Township of Union Preschool
Family Handbook

2019-2020
Important Numbers

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Our Mission

The mission of the Township of Union Public Schools is to build on the foundations of honesty, excellence, integrity, strong family, and community partnerships. We promote a supportive learning environment where all students are challenged, inspired, empowered, and respected as diverse learners. Through cultivation of students' intellectual curiosity, skills and knowledge, our students can achieve academically and socially as well as contribute as responsible and productive citizens of our global community.
Importance of Daily Preschool Attendance

- The preschool program is an educational program that requires your commitment to bring students to school each day.
- Regular school attendance is an important factor in children's social and cognitive development.
- Regular school attendance can provide children with various enriching opportunities and experiences that are beneficial to their social development and relationships with peers and adults.
- Excessive absenteeism whether sporadic or consistent can have long term effects on a child's educational path starting in the preschool. (Refer to helpful links: “Attendance, Absences, & Excuses” for details of excused/unexcused absences.)
- Chronic absenteeism sets the stage for poor attendance and inability to successfully do grade-level work in later grades (Attendance Works, 2013).

Procedure:

- If your child is going to be absent, please contact the school nurse before 9:30.
Daily Activities (sample)

- Arrival
- Outside Time
- Small/Large Group
- Lunch/Rest time
- Discussion & Shared Writing
- Choice Time
- Read-Aloud
Supply List- Sample

- 3 boxes of tissues
- 3 rolls of paper towels
- 2 pocket folder
- 3 large Elmer's glue sticks (disappearing purple)
- 2 bottles of Elmer’s White School Glue
- Large Backpack (big enough to put a folder and crafts into)
- Smock or old shirt (labeled with your child's name)
- A full change of clothes (in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child’s name)
- 1 box of washable markers
- 1 box of Crayola crayons (the LARGE size)

Items for Nap/Rest Time

- crib sheet
- blanket
- small pillow -optional
- small soft animal (or something that helps them rest)- optional
- a picture of parents/guardians (the picture will be laminated)

Please label **ALL** nap/rest time items with your child's name.

*If necessary, your child’s teacher will provide a supply list that is tailored to the needs of their classroom.
Preschool Curriculum

- All components of the preschool program are aligned to *New Jersey Teaching and Learning Standards*.
- Creative Curriculum is a research-based program.
- Creative Curriculum is an effective and content-rich program addressing the following development and learning objectives:
  - Social-emotional
  - Physical
  - Language
  - Cognitive
  - Literacy
  - Mathematics
  - Science & Technology
  - Social Studies
  - English Language Acquisition
Social Emotional Learning in the Classroom

● Relationships with adults and children in the preschool environment promote a powerful positive influence on children’s social/emotional development.
● A partnership between schools and children’s families will work together to assist children in developing social competence and confidence.
● Preschool teachers support young students’ developing self-concepts and self-esteem by talking with them about their actions and accomplishments and by always showing respect for their feelings and cultures.
● Throughout the day, teachers coach and guide children as they interact with each other, and they support children’s social skills and problem-solving abilities.
● Within this community of learners, children develop the social and emotional competencies they need to fully immerse themselves in the preschool day and become successful learners.
Meal & Snack Time

- Snack is an option made available to students during Choice Time, as there is not a set “snack time”.
- Classrooms are peanut/nut free.
- Confer with teachers to determine if they are accepting donations.
- Teachers will not accept anything that was made with peanuts/nuts, contains peanuts/nuts, or processed in a factory with peanuts/nuts.
- Nutritious snacks are donated/provided by the parents/guardians. When needed, we will send home a note asking for snacks, juice, or water, etc. We will be splitting the class into two groups when asking for snacks, so you may see others bringing items. Don’t feel left out, you will soon have a turn.
- Milk is served during snack time. If you choose not to order milk, then your child will be served water or juice. Please be aware of the due dates for the milk. Any envelopes returned after the due date cannot be accepted.
- All food donated must have the nutrition label on the packaging.
- See “Meal & Snack Time” under Helpful Parent Links.
Birthday Celebrations

- Birthdays will be celebrated during snack time.***
- If you wish to celebrate your child’s birthday, you could send in a birthday snack.
- We cannot accept baked goods that are made at home.
- They must be store bought with the packaging label indicating they are peanut/nut free.
- Please let teachers know in advance if you are planning to send in a birthday snack.

Birthday Celebration snack suggestions are:

- small cupcakes
- ice cream cups
- cookies

***Confer with your child’s teacher, to make sure you are in compliance with the school’s policy.
The Importance of Play

- Play is a critical activity of preschool. By giving the children the opportunity to play, we are giving them the opportunity to practice and make experiences their own.

- Play allows children to:
  - Children make their own decisions and experience freedom in making their choices.
  - They also begin to see connections between choice and the consequences or results of that choice.
  - Open-ended materials can be used in many ways so children can decide for themselves how to use them.
  - For example, a child can imagine a block to be a fire truck or any number of things. A toy fire truck, on the other hand, is usually used as a fire truck. Foam pieces, little wooden sticks, ribbon scraps, and other reusable resources are all open-ended materials that inspire creative thinking and delight when children use them to make something no one has ever made before.
Studies

- Every 5-6 weeks students learning will be centered around a specific study.
- All learning including read alouds, small/large group time, and items within interest areas will be geared around the study topics.

Choice Time

- Students will be given 1 hour to explore the various interest areas of the classroom.
- Teachers will interact with children in the interest areas.
- Teachers will be paying attention and recording what children say and do.
- This is the students time to be free and explore.
Creative Curriculum Studies (samples)

- Beginning of the Year
- Sand
- Signs
- Simple Machine
- Trees
- Pets
- Clothes
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Buildings
- Balls
Preschool End of Year Celebration

- Preschool classes will have an end of the year celebration that will be meaningful for all children.

- These large group times will be active, designed around children’s interests, and take place for a length of time that is appropriate for the children.

- Familiar music and movement activities, reciting poems or acting out a familiar story are all appropriate choices that will be incorporated into the designated day.

- The celebration will be most comfortable for the children if it takes place in a familiar location such as the classroom or familiar outside area.
Helpful Parent Links:

- Attendance- https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/handouts-for-families/
- Attendance, Absences, & Excuses Policy- http://www.twpunionschools.org/attendanceabsencesexcusespolicy
- Social Emotional Learning- https://www.edutopia.org/SEL-parents-resources