

Interboro School District Kindergarten Academy



Parent Handbook

2017-18

An Interboro School District Handbook is available online.
If you would like a hard copy, please call or send in a note with your child.
We would be happy to send one home.

7/31/2017



Interboro Kindergarten Academy

Developing a Family, School, and Community Partnership
900 Washington Avenue
Prospect Park, PA 19074

Ms. Nancy DeSanctis, Principal
Mrs. Adriane Clemson, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Diana Conlin, School Secretary

Phone: 610-957-5401
Fax: 610-957-5403

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Welcome to the Interboro *Kindergarten Academy*! This will be an exciting year filled with new learning experiences and wonderful events for you and your child. This handbook provides important information about the many facets of kindergarten life. It is intended as a guide for each parent/guardian to use as they support their child's participation in the Interboro School District's *Kindergarten Academy* program. In addition, there is a comprehensive Interboro School District Handbook (K-12) available on the district website (www.interborosd.org).

The goals of the Kindergarten Academy program are to:

- support student learning through a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences
- create an environment where students will communicate their thoughts and ideas in a variety of forms
- challenge each student's interests and understanding, so that deeper learning will take place
- provide cooperative social experiences for all children so that they can work and play together as members of the school community

Children benefit both academically and socially when parents and school staff work closely together. Your participation in all kindergarten activities during the coming year is invited and encouraged. Thank you for all that you do to support, motivate, and inspire your child.

Sincerely,

Nancy A. DeSanctis
Principal

The Interboro Kindergarten Academy

The Interboro Kindergarten Academy provides a high-quality early childhood program. The nurturing child-centered environment promotes physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children. The kindergarten staff provides planned learning activities appropriate to the age and development of each child.

The classrooms are arranged to promote all areas of development through a variety of centers, including drama, play, art, music, science, mathematics, storytelling, block building, table toys, writing, speaking, and listening.

The kindergarten curriculum focuses on readiness skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics aligned with the common core standards. This curriculum utilizes standards-based materials that have been researched and provided by the district's Office of Curriculum and Instruction.

The atmosphere of the Kindergarten Academy encourages the development of the whole child. The multi-purpose room and gym provide locations for large and small group interaction. The child centered library and computer laboratory afford learning experiences in these areas. The outdoor classroom is a hands-on extension of the science curriculum offering exploration and discovery of the pond and surrounding habitats. Within the outdoor classroom the children gain awareness and respect for their environment. Music and physical education classes compliment the integrated curriculum, further enhancing development of the whole child. The outdoor playground provides a safe environment for active play and social development for all of the students.

Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's learning program by reviewing daily work, communicating with the teachers and support staff and attending parent evenings such as Back to School Night and literacy and math events.

The Interboro Kindergarten Academy boasts a connection with community preschools and the Delaware County Intermediate Unit's Early Intervention program to provide a smooth transition into the public school system.

Specially trained teachers and staff complete the partnership between parents, children, and community. At the Interboro Kindergarten Academy, learning is FUN for everyone!



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Kindergarten Academy Staff

Emeralds

Mrs. Tara Doherty
Mrs. Suzanne Earnest
Mrs. Jessica Lennox
Mrs. Lisa Madormo

Sapphires

Ms. Emily DeVos
Mrs. Christine Regino
Mrs. Kim King
Mrs. Kelly Peterson

Diamonds

Mrs. Kelly Spiotta
Ms. Krista Cesarine
Ms. Joanne Mullen
Mrs. Nicole Young

Nurses

Mrs. Peg Razzi (M, T)
Mrs. Lisa Keeney W)
Mrs. Virginia Kambies, (Th, F)

Specialists/Support Teachers

Mrs. Dena Killian, Music
Mr. Timothy McElhiney, Physical Education/Health
Mrs. Noelle Hokanson, Library/Computers/ Science
Mrs. Crystal Wilchensky, Reading Specialist
Mrs. Christine Bryan, Guidance Counselor
Ms. Laura Einspahr, Special Education Teacher
Ms. Gretchen Hazard, Special Education Teacher
Dr. Amanda Amidon, School Psychologist
Dr. Ciaran Dalton, Behavior Management Specialist
Mrs. Heather Keiser, Speech/Language Therapist
Mrs. Elise Sutton, Occupational Therapist
Mrs. Janice Thompson, Physical Therapist

KA Office Staff

Mrs. Adriane Clemson
Mrs. Diana Conlin

Mission Statement

Interboro School District provides a challenging and supportive learning environment for all students to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally while becoming college and career ready citizens within a global community (2014).

Development of the Young Child

Development in young children is a continuous process. Because kindergarten children are at different stages in their growth and development, they differ in their ability to perform certain tasks. It is important to recognize where the child is in his/her stage of development in order to individualize instruction. Even if two children are exactly the same age, they might be quite different in their rates of development. Consideration needs to be given in all areas -- physical, social/emotional, aesthetic, and cognitive. Because each child is viewed as an individual, different from every other child in a variety of ways, kindergarten instruction is carefully organized to provide for different developmental levels of children.

Kindergarten Curriculum

➤ Literacy Development

A primary focus during the kindergarten year is literacy development. Teachers recognize that all children entering kindergarten are at various stages in their literacy development. To accommodate these differences, the kindergarten program offers a balanced literacy program for young children. A balanced literacy program includes rich language experiences involving speaking and writing, and instruction in reading skills and strategies. An overview of the kindergarten literacy program is provided below. Together, these activities allow for a variety of interactive and independent reading and writing experiences to occur.

➤ Phonemic Awareness/ Phonics/ Handwriting

Building a foundation for reading and writing is key to reading success! The Journeys Reading program provides instruction, application, and practice in phonemic awareness, word study, writing, and guided reading.

➤ Reading Aloud to Children

Besides giving children a pleasurable experience, reading aloud introduces them to basic reading concepts, allow children to hear the sound of rich language and to internalize language patterns. Students develop listening comprehension and a more extensive vocabulary.

➤ Shared Reading

This is an interactive process used with the whole class. As the teacher reads a story, children join in on phrases or words that they know. During subsequent rereading, children read more and more of the text, until they are able to read the story independently. Shared reading is an opportunity for the teacher to model conventions of print and use of reading strategies.

➤ Guided Reading

In kindergarten, the definition of reading encompasses a wide variety of behaviors. For example, some kindergarten children may require teacher support to read stories with predictable text, while others will read simple text independently. At the same time, there may be children who are beginning to recognize letters of the alphabet. Guided reading provides an opportunity to teach children the variety of reading strategies they need in order to become fluent, independent readers. During guided reading, the teacher monitors and evaluates each child's progress.

➤ Independent Reading

Because children learn to read by reading, they need plenty of opportunities to read independently. Sufficient time and appropriate materials are critical to develop and strengthen reading abilities.

➤ Writing

Research in language development has shown that growth in reading and writing is interdependent; opportunities to write increase ability to read, and vice versa. Kindergarten children participate in various writing activities such as interactive writing and journal writing. The writing program used at the Kindergarten Academy is a component of the Journeys Reading program

Young children learn to write as much as they learned to talk. Even though toddlers make many “mistakes” or approximations in speech, parents enjoy the conversations and encourage the child to talk knowing that speech develops by talking. In kindergarten, writing is approached in much the same way. Teachers accept children’s approximations of spellings. Just as parents are proud of a child’s every attempt to say words, teachers praise young writer’s efforts at writing. Your child’s writing will contain examples of spelling approximations. For example, a child might write, “love” as “luv”, because that is the way it sounds. Teachers will praise the child for the letters that he/she got correct and will model the correct spelling, and children will gradually incorporate conventional or standard spelling into their writing. Be assured, however, that your child will progress to age-appropriate conventional spelling in later years.

➤ Social Studies/Science/Health

The teachers teach thematic units that will incorporate activities relating to these subject areas. Examples of themes that will be taught are Earth Day, dental health, disabilities awareness, holidays, and insects. In addition, students will also participate in environmental science, taught by Mrs. Hokanson, and health lessons taught by Mr. McElhiney twice a month.

➤ Math

A hands-on approach will be used in which children will be actively involved in learning about shapes, counting, patterns, graphing, addition and subtraction. The mathematics program used at the Kindergarten Academy is *Go Math!*

❖ Music

Children will be exposed and involved in various movement and rhythm activities twice a week, in music class taught by Mrs. Killian. Literacy through music is a major focus of the Kindergarten Academy’s music program.

❖ Computers

Mrs. Hokanson will expose students to general computer literacy lessons once a week. Each lesson is integrated within the Kindergarten curriculum. All software is standards-based. Mrs. Hokanson is providing the students to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) activities to deepen their thinking and problem solving skills.

❖ Technology

The Kindergarten Academy has a fully functional computer lab which is available to all teachers and students. Each classroom also has been equipped with a SMARTBoard and projector which teachers and students use for instruction. The Kindergarten Academy also has two SMART Tables which are used for small group instruction and remediation. In addition, the KA has an iPad cart that can be accessed by all of the classes and individual iPad minis in each classroom. Students access approved apps to reinforce, remediate, and enrich learning.

Reports Cards

Report cards will be issued three times a year. In December and March you will receive your child’s report card and have a parent-teacher conference. Parents must attend their child’s conferences to receive the report card. Final report cards will be sent home with your child on the last day of school in June. Report cards are also accessible to parents through the **Home Access Center (HAC)** available on the Interboro School District website. Parents will be provided with a pass code for this system.

Daily Schedule

School hours are 8:15 am to 2:45 pm. There will be periodic *Early Dismissal Wednesdays*. Please make sure you refer to the Interboro School District Calendar and Kindergarten Academy Monthly Newsletters for any and all time schedule information. **School Messenger** phone messages will also be sent to inform/remind families of upcoming KA events. All events and calendar items can be accessed on the KA website (www.interborosd.org)

Each week the children will have various specials as stated below:

- Physical education - 2 times per week
- Music - 2 times per week
- Library - 1 time per week
- Computers - 1 time per week
- Science – 2 times per month
- Health – 2 times per month



The Second Step Program

The Interboro Kindergarten Academy has implemented the Second Step Program. The Second Step Program is designed to promote social competence and reduce children's social- emotional problems. The curriculum teaches students several skills central to healthy social - emotional development: (a) empathy; (b) impulse control and problem solving; and (c) anger management.

Our goal is for students to feel safe and secure, be respectful to themselves and others, and to learn how to solve problems using their words. By developing these skills with our children, we create an environment conducive to learning.

Positive Behavior Instruction Support Program (PBIS)

The PBIS program is a behavior management program, which encourages the students to demonstrate positive behaviors during the school day and beyond. School-wide expectations have been established that we feel the KA students can work toward achieving. Our goals for the children are: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe in the following areas: Classroom, Cafeteria, Lavatories, Hallways, Playground/Recess, and on the Bus. The program is instructional in nature, beginning with classroom lessons, modeling, and consistent expectations. As the year progresses, staff members will reinforce positive behaviors by presenting students with K Coins. These small reward tokens are visible reminders to the children that they are making good choices. If a student does not meet the behavioral expectations there are appropriate consequences based on the level of the behavior (ranging from a verbal reminder, time out, or meeting with principal/parents).

Student Discipline

It is the goal of the Kindergarten Academy is to create a positive atmosphere where learning is not negatively impacted by behavior or discipline issues. In instances where a problem occurs with a student, the child's teacher will address it and contact the parent through phone, note home or email. Behavior management systems are implemented by the classroom teachers to support a positive learning environment. The principal takes an active role in positive behavior supports and discipline at the school. Therefore, students may visit the principal in her office to discuss behavior issues, engage in problem solving and determine consequences. Either the principal or the teacher will contact the parent. The principal will schedule parents meetings, as needed. Open communication between teachers, parents, and the principal is important to problem solving and the resolution of discipline issues. A behavior matrix and Behavior Incident Report will be provided to parents on Back to School Night.

Attendance

Once your child is enrolled in Kindergarten, **daily attendance is required**. Kindergarten is building the foundation for your child's school career and every day is important. The Kindergarten Academy strictly adheres to the District's Attendance/Tardiness policy. Consistent contact is made to parents/ guardians to keep you informed of the days and minutes your child has been late or absent. The principal will schedule parent meetings to address chronic attendance concerns.

❖ Reporting Absences

When your child is going to be absent from school, please call the office at 610-957-5401 or email Mrs. Diana Conlin @ diana.conlin@interborosd.org, report the absence through the Kindergarten website as soon as possible. If no call is received, the school will contact the student's parent or guardian by phone. This is a safety check for the children. When your child returns to school, you must complete and return an absent note. This should state your child's name, teacher, date of absence(s), and reason. Prolonged absences (3 or more days) will require a doctor's note.

❖ LATENESS:

If your child is late for school (after 8:20 AM), an adult must sign him/her in at the office. **Parents are not permitted to drop of their child without signing them in at the Kindergarten office.** Frequent lateness to school disrupts the schedule and routine of the day, not only for your child, but also his/her peers. Please help your child get the most out of their school day by arriving on time. If your child is going to be late due to a doctor's appointment, please provide a note from the doctor's office so your child will be excused from the lateness. *Cumulative lateness of 90 minutes or more is considered chronic.*

ABSENCE/LATENESS REPORTING AND RECORDING (Taken from District Handbook)

It is very important in setting life patterns both in school, and eventually on the job, that proper attention is paid to promptness. It is extremely important that students attend their classes on a regular basis and start their day off on a positive note. **Students are expected to be in homerooms by 8:15 AM.** Students late to school must report directly to the school office and sign-in. **Cumulative lateness will be calculated as of 8:20 AM.**

The following conditions constitute reasonable causes for lateness to school:

1. Illness with doctor's note.
2. Required court attendance (note/documentation as proof).
3. Family/Educational trips (to be determined by the principal).



Parental Notification of Absence and Lateness Consequences

Lateness:

- 30 cumulative minutes or 5 days late – Courtesy Letter
- 60 cumulative minutes or 10 days late – Warning Letter
- 90 cumulative minutes or 15 days late – Parent conference with building administrator or truancy officer to establish Interboro SD Truancy Elimination Plan*.
- 120 cumulative minutes or 20 days late – Truancy Court

*Truancy Elimination Plan – A plan developed by the school that provides steps to improve student attendance at school. This plan is presented to parents/ guardians for input. This plan may include but is not limited to recommendations to an out of district agency or district court.

Parental Notification of Absence and Lateness Consequences:

Absences:

It is expected that parents will notify the school of a student absence. If a school is not notified that a student will be absent, the district will call to ensure that your child is in the care of a parent/guardian.

- 5 days absent – courtesy letter
- 10 days absent –parent conference with school administration and all future absences will require a doctor’s note
- 15 days absent- Truancy Court

Parents are encouraged to contact the building principal if there are extenuating circumstances that directly affect your child’s attendance.

Vacation Excusal - Students/Parent must request a vacation form 2 weeks prior to absent dates for review and approval by Principal and teachers. Please note that vacation days are counted as a part of total student absences.

Commented [ND1]:

Commented [ND2R1]:

Dismissal ID Tags

Each family will receive four Dismissal ID tags. Your child's name will be printed on the front. These tags MUST be shown to the staff at the 10th Avenue doors, school office, bus drivers, or monitors in order for your child to be released. **NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO AN ADULT WITHOUT A DISMISSAL ID TAG.** This is for your child's safety. Your child's teacher distributed these tags at the Open House. Additional Dismissal tags will be available in the school office. Parents are permitted to have a back-up photo of the original Dismissal ID Tag on their cell phone in the event that they forget the card.

Any parent or designee not presenting an ID tag at dismissal or bus pick-up will be asked to go to the school office to present identification (driver's license or photo id) before the child can be released. If Dismissal ID tag is not presented at the afternoon drop off by a parent or designee, an attempt to verify identification with the KA office will be made. Students may need to be returned to the KA Academy if identification cannot be verified.

Inclement Weather

Inclement weather may cause the school to have a delayed opening. The **School Messenger** *phone call system will be used by the Interboro School District to inform families of late openings or school closings due to inclement weather. Please inform the school office of changes in phone numbers, so that you receive these important calls. Information is also available on the district website or thru Twitter.

It is also important that your child is dressed **appropriately for the weather**. Rain and snow gear is essential. To alleviate the frustration with boots, we suggest the following: If the boots fit but the shoes do not slide, cover the shoes with plastic bags and then slide them into the boots. If the shoes do not fit inside the boots then you may want to have your child carry their sneakers in a plastic bag or in their backpack.

Decisions regarding outdoor recess are made on a daily basis based on temperature, precipitation, and playground conditions. Please have your child prepared each day with appropriate outerwear.

KEEP SCHOOL OFFICIALS INFORMED

Call the school office or send a note with your child if:

1. You are going to move.
2. Your telephone number is changed.
3. There is a change in the emergency number.
4. Your child is absent for three (3) consecutive days.
5. Your child has a communicable disease.



Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

The information provided below is to inform you of the Kindergarten Academy's arrival and dismissal procedures. Please refer to them as needed. The Kindergarten Academy strictly adheres to these procedures.

Walkers/Car Riders

❖ Arrival

Walkers/Car Riders will enter through the gym doors on 10th Avenue. Our doors open at 8:00 am. **Doors will close promptly at 8:20 am.** Any student arriving **after 8:20 is considered late and must be walked into the school building** through the front doors and be signed in by a parent in the Kindergarten office.

- **Park and Walk:** If your child needs assistance exiting the car, you will need to park (short term) on surrounding streets and walk child to the gym doors. Please do not block driveways or turning lanes. Comply with the crossing guard's directions. Cross your child safely to the KA gym doors.

- **Car Loop: (Patience Required*)**

- Forms curbside on right lane of 10th Avenue
- Flashers on
- Enter KA Car Loop. Stay to right (close to curb).
- Student **must be able to exit car independently.**
- Parents must stay in their car.
- Children exit from right side of car only.
- Pull up to yellow curb to discharge your child. Staff members will guide children to the gym doors.
- Merge safely into traffic.
- **Doors must close promptly at 8:20.** This includes 5 minute courtesy window.
- Late arrivals must be signed in at the main office.



- ❖ *Please note that staff members no longer open/close car doors but do support safe discharge from the vehicle.*
- ❖ *Be safe when crossing your child and follow the directions of the crossing guards on duty.*

- ❖ **Departure**

Walkers and car riders will depart from the gym doors on 10th Avenue. Please park on neighboring streets and **walk to the gym doors.** You may park (short term) in a single line in the car loop. **Do not park in the cross walks or X boxes.** You must wait outside the doors for your child. Staff members will dismiss each child. The Dismissal ID tag must be shown in order for your child to be released. **No child will be released without a dismissal tag. This is for your child's safety.** Proof of identification will be required in the school office before any student is dismissed without a Dismissal ID tag.

Bus Riders

- ❖ **Arrival**

Students arriving by bus are dropped off at the main doors of the administration building. All bus riders are greeted by a staff member on duty and escorted into the building.

- ❖ **Departure**

Students are picked up at the main doors of the administration building and dropped off at the designated stop. The Dismissal ID tag with your child's name must be shown to the driver or monitor for your child to be released. **No child will be released without a tag. This is for your child's safety.** If a Dismissal ID tag is not presented, your child will be returned to the Kindergarten Academy.

Bus Transportation Information

- ❖ **Bus Changes (Bus#, Bus Stop, Rider to Non-Rider etc)**

Any changes must go through the Transportation Department in writing or by phone. Students will only receive bus transportation to approved daycare providers. Proof of this must be on file with the transportation department.

Transportation must be consistent, for example: a student can't be a walker two days a week and a bus rider for the other three days.

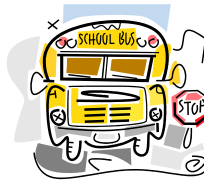
Transportation Department – 610.237.9751
Bill Bierman or Jim Simmonds – Ext. 2331 or 2334

**Phone calls made to the school office will not result in a change in method of transportation. You must contact the Transportation Department. Please note that only one change is allowed for the school year.

❖ School Bus Safety

All students are expected to follow the bus rules listed below. These rules are reviewed at Bus Orientation and by the bus drivers and monitors on a regular basis. Students that do not follow the rules will receive a bus referral and meet with the principal.

1. Stand back from the curb until the bus stops.
2. Slowly walk on the bus and find a seat quickly.
3. Remain in your seat while the bus is moving.
4. Keep hands away from windows.
5. Keep aisles clear at all times.



Parents should be monitoring their children at all times. Please be respectful of the homeowners in and around the bus stops. Children should not be running on lawns, and there should be no trash or cigarette butts left by the adults.

Dismissal ID cards are required when you or your designee pick your child up at the bus stop.

Field Trips

The Kindergarten Academy has a variety of field trips that all students attend each school year. Field Trips are organized by the classroom teachers. Permission slips and information about the trip, date/times, cost and chaperoning is provided in advance of the scheduled trips. Chaperone's for field trips are arranged with the teachers. Anyone chaperoning trips or events must have Volunteer Clearances on file prior to the trip. Trips have included: Highland Orchards and the Philadelphia Zoo.

Only one permission form is sent home in the beginning of the year for both of these trips. Payment for trips will be organized by the classroom teachers prior to each trip. More information will be provided at the beginning of the school year.

A few field trip reminders...

- *It is strongly suggested that only parents or guardians attend field trips.* If a parent or guardian is not available to attend, and a parent/guardian would like a close relative (21 years of age or older) to attend with his/her child, it must be approved by the principal.
- Field Trip chaperones must have the required clearances on file prior to the trip.
 - See the school districts Human Resources site for the link to Clearances.

- PA State background check (Act 34) *
 - FBI Criminal (Act 114) – Required if you have not lived in PA for the past 10 consecutive years.
 - Childline (Act 151)*
 - *No fee to obtain these volunteer clearances.
- Children are NOT PERMITTED to leave a field trip for any reason. All students and chaperones must return to school on the bus.
 - All students are required to stay in school until the end of the day when returning from a class trip. Students are not permitted to be signed-out early.

Standard of Dress

It is important to provide your child with appropriate clothing so that he/she can care for him/herself independently. The clothing should be well fitting, easy to manage, safe, and **labeled for identification with your child's first and last name**. A permanent Sharpie laundry marker is suggested for this procedure. Make sure you are aware of your child's gym days so that they can wear the proper clothing and sneakers.



Interboro School District Standard of Dress Requirements

MALE STUDENTS (K - 8)

PANTS

- Pants or shorts in solid colors
- Colors must be black, tan (khaki), gray, yellow/gold, or white
- Only school or school district lettering or logos is permitted (Examples = “Bucs”, “Interboro”, “Prospect Park School”, a pirate logo) EXCEPT brand or other logos or labels, which cannot be larger than 2” X 2” (Example = small Nike symbol or brand name)
- Lettering is allowed on the front and sides ONLY

SHIRTS AND SWEATSHIRTS

- Shirts and sweatshirts in solid colors
- Colors must be black, white, yellow/gold, or gray

- Style must be crew neck (non-collared shirt worn along the neck line) or collared (Polo or golf shirts with 2 to 3 buttons). Sleeveless shirts are not permitted.
- Only school or school district lettering or logos is permitted (as described above) EXCEPT brand or other logos or labels, which cannot be larger than 2” X 2”

FEMALE STUDENTS (K-8)

PANTS

- Females may wear pants, shorts, skirts/skorts, or dresses in solid colors
- Pants, shorts, skirts/skorts must be finger tip length.
- Colors must be black, tan (khaki) yellow/gold, gray, or white
- Lettering (same as for males – see above)

SHIRTS AND SWEATSHIRTS

- Same as for males (see above)

NO PAJAMAS ARE PERMITTED FOR BOYS OR GIRLS AT ANY TIME

FOOTWEAR

Grades K – 2 – SNEAKERS ONLY

Grades 3 – 8 – SNEAKERS required ONLY on gym days, any other footwear is permissible

No slippers are permitted at any time for any grade

Please write the student’s name on all clothing items to insure misplaced clothing items can be returned to the student.

NOTE: There will be no opting out of the School Standard of Dress Policy except for religious reasons. Please discuss specific situations with the school principal.

Health Information

The Interboro School District recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their children. Although we strongly recommend that medication be given in the home, we realize that the health of some children requires that they receive medication in school. Please confer with your child’s physician to arrange medication time intervals to avoid school hours whenever possible. When medication absolutely must be given during school hours certain procedures must be followed. You may contact the school nurse for further information. There is a nurse at the Kindergarten Academy every day. Only parents can bring medication to the nurse. Children are not permitted to carry any medication, including cough drops.

➤ Emergency Contact Information

Please be sure that the emergency contact information listed on your child’s emergency card is accurate and up to date. Anyone that is listed as an emergency contact should be available to be contacted if you are not available and/or to pick up your child in case of an emergency.

➤ When to Keep Your Child Home

For the health of your child and their peers, parents should keep children home when they show these symptoms:

Vomiting
Enlarged glands
Fever



Chills
Sore throat
Headache

Coughing
Earache
Stomach- ache
Diarrhea
Red or Discharged eyes

➤ Vaccinations

Any child that is not current on their vaccinations will be excluded from school beginning April 1st.

Bathroom Accidents/Change of Clothes

A change of clothes* is required for each child (pants, top, underwear) in case of a bathroom accident, school yard or lunchroom mishap. Please label these clothes items and secure in a large Ziploc bag. They will be kept in the classroom and returned at the end of the year if not used. * These clothes do not need to be Dress Code issue.

If the school provides a change of clothes, we ask that you wash and return or replace for future use. Do not return any underwear.

Lunch/ Recess Procedures

For many Kindergarten children eating lunch in a school cafeteria is a new experience. All students have the option to purchase or bring their lunch. Students bringing their lunch may purchase a drink. A menu is sent home at the beginning of each month.

➤ Lunch Coupons:

- **If your child is purchasing lunch, a lunch coupon needs to be sent in each day with your child's lunch choice, as we need to make sure that enough food is prepared for the students each day.** If you will be sending in money, please make sure the coupon is included in the envelope with your child's name, teacher's name and ID number.
- The lunch coupons are sent home weekly.
- If a child does not come to school with a completed lunch ticket they will need to wait at the end of the line until all the other children have been served to receive what's available. If a lunch ticket is not consistently sent in with a student, it will be suggested that the child bring their lunch to school each day.

A teacher and lunch/recess assistants are on hand to supervise every lunch/recess period. Your child has a 40 - minute lunch period, 20 minutes to eat and 20 minutes of recess (weather permitting). **It is important that you pack what you KNOW your child will eat, and an appropriate amount that can be eaten in 20 minutes.** Encourage them to finish all their lunch.

Clearly label your child's lunch container with his/her first and last name and if possible his/her teacher's name. Please remind your child not to put open drink containers (juice or milk cartons)

back into their lunch containers. Provide at least two napkins or paper towels in your child's lunch container. That way one can be used as a placemat and the other as a napkin.

**** The Kindergarten Academy has a designated table for students with food allergies.**

➤ Free and Reduced Lunch

Free and reduced lunch forms are given out to all students on the first day of school. If you feel that your child is eligible for free or reduced lunch, make sure you fill out the forms and return them as soon as possible. If you did not receive these forms and feel you are eligible please contact the Kindergarten Office. All students receiving free or reduces lunch are required to complete a lunch ticket each day with the choice of lunch. Forms are also available on the district website. Parents can also apply for free/reduced meals on line at www.compass.state.pa.us

CAFETERIA PROGRAM

The Interboro School Food Service Program is operated by a private company, Chartwell Foods, that makes every effort to provide the most nutritious lunches available to your children. If for some reason you are not pleased with the quality of lunch, service or some other aspect of the program, please contact the Food Service Director at 610-461-6700 Ext 2153.

For the 2017-18 school year the cost of lunch, for students in grades K - 5 will be:

Lunch Paid = \$2.50 (Grades K-5)

Reduced Lunch = \$.40

Breakfast is not served at the KA. Your child can participate in the Breakfast program at your community school. Breakfast is served at 7:35. Walk your child into the building. The breakfast menu is on the district website. Breakfast Prices: \$1.50, Reduced .40 cents, or Free.

My School Bucks is now available to make your child's lunch account payment by using: myschoolbucks.com.

The District uses a computerized system in each of its cafeterias called Point of Sale, which will have the following benefits:

- **Certain Identification:** Each student enters his or her student ID number into a PIN pad. The cashier will see a picture of the student. This guarantees that only the correct student is able to access their lunch account.
- **Ensuring Anonymity:** A requirement of the National School Lunch Program so no one knows the recipient of a Free, Reduced or Full Pay Lunch.
- **Prepaid Accounts:** Parent(s) or guardian(s) may fund their child's account and allow them to purchase their lunch without having to carry money to do so. Records are available from the Food Services Director. Parents may also make a payment to their child's account at myschoolbucks.com. The payment will take one business day to clear.
- **Overdue Accounts: Low balance in the student account –**
Notifications will be sent out to the parent(s)/guardian(s) via global messenger and/or email notification (for those families who use myschoolbucks.com).

Negative balance in the student account between \$10.00 and \$39.99 – Letters will be sent out to the parent(s) or guardian(s), in addition a meeting between the respective school principal and/or members of the district support staff and the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be requested.

Negative balance in the student account between \$40.00 and \$99.99 – Students will be withheld from certain activities, which includes, but not limited to dances, 8th grade end of year trip, extra-curricular activities, etc.

Negative balance in the student account between \$100.00 or more – In addition to the options above the district will use an outside collection agency and/or refer the accounts to the District Magistrate. Students are NOT allowed to leave the building at lunch. Students may bring their own lunches.

➤ **Table Manners in the Cafeteria**

Remind your child that appropriate table manners are expected the same as if they were eating at their own table at home.

- Children should sit at the cafeteria table with their bottom on the bench at all times.
- Children should keep their own eating space clean.
- All their trash should be disposed of in the large cafeteria trashcans.
- Always raise their hands if they need assistance with food containers.
- Always speak with an indoor voice, and remain in their seats until given permission to line –up for recess

➤ **Recess Procedures**

Again, lunch recess may be a new experience for most Kindergarten children. Children should come to school dressed for outdoor recess. Weather permitting; your child will have approximately 20 minutes of outdoor recess on the Kindergarten playground. Please review some of the rules of appropriate playground safety.

- All children should keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- All children should be considerate of others when **taking turns** on the playground equipment.
- Your child will receive Health/Safety lessons about appropriate playground behavior.
- Encourage your child to be polite and respectful of the playground/cafeteria adults. They are in a supervisory position on the recess yard in order to keep your child safe while at play.

Student Nutrition Accountability Program System or SNAP System:

SNAP Student ID's: All students will be issued an ID number by the school district. This is required by the state whether or not you plan on purchasing any items off of the menu.

- All students will need to memorize their ID number. Your child's ID number will come home on the first day of school. Please practice with your child to learn his or her number. This number will be the same when they leave the Kindergarten Academy and move to the community schools.
- Children purchasing lunch, or an a la carte item will be responsible to punch in their own number. Teachers, assistants and school staff will assist students in the cafeteria. NO student will lose any of his or her lunchtime.
- Your ID number should be kept private, as this is very similar to a pin number for a debit card.

Depositing of Money into Accounts:

- Money can be deposited into your child's account at any time. You can send in cash, but checks are preferred. Checks should be made payable to the Interboro School District.
- All money should be sent to school in a sealed envelope with your child's full name, teacher, and ID number on the envelope. No money will be accepted if it is not in an envelope with the correct information.
- You do not need to deposit money into the account, as this is a voluntary accounting system. The benefit of using this system is that it eliminates the need for students to carry money each day to school.
- As this is a DEBIT system, students cannot "charge" their lunch.
- Deposits can be made for any amount into the account on any day.
- Negative and low balance letters are sent to parents on a monthly basis by the school district.

Additional Information:

- If you will be sending money in each day, it will need to be in an envelope with your child's name, ID number, and a completed lunch coupon.
- A lunch menu will be sent home with the school newsletter and is also available on the district website

- Any student receiving free or reduced lunch will follow the same procedures as outlined above.



Wellness Policy

In June of 2007 the Interboro School District adopted a Wellness policy. As stated in the *Nutritional Standards for Competitive Foods* in PA Schools, as of July 1, 2008 we are in the “Best” category. All information below has been compiled from the *Nutritional Standards for Competitive Foods*, the Interboro School District’s Wellness Policy and from literature provided by the Interboro School District Wellness Committee. This information has been provided to all staff regarding snacks, lunches, birthday treats, and classroom parties.

The information below should be followed when providing any food items to children. This includes snacks, classroom parties, rewards, and student activities.

Choose foods with:

- less than 7 grams of total fat per serving
- less than 2 grams of saturated fat per serving
- less than 360 milligrams of sodium per serving
- no added sugar or caffeine

- School Snacks: Whether your child’s teacher is providing the daily snack or you are asked to provide a snack each day, the guidelines above need to be followed. Each student should receive a single size serving of the snack.

Some ideas...

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| - low fat granola bars | - graham crackers |
| - animal crackers | - low- fat trail mix |
| - fruit | - raisins |
| - pretzels | - low- fat popcorn |
| - baked crackers | - goldfish |
| - veggies | |

- Classroom Parties: No more than 2 items that contain added sugar as the first ingredient will be served at any classroom party.

- NO Candy or soda
- Fresh fruit and vegetables will be offered as an alternative
- Milk, 100% juice, or water only
- A meeting will be held with the homeroom parents to review these guidelines more specifically

- Birthday Treats: No Food or Treats for Birthdays, as per the new district wellness policy.
 - We love to celebrate student birthdays at the KA. Our new wellness policy eliminates birthday treats (food/snacks/sweets). If you would like to send in a treat to celebrate your child's birthday consider a small "gift bag" containing erasers, pencils, stickers, or a classroom book, or small game.
 - No candy or soda

- School Lunches: If you are packing a lunch for your child, please make sure it contains healthy and nutritious foods. Our goal is to encourage your child to eat healthy and nutritious foods in order to maintain a sound mind and healthy body. A few examples of nutritious lunch foods may be: A sandwich, yogurt, fruit, veggie sticks, milk or juice. Try to avoid sending in a "lunchable" type item as these contain a high amount of sodium. Soda and candy are not permitted at lunch. Please consider following the Wellness Policy guidelines above when packing your child's lunch.

General Information

➤ Visitors

Anyone who visits our school needs to stop in the office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge. For your child's safety, it is important for us to know who is in the building at all times! If you would like to visit your child's classroom or volunteer, please make arrangements in advance with the classroom teacher.

➤ Volunteers

The Kindergarten Academy encourages and welcomes volunteers to our school. There are many opportunities to volunteer including supporting classroom programs, Earth Day, Mayfair/ Field Day, among others. The Interboro School District has adopted a Volunteer policy which includes the following clearances for all chaperones and school volunteers.

The following clearances are required for any school chaperone or volunteer. See the district's website (Human Resources Department for a quick link to Clearances).

- PA State background check (Act 34)*
- FBI Criminal (Act 114) – Required if you have not lived in PA for the past 10 consecutive years.
- Childline (Act 151)*

*No fee to obtain these volunteer clearances.

➤ Parent Involvement

Parents are important members of the KA community. Parent events will be held throughout the school year. Kindergarten Academy is presented and parents are given an opportunity to offer ideas and suggestions for upcoming events. Please consider attending these meetings.



➤ Lost and Found

The Kindergarten Academy is not responsible for items that are lost at school. To prevent this from happening:

- Do not send your child to school with ANYTHING VALUABLE (jewelry, loose money, etc...)
- CLEARLY LABEL everything that your child brings to school with permanent marker in **large dark letters** (backpacks, lunch boxes, sweaters, sweatshirts, jackets, etc)
- If something is lost, check with your child's teacher and ask the school office if the missing item has been found.

When Your Child Starts School

The first day of school is a milestone in your child's life. Your understanding at this "turning point" is important to your child's future attitude toward school and to his or her growth and development. Experts in child development emphasize that you, the parent, can play an important role in starting your child off with the self-confidence needed throughout life. This self-confidence is built upon good feelings about parents, other adults at school, other children, and himself or herself as a worthwhile human being.

Here are some things for you to keep in mind...

- Recognize that the first day your child goes to school is an important event.
- Remember that learning to like school and liking to learn are closely related.
- Prepare your child for the new school experience by explaining what to expect and answering all questions honestly.

- Convey a positive attitude about school.
- Make transportation plans clear to your child.
- Create a normal routine environment at home the first few days of school.
- Get to know your child's teacher.
- Attend scheduled meetings to be informed about your child's educational program.
- Plan your day so that you can spend time with your child.
- Help your child cope with occasional frustrations and disappointments at school.
- Avoid comparing your child's school experiences with how brothers and sisters or neighbors did when they began school.
- Your child should be well rested – 10 to 12 hours of sleep per night.
- Your child should be well nourished before he or she comes to school.
- Your child should be able to use the bathroom without assistance.
- Your child should be learning to button, zip, tie shoes, and buckle without assistance.



Helping Your Child Grow in Literacy and Language

Reading to Young Children - Research Findings: The best way for parents to help their children become better readers is to read to them – even when they are very young. Children benefit most from reading aloud when they discuss stories, learn to identify letters and words, and talk about the meaning of words.



GETTING READY FOR READING...STORY TIME

- Have a regular story time before or after dinner or before bed. It will help to calm your child.
- Look at the book together. Talk about where the cover is. Find the back of the book. Talk about where the story starts. This will introduce your child to the way the book functions.

- Look through the pictures with your child before reading the story. Can your child predict what the story will be about? This will help your child to use picture clues for reading comprehension.
- While reading, follow the words with your finger. This will help your child learn the left to right progression for reading and writing.
- Stop on one page of print and ask your child to locate letters or words. “Your name starts with B. Can you find any B’s on this page?”
- When you reach a dramatic point in the story, stop and ask your child to predict what will happen next.
- Read for enjoyment. After the story, ask, “How would you feel if that happened to you?” “Do you wish you could try that?”
- Try telling your child a story without pictures. He/she will learn to listen carefully without having pictures as clues. Ask your child to tell you a story. Write it down and read it back to him/her.

Continue story time after your child is in school. Young children love to be read to and it is a great (quiet) time for parents and children to spend together.

Speaking and Listening

Research Finding: A good foundation in speaking and listening helps children become better readers. Parents are their child’s first and most important teacher. Parents can do many things at home to help their child succeed in school. They do this by offering encouragement and support. The following information is provided to assist parents as they work with their young child.

Helping Your Child Grow in Math

Math - Research Findings: Young children learn math naturally, through play and informal experiences.



MATH IN THE KITCHEN

Young children will enjoy assisting mom and dad in the kitchen while learning math concepts as well!

Encourage your child to:

- Help set the table - He/she can learn *spatial concepts* if you draw the shapes of the plate, fork, etc on an old placemat and have your child match the utensil to each shape.
- Talk about the sequence of the meal time... First, we set the table. Then we eat. Last we clean up. Add more steps as your child’s understanding of *sequence* expands.
- Help to put away the dishes - Your child will learn to *sort* and *classify*. Forks go in on section, spoons in another, etc.
- Help to bake dessert -He/she will learn *measuring concepts* (cup, teaspoon) and will be introduced to *fractions* (1/2).

Of course the best part of learning math in the kitchen is the valuable time that you are spending with your young child! He/she will learn to *count*. “How many plates do we set out?”

The Importance of Play

Child development specialists know the importance of play because children discover and learn about their world through play. Play also promotes the total development of the child and enhances self-esteem as children succeed in play. A child playing in the following ways is forming a solid foundation for a life of learning:

When I dress-up and pretend play with household items, I am:

- practicing to understand and master adult roles
- practicing math and language skills
- organizing and using ideas
- symbolically using materials in meaningful ways



When I am listening to or looking at books with others, I am:

- making friends with books
- learning that printed words have meaning
- learning about other people and places
- often interacting with an important adult to develop verbal and listening skills

When I am building with blocks, I am:

- using my imagination and creativity
- learning about height, width, depth, and length
- experiencing patterns, symmetry, and balance
- gaining feelings of competence
- learning to cooperate, share, plan, negotiate



When I notice and play with things in nature, I am:

- investigating the world around me
- developing my curiosity
- growing in my sensory awareness
- appreciating beauty and order in nature



When I am playing with play dough and modeling clay, I am:

- strengthening and developing my small muscles
- developing my sensory awareness
- being creative and imaginative

When I am playing with paints and watercolors, I am:

- being creative and imaginative
- experimenting with colors, lines, form, spatial relationships, and methods of applying paint
- expressing my feelings and moods

When I am throwing, climbing, riding, and doing other physical activities, I am:

- discovering how my body moves
- learning to feel good about my body and myself
- developing my large muscles and learning skills
- developing the habit of being physically active

When I am playing with sand or water, I am:

- learning about pouring, measuring, and comparing
- being given an opportunity to expand my sensory awareness
- talking with my friends and learning about them

When I playing with writing materials such as paper, pens, pencils, etc., I am:

- learning that I can communicate with squiggles and written words
- strengthening and developing my small muscles
- using a variety of writing tools to convey my thoughts and feelings

When I am playing with puzzles, pegboards, sewing cards, and other hands-on toys, I am:

- strengthening and developing my small muscles
- making discoveries
- developing eye-hand coordination
- working on problem-solving skills

<http://www.pta.org/programs/education/build2.htm>

(Adapted from materials developed by Ingeborg Teske and Judy Bartell, staff of the Early Childhood Education Center, Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois 60305; (708) 209-3099.)

