

# Brevard Public Schools



## Program



# Parent Handbook

2017-2018

# **WELCOME TO THE VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM!**

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This handbook will provide some general information about the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program that will be helpful to you and your child. It is important for families and teachers to work together as partners to assure the best educational experiences for children. Please take the time to review this booklet. The information provided can help make the transition from home to school a successful one for your child. It is our goal to provide your child with an environment that is safe, caring, and rich in learning experiences.

**We look forward to having your child  
join our prekindergarten school family!**



# MISSION STATEMENT

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Our mission for the prekindergarten program is to partner with families to create safe, nurturing environments for young children that provide appropriate learning experiences in all areas of children's development.



## Prekindergarten GOALS for Brevard Public Schools



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Brevard Public Schools Prekindergarten (PreK) programs are committed to the following program goals:

- Provide a high quality, developmentally appropriate prekindergarten program promoting children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.
- Provide a safe, nurturing learning environment for all children.
- Integrate the **HighScope** educational approach and **Creative Curriculum for Preschool** to support mastery of the **Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards**.
- Promote active learning experiences by encouraging children to explore, create, and manipulate a variety of materials with adult support.
- Partner with families to support children's learning and development by establishing relationships based upon mutual trust and respect.
- Prepare children to be successful learners as they enter kindergarten and throughout life.
- Provide ongoing progress monitoring and professional development for teachers and administrators to support student success.

# **PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS**

## **2017-2018**

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Brevard Public Schools offers Title I Step **FOURward VPK**, **Blended VPK**, and **Early Childhood Education (High School) VPK** programs at selected elementary and high schools throughout the county. The programs promote high quality, full day early childhood education with a focus on early language and literacy. All classes are staffed with a Florida Department of Education early childhood certified teacher and a highly qualified instructional assistant. The VPK programs incorporate strong family engagement activities including family meetings and parent participation in classrooms.



### **Title I Step *FOURward* VPK**

The **Step *FOURward* VPK** program maintains a class size of 20 children with the teacher to child ratio of 1:10. Children eligible to attend the program must be four years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> and live in the attendance area of one of the following schools:

**Roy Allen Elementary**  
**Cape View Elementary**  
**Columbia Elementary**  
**Dr. W. J. Creel Elementary**  
**Croton Elementary**  
**Fairglen Elementary**  
**Golfview Elementary**

**Harbor City Elementary**  
**MILA Elementary**  
**Pinewood Elementary**  
**Riviera Elementary**  
**Sabal Elementary**  
**Sunrise Elementary**  
**Turner Elementary**  
**Westside Elementary**

## **Blended VPK**

The **Blended VPK** program is an inclusion program consisting of ten VPK students and eight students with exceptional education needs. These 18 students must be four years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> and are not required to live in the school's attendance area unless the school is frozen to out of area.

**Atlantis Elementary  
Audubon Elementary  
Columbia Elementary  
Longleaf Elementary  
McAuliffe Elementary  
Oak Park Elementary**

**Pinewood Elementary  
Riviera Elementary  
Sea Park Elementary  
Sunrise Elementary  
University Park Elementary**



## **Early Childhood Education (High School) VPK**

The **Early Childhood Education VPK** program is located in selected high schools and maintains a class size of 20 children with the teacher to child ratio of 1:10. Children eligible to attend this program must be 4 years olds by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Eau Gallie High  
Merritt Island High  
Palm Bay High  
Satellite High  
Viera High**

The Step *FOUR*ward VPK, Blended VPK and High School VPK programs are available to eligible children at NO COST to families.

# PROGRAM DATES

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## Elementary Schools

Monday through Friday

Times vary by school

## High Schools

Tuesday through Friday

Times vary by school

Elementary School Dates: August 17, 2017 – May 23, 2018

High School Dates: September 5, 2017 – May 11, 2018

## There is NO school for children on the following dates:

- September 4, 2017 Labor Day
- September 18, 2017 Student Holiday
- November 10, 2017 Veterans' Day
- November 22-24, 2017 Thanksgiving
- December 22, 2017 - January 5, 2018 Winter Break
- January 15, 2018 Martin L. King Jr.'s Day
- February 19, 2018 Presidents' Day
- March 16, 2018 Student Holiday
- April 2-6, 20178 Spring Break

**There will be an early release time every Wednesday,  
December 19-21, 2017 and May 21-23, 2018**

*(Contact the school office or the classroom teacher for details.)*

# ATTENDANCE

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It is important that your child be on time and attend every school day to ensure both the success of your child and the program. Each day is planned to provide valuable learning experiences.

Your family support is needed to provide consistency with attendance. **Parents need to be aware of the following:**

- In the event your child must be absent, please notify the school immediately AND submit written documentation for all absences upon their return to school. Written documentation can be a parent or doctor's note or legal document.
- The teacher will keep a daily log of attendance for each student. At the end of the month, you will be asked to review the attendance record, attest to the accuracy and state your desire to have your child remain in the program by signing and returning the *Parental Choice* form to the school. If you do not sign and return the form within a reasonable time, your child may be withdrawn from the program.
- Withdrawal procedures will begin for any child who has frequent absences and tardies.
- If your child is withdrawn from the program, a new certificate of eligibility must be obtained from the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) to re-enroll. A child may only re-enroll in a VPK program one time.



# PROCEDURES FOR ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

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In order to maximize the school experience, it is expected that your child arrive on time and be picked up on time.

## Arrival:

Arriving on time provides for a smooth, calm transition for your child from home to the school setting. **If you arrive early you will need to wait with your child until class begins.**

Late arrivals create classroom disruption and can affect the educational growth of your child and others in the classroom. **If a child arrives after class begins, the parent needs to accompany the child to the school office to sign the child in for the day.**

## Dismissal:

Picking up your child on time eliminates the anxiety your child will feel when you are late.

If your child must be picked up early, a note should be sent to the teacher indicating an early dismissal is needed and what time. **The parent or adult picking up the child must report to the school office to sign the child out for the day. The adult must be authorized to do so in writing and show photo identification. Parents are expected to comply with the school's arrival and dismissal procedures.**



# STUDENT HEALTH

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For the well-being and health of all children and teaching staff, parents are requested to please keep your child home if the following symptoms are evident:

- **Fever**
- **Vomiting or diarrhea**
- **Signs of a contagious illness**



If a child has a health related issue or needs emergency treatment at school, every effort will be made to contact families.

**Parents are required to provide the school office and teacher with names and phone numbers to use if contact with a parent is necessary. Please keep this information current.**

Your child will only be released from school to an adult (with photo identification) whose name is indicated on your release list. A child will not be allowed to leave the school with anyone who has not been given written permission.

# MEDICATION

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Your child may develop a health condition that indicates the need to bring prescription medication to school. Only medicine **approved by a physician** will be administered to children at school (including non-prescription and over the counter medication). All medicine must be in the original container and include the child's name, type and date of prescribed medication, amount, and time of dosage. Medication will only be administered through the front office.

# **BREAKFAST and LUNCH**

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Good nutrition is important to a child's growth and development. All children are offered a free breakfast at school every day with plenty of time to eat. Children have the choice of buying a school lunch or bringing a packed, nutritious lunch from home. Lunches from school can be provided free or at a reduced price if the family qualifies. The school office can assist families with the federal free/reduced lunch program eligibility process.

Full Price Lunch	\$1.80
Reduced Price Lunch	\$0.40

**If your child has a food allergy,  
please notify the classroom teacher immediately  
to avoid an allergic reaction.**

## **Meal Prepayment Options**

Parents can prepay for lunches either in the school cafeteria or online at [www.mypaymentsplus.com](http://www.mypaymentsplus.com).



## APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

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Active learning is the focus of the prekindergarten program. A variety of materials will be available to children including paints, water, and sand. Outside play is also a part of their daily routine. Children should wear comfortable clothes and appropriate shoes for both classroom and outside time activities. Please provide an extra set of labeled clothes for your child in case of emergency.

## FIELD TRIPS

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Field trips are the ideal way for young children to experience, first-hand, the world around them. Field trips can be used to introduce or enrich all areas of learning. When opportunities and resources permit, field trips are planned to extend and enhance classroom experiences. Each participating child must have a permission form signed by the parent or guardian. Transportation is provided by school buses. Children are supervised and chaperoned by adults at all times while on field trips.

*If you are interested in chaperoning, contact the school office as soon as possible about becoming a “Level A” volunteer. Approval of your volunteer status must be received by the school prior to attending field trips.*



# CURRICULUM

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The prekindergarten program's curriculum centers on integrating:

- **Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds**
- **HighScope**
- **Creative Curriculum for Preschool**

The Florida Department of Education has developed the **Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds** which provides the curriculum foundation for the prekindergarten program. The standards are grouped around five areas of development:

- I. **Physical Health**
- II. **Social and Emotional Development**
- III. **Approaches to Learning**
- IV. **Language, Communication, and Emergent Literacy**
- V. **Cognitive Development and General Knowledge**



The content of the **HighScope** educational approach centers on **58 Key Development Indicators**, which are organized under five content areas:

- I. Approaches to Learning**
- II. Language, Literacy, and Communication**
- III. Social and Emotional Development**
- IV. Physical Development, Health, and Well-Being**
- V. Arts and Sciences**

Teachers observe, support, and plan activities for children that are appropriate to each child's level of development. Through active learning, children are encouraged to explore, create, manipulate, and interact with their peers in a safe learning environment.



The **Creative Curriculum for Preschool** provides a curriculum for young children that addresses 10 areas of development and learning that help teachers ensure that they are focusing on what's most important, each and every day.

- Social–Emotional
- Physical
- Language
- Cognitive
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies
- The Arts
- English-Language Acquisition

The program incorporates high quality literature throughout the child centered lessons.

The integration of the **Florida Early Learning and Development Standards for Four-Year-Olds**, **HighScope** educational approach and the **Creative Curriculum for Preschool** provides a strong foundation for young children to develop positive self-concepts, independence, and a sense of responsibility in an early childhood environment.



# SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

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Children may be assessed throughout the year with the following tools to monitor student progress and guide instruction.

- Florida VPK Assessment
  - \* Print Knowledge
  - \* Phonological Awareness
  - \* Oral Language/Vocabulary
  - \* Mathematics
  
- Teaching Strategies GOLD
  - \* Social-Emotional
  - \* Physical
  - \* Language
  - \* Cognition
  - \* Literacy
  - \* Mathematics
  - \* Science and Technology
  - \* Social Studies
  - \* The Arts
  - \* English Language Acquisition (when indicated)

The Batelle Developmental Inventory (BDI) is a developmental screening tool used to guide instruction and to identify young children who may be in need of additional services and/or assessment.



# POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

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Challenging behavior can interfere with a child's learning and development. Promoting children's social emotional development and establishing a positive learning environment are primary goals of the program. Positive discipline is helping children be successful socially. Throughout the day, children are guided toward using appropriate behavior.

Teachers will support children by teaching acceptable alternatives to unacceptable behaviors so children can interact positively in the classroom environment. Children are encouraged to do their own problem solving. Conflict resolution strategies are used to help them develop positive social skills. If a child has difficulty practicing appropriate behaviors, teachers may work with parents and together provide supportive strategies to meet the child's needs.



# **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

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Every family plays an important educational role in the life of their child. Family engagement is valued and strongly encouraged within the prekindergarten program. The education of a child is a shared responsibility between families and schools. When families actively participate in the education of their child, at home or at school, children have a greater chance of positive learning experiences and outcomes.

Throughout the program, families have the opportunity to become actively involved in their child's learning experiences through:

**Home Visits**

**Family Handbook**

**Open House**

**Family Communication Folders**

**Family Meetings**

**Family Conferences**

**Family Book Bins (lending library)**

**Classroom Volunteers**

**Field Trips**

**Special Classroom/School Events**

When family members volunteer in the classroom, their extra hands and hearts can make a difference for all children. Family members benefit by learning about their child's experiences at school. Children benefit too, by seeing family members demonstrate an interest in their education at school.

**When families and schools work together on behalf of children, everyone benefits!**



# WHAT PARENTS CAN DO FOR THEIR CHILD

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**Communicate with teachers.** Teachers are grateful to see parents. They are eager to celebrate successes and to discuss challenges a child might be experiencing. Please check your child's family communication folder regularly for important information. Bring concerns to the teacher's attention as soon as possible, and partner to find an appropriate solution.

**Read to your child daily.** Allow your child to select books to read. Encourage your child to read (tell the story by looking at the illustrations) aloud to you. Monday-Thursday of each week, your child will bring home a book from the Book Bin in their classroom lending library. Send the book back to school to select another title. Enjoy reading together!

**Encourage your child.** Let children know you appreciate their efforts, contributions, and accomplishments.

**Make sure your child gets enough rest.** No one does their best when sleepy or tired. "Enough rest" for children means eight or nine hours of sleep.

**Keep your child healthy.** Take your child to the doctor for regular checkups and booster shots. Notify the teacher of any medical problems. Maintain a balanced diet at home and include regular exercise. Clean hair and clothes will add to building a child's self-esteem.

**Help children maintain good attendance records.** This will be the beginning of creating good habits that will last a lifetime. When children miss school, they may fall behind causing them to become anxious and frustrated.

**Monitor and limit TV watching.** Discuss with your child the appropriate television shows to watch. Try to watch television together and comment on the show with your child.

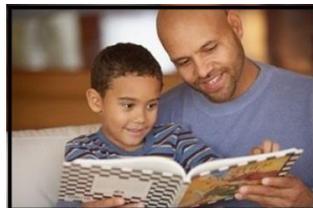


## FOR FAMILIES

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1. Please send your child to school in play clothes because activities such as painting, coloring, gluing, sitting on the floor, and playing outside are part of the daily routine.
2. Label personal items such as sweaters and backpacks with your child's first and last name.
3. Please dress your child in clothes that can be easily managed alone in the bathroom.
4. If your child is absent, please send a note upon return. Regular attendance is very important to a child's educational progress.
5. If your family moves, changes telephone numbers, or changes emergency numbers, send a note including the new information as soon as possible. This is for your child's health and safety.
6. You must send a written note regarding **any** change in transportation.
7. Read all notes and information sent home with your child. If there is a need to respond, please do so the following day.

8. Participate as a volunteer with field trips and other activities. Contact the school office about becoming a volunteer now to allow plenty of time for processing before your help is needed at school.
9. Allow time each day for your child to tell you what activities were experienced at school. For example, “Tell me about your picture,” “How did you make this?” “What songs did you sing?” or “What did you do at work time?”
10. Be supportive and positive with your comments. For example, “I can see you worked really hard in making this,” or “Thank you for sharing this with me.”
11. Provide access to appropriate books and other reading materials for your child.
12. Read aloud to your child every day.
13. Provide opportunities to do and see things together.
14. Play games with your child.
15. Monitor and limit television viewing.
16. Sing with your child.



## UNITY

I dreamed I stood in a studio  
And watched two sculptors there.  
The clay they used was a young child's mind  
And they fashioned it with care.

One was a teacher - the tools he used  
Were books, music and art.  
The other, a parent, worked with a guiding hand,  
And a gentle, loving heart.

Day after day, the teacher toiled with touch  
That was careful, deft and sure.  
While the parent labored by his side  
And polished and smoothed it o'er.

And when at last, their task was done.  
They were proud of what they had wrought.  
For the things they had molded into the child  
Could neither be sold nor bought.

And each agreed they would have failed  
If each had worked alone.  
For behind the parent stood the school  
And behind the teacher, the home.

---Author Unknown



# BREVARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Remember to visit the district webpage at  
[www.brevardschools.org](http://www.brevardschools.org)



By clicking on the “Students & Parents” tab, clicking on “Parents” tab you can access information and resources available on the “Parents” portal.

You may want to visit the Family Engagement link on the “Parents” Portal which is specifically aligned to supporting engagement in your child’s education.

You can also visit your school’s webpage for updates particular to your child’s school.



## NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE

The School Board of Brevard County strictly prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation, transgender status, or gender identity), disability (including HIV, AIDS, or sickle cell trait), pregnancy, marital status, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry, or genetic information or any other factor protected under applicable federal, state, or local law. This notice applies to all educational programs, activities, or employment practices/procedures of the School Board of Brevard County. The School Board of Brevard County is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Amendment Act of 2008 (ADAA), the Florida Education Equity Act of 1984, Age Discrimination Act of 1967 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Civil Rights Act of 1964 including: Title II, Title VI, and Title VII, United States Education Amendments of 1972 - Title IX, Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), and the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act.

Students, parents, or the public with inquiries regarding this non-discrimination policy are encouraged to review Board Policy 2260.01 - Nondiscrimination Grievance Procedure and Board Policy 5517 - Harassment. Students, parents, or the public with questions or wish to file a grievance may contact their school administrator directly or if there is an issue in doing this, you may contact:

Student Equity Coordinator

Mr. Robin L. Novelli  
Director, Secondary Leading and Learning  
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Melbourne, FL 32940 (321) 631-1911, Ext. 310  
Novelli.Robin@Brevardschools.org

Exceptional Education/504 Coordinator

Dr. Patricia Fontan  
Director, Exceptional Student Education  
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Melbourne, FL 32940 (321) 631-1911, Ext. 505  
Fontan.Patricia@Brevardschools.org

Employees or job applicants with inquiries regarding this non-discrimination policy are encouraged to review Board Policy 3122 - Equal Employment Opportunity and 3362 - Anti-Harassment. Employees or job applicants with questions or wish to file a grievance may contact their school/department administrator or if there is an issue in doing this, you may contact:

Employee/Job Applicant Equity Coordinator

Mr. Rivers Lewis  
Director, Human Resources and Labor Relations  
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Melbourne, FL 32940  
(321) 631-1911, Ext. 265  
Lewis.Rivers@Brevardschools.org

Reasonable accommodations are available for persons with disabilities to complete the application and/or interview process. Applicants/Individuals with disabilities requesting accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may contact the Employee/Job Applicant Equity Coordinator for assistance. All policies and procedures of the School Board of Brevard County as indicated above can be located on the World Wide Web at the following web address: <http://www.neola.com/brevardco-fl/>. This Publication or portions of this publication can be made available to persons with disabilities in a variety of formats, including large print, braille or audiotape. Telephone or written request should include your name, address, and telephone number. Requests should be made to Kim Parker, Exceptional Education Projects, (321) 633-1000, ext. 535, at least two (2) weeks prior to the time you need the publication.