives to greet and assist the student off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each student to the bus and assist the student onto the bus.

Throughout the day each time children transition from one location to another, i.e. classroom to outdoor, the teacher will be responsible for counting the number of children whenever leaving one area and when arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

## Transportation

## Field Trips

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. PLC transportation is used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip through a newsletter/email in advance. A parent or legal guardian must sign an informed consent form for trips for each child, which is included in the enrollment form. Adult family members are asked to volunteer to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios. Each child will be assigned to an adult for every part of the trip.

A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization information for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children will be counted before moving from one location to another. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult.

## Attendance

Students who are enrolled for classes in PLC are expected to be in school for the full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are expected to be in class everyday unless illness or emergency make it impossible to attend. Please call the PLC office with the reason for an absence no later than 8:45 A.M. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school secretary/teaching staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

## Ethics and Confidentiality

Staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families.
Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way to demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child negatively or positively. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. The PLC will continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

## Children's Records *QPPS 10.10*

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular office hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the superintendent's secretary in the school district's administration office.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

### Preschool Steering Committee *QPPS 7.2*

The PLC has a Preschool Steering Committee composed of school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets periodically throughout the year to provide feedback on services that meet children and family needs. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services. Please let the preschool teacher know if you are interested in being part of the Preschool Steering Committee.

### Grievance Policy *QPPS 7.6*

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. The PLC desires open communication between parents and PLC staff regarding your child. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for the assistance from the administrator of each program. If you remain dissatisfied, you may contact the Superintendent of the Sioux Center Community School.

## VI. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT *QPPS 7.1, 7.2*

The PLC encourages families to be involved in their child's education. Family members are welcome to visit.

Teachers and administrators use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication; and information about their socio-economic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year. Program staff communicate with families on at least a weekly basis regarding children's activities and developmental milestones, shared care-giving issues, and other information that affects the well-being of the child. Family teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters, as well as when either party requests. At least one Family Night is held during the year.

The PLC values communication and interactions with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. With gathered expertise regarding the child, goals for growth and development can be incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences or questions with the preschool teacher or administration.

Although face-to-face contact cannot be replaced, preschool staff also rely on notes home, emails, phone calls, newsletters, and boards as alternative means to establish and maintain open, two-way communication.

The PLC invites you to become involved in one or more of the following ways.

1. Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
2. Attend school sponsored events.
3. Return all forms and questionnaires promptly.
4. Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring.
5. Check the student's backpack each day and read all the material sent home.
6. Participate in field trip activities.

7. Share talents in the classroom through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips taken.
8. Share any family cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
9. Help with special events by preparing materials at home, recruiting other volunteers, and setting up before events or etc.

It is the policy of the Sioux Center Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socio economic status in its education programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI or VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats on request, and, to the extent possible, in a language families understand.

The school district believes families should be supported in making decisions about services that children may need. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections.

### Home Visits
Prior to the start of the school year, home visits are an opportunity for the preschool teacher to get to know the student and family to begin a partnership between home and school to best meet the child's needs. Home visits are held with each preschool child if at all possible. Parents are encouraged to share preferences, concerns, and questions with the classroom teacher.

### Parent Teacher Conferences
The PLC will have Parent Teacher conferences in the fall and spring. During the conference, the teacher will share results of classroom assessments (GOLD) and samples of the child's work. A plan is collaborated for child's growth and development.

### Transitions *QPPS 7.9, 7.10*
Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit.

## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The PLC is committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in the program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, the PLC follows guidelines required by the Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

## Health and Immunization Certificates *QPPS 5.1*

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using medical or religious exemption.

## Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the child's classroom in a locked file cabinet. Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records; the child's parent or legal guardian; and regulatory authorities, upon request. ***QPPS 10.10***

Child Health and Safety Records will include: ***QPPS 5.1***

1. Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency;
2. Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results;
3. Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up to date by a specified method during the year;
4. Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
5. Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes);
6. Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support; and ***QPPS 10.14***
7. Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implement a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

## General Health and Safety Guidelines

- All staff involved with the education of a child must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions.
- Under the supervision of the preschool teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.
- All staff follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- All teaching staff complete "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" annually.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might

require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is present in the program at all times. ***QPPS 5.2***

## Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children ***QPPS 5.3***

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If child has any of the following symptoms during the night, he or she will not be admitted the following morning for the safety of the other children.

- fever greater than 100 degrees F
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- pink eyes with drainage
- cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge

The center's established policy for an ill child's return:

- Fever free for 24 hours
- Chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other person authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that the PLC has current, accurate phone numbers for parent, authorized emergency contact person and child's pediatrician. In the meantime, PLC will provide the child a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives under the supervision of someone familiar with the child. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then until she or he can be picked up, the child is located where new individuals will not be exposed.

## Reporting Communicable Diseases ***QPPS 5.4***

Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

## Medication Policies and Procedures ***QPPS 5.10***

The PLC staff administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose

(4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. If a medical error occurs, the child's parents will be notified immediately.

For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in the PLC nurses station locked cabinet.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log.

## Cleaning and Sanitization *QPPS 9.11*

The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected after they are cleaned with soap and water. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using a non-toxic solution of one tablespoon household bleach to one quart of tap water made fresh daily or an approved disinfectant. To disinfect, the surfaces will be sprayed until glossy. The bleach solution will be left on for at least 2 minutes before it is wiped off with a clean paper towel, or it may be allowed to air dry. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will be discarded. *QPPS 5.24*

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents. When a bodily fluid hazard occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III, page 47 of the QPPS manual. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Nontoxic substances will be used whenever possible.

## Hand Washing Practices *QPPS 5.8*

Frequent hand washing is key to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day;
- after diapering or using the toilet (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants);
- 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 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; and

Adults also wash their hands

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

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

- using liquid soap and running water;
- rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water).

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.

- Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal material.

In situations where sinks used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

### First Aid Kit *QPPS 9.13*

A first aid kit is located in the preschool classroom. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from Healthy Child Care Iowa. Following each use of the first aid kit, the contents will be inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. There is a first aid kit is available for the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

### Fire Safety *QPPS 9.14*

Since the building has a sprinkler system installed, fire extinguishers are not required in each classroom. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

### Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents *QPPS 10.13*

The Sioux Center Community School District has in place a "Safety Procedures Booklet" that describes the following situations and procedures to follow:

- Emergency phone numbers
- Fire procedures
- Utility Failures (electric power failure, water line break, gas line break)
- Severe weather
- Bomb threats
- Physical Threats/Armed Intruder
- Evacuations
- Crisis Intervention Plan, Crisis Intervention Steps, and Media Procedures
- Accidental Injury or Illness procedures for life threatening and non-life threatening situations
- School crisis team members and a checklist to use
- List of CPR/First Aid experienced persons in each building

This booklet will be posted in the office of the PLC and included in the first aid kit. The booklet will be reviewed by each staff member at the beginning of each school year and when changes are made to it.

In the event that your child receives a minor, non-life threatening injury during their time at preschool, our teacher will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. Any incident or injuries will be documented on an "Injury and Illness" form and a copy will be given to the parent within 24 hours of the incident.

All staff will have immediate access to a device that allows them to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers of the Fire Department, Police Department, Hospital, and Poison Control will be posted by each phone with an outside line. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member will be kept readily available. The list of emergency telephone numbers, and copies of emergency contact information and authorization for emergency transport will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.

### Inclement Weather

In the event that the PLC must be closed due to bad weather, we will notify school patrons by radio as we have in the past. KSOU (1090 AM/93.9 FM), KDCR (88.5 FM), KTIV (Channel 4), KMEG (Channel 8), and KCAU (Channel 9) are stations utilized to make announcements about school delays or closings.

An automated phone service will also be used to contact families to notify them of changes in schedules due to inclement weather.

## Protection from Hazards and Environmental Health *QPPS 9.12, 9.16, 9.17*

Program staff protect children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, or scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping.

Custodial staff maintain the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children.

## Tobacco and Nicotine Free Facility *QPPS 9.19*

In compliance with the Iowa Smoke Free Air Act of 2008, PLC buildings and grounds are tobacco and nicotine free. A sign meeting the law's requirements is posted at the entrance to the preschool classroom building to inform people that they are entering a tobacco and nicotine free place. No tobacco or nicotine is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children.

## Child Protection Policies *QPPS 10.8, 10.16, 10.19*

The health and well-being of every child is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is our responsibility. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with the preschool program involves direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children must execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition, no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

The program has written policy for reporting child abuse and neglect as well as procedures in place that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws. The policy includes requirements for staff to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers, or others to the appropriate local agencies. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious. All teaching staff complete "Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult Abuse" at least every five years and within six months of employment.

The Preschool Learning Center does not tolerate employees physically, verbally, or sexually abusing or harassing students. Students who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, legal guardians, teacher, principal, or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees. That procedure requires the school district to designate an investigator to look into the allegations. The Preschool Learning Center has designated Julie Oldenkamp at (712)722-2981.

## Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of the PLC. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

## Volunteers *QPPS 10.15, 10.17*

Parents, friends, grandparents, and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Please contact the teacher, the PLC Director, or our office secretary if you would like to be a preschool volunteer. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

## VIII. Staff *QPPS 10.15 - 10.20*

### General Information

The Sioux Center Community School district has written personnel policies that define the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and specialized training required of staff and volunteer positions. The policies outline nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and policies for staff evaluation. Policies detail job descriptions for each position, including reporting relationships; salary scales with increments based on professional qualification, length of employment, and performance evaluation; benefits; and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures. Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. The policies are provided to each employee upon hiring.

Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks: criminal-record check, free from history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check, education credentials, verification of age, completion of high school or GED, personal references and a current health assessment.

### Health Assessment *QPPS 10.17*

The preschool program maintains current health information from documented health assessments for all paid preschool staff and for all volunteers who work more than 40 hours per month and have contact with children. A current health assessment (not more than one-year old) is received by the program before an employee starts work or before a volunteer has contact with children. The health assessment is updated every two years. Documented health assessments include:

- Capacities and limitations that may affect job performance
- Documentation by a licensed health professional of TB skin testing using the Mantoux method and showing the employee to be free from active TB disease. For those who have a positive TB skin test and who develop a persistent cough or unexpected fever, immediate assessment by a licensed physician is required. For those who have increased risk of TB according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), documentation is required annually by a licensed health professional showing that the employee is free from active TB disease.

Confidential personnel files, including applications with record of experience, transcripts of education, health-assessment records, documentation of ongoing professional development, and results of performance evaluation, are kept in a locked filing cabinet.

### Orientation *QPPS 6.2*

Employees must know their role and duties. New preschool teaching staff will be required to participate in an initial orientation program that introduces them to fundamental aspects of the program operation including:

- Program philosophy, mission, and goals;
- Expectations for ethical conduct;
- Health, safety and emergency procedures
- Individual needs of children they will be teaching or caring for;
- Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques;
- Daily activities and routines of the program;
- Program curriculum;

- Child abuse and reporting procedures;
- Program policies and procedures;
- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria;
- Regulatory requirements.

Follow-up training expands on the initial orientations. See Staff Orientation Checklist.

The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. The superintendent will explain payroll procedures, employee benefit programs and accompanying forms to the employee. Regular employees ineligible for the school district's group health plan will be given information regarding where they can obtain health care or health care insurance.

## Staffing Patterns and Schedule

The preschool program is in compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our program follows requirements for staffing for Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards of maintaining an adult/child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. The program administrator will maintain lists of current substitutes for both the preschool teacher and the preschool teaching assistant in case of absence. If one of the teaching staff needs to temporarily leave the classroom, the person will call the program administrator to arrange for coverage in order to maintain the adult/child ratio.

Staff are provided space and time away from children during the day. Should staff work directly with children for more than four hours, staff are provided breaks of at least 15 minutes in each four-hour period. In addition, staff may request temporary relief when they are unable to perform their duties.

## Staff Development Activities *QPPS 6.6, 10.15*

Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. All teaching staff continuously strengthen their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community, and beyond. Teaching staff are encouraged to participate in informal and formal ways in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities. They may join an early childhood group or organization, attend meetings, or share information with others both at and outside the program.

Teaching staff will be informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local Empowerment areas, and the area education agency. Staff are expected to attend all staff trainings and meetings throughout the year. Trainings will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community.

## Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan *QPPS 6.5, 6.6*

All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor or, in the case of the program administrator, by the superintendent. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflections and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. From this, they develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.