

Oviatt Preschool Handbook

2021-22



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INTRODUCTION

Oviatt's Preschool Program is a fully integrated, multi-age program. There are many reasons to provide opportunities for children of various ages and stages of development to play, learn and interact with each other. Through positive interactions with children of various skill levels, children become sensitive to the needs of others and learn to appreciate individual differences at an early age. In integrated settings, all children have the opportunity to form friendships with a wide variety of peers.

Preschool curriculum is specifically designed and delivered to allow children of a wide ability range to access learning at their level in order to grow forward.

MISSION, PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS (IQPPS 10.1)

Norwalk Community Schools is focused on "Growing Learners and Leaders" as our core mission.

Oviatt provides a high quality preschool program that meets every child's needs. We want children to become independent, self-confident, curious learners who can work well with their peers. We do this by creating purposeful and productive play experiences, accomplishing this in a setting where children feel safe, cared for, and respected.

Goals for Children

In Norwalk, our Portrait of a Learner drives our work and goal-setting for all of our PK-12th grade students under one cohesive vision. The attributes of our NCSD Portrait of a Learner are:

Self-Aware:

- Demonstrates self-efficacy
- Demonstrates a growth mindset
- Recognizes strengths and areas of growth
- Engages in metacognition and reflection

Self-Directed:

- Proactively sets goals and self-monitors progress
- Takes purposeful initiative
- Demonstrates enthusiasm, grit and persistence
- Cultivates leadership opportunities for self and others

Strategic:

- Embraces curiosity and inquiry
- Engages in critical thinking
- Identifies and solves problems
- Uses creative and flexible thinking

Socially-Aware:

- Demonstrates empathy and respect for others
- Appreciates diversity
- Develops equity consciousness
- Listens and communicates effectively

Connected:

- Engages with the community
- Understands civic responsibilities
- Builds healthy relationships
- Participates in teamwork and collaboration

Goals for Families (IQPPS 1.1; 7.1-7.7)

Families are part of our classroom community, and we want families to feel welcome. We encourage parents to volunteer in the classroom once each semester. We offer a variety of ways families can be involved, and we encourage you to reach out to your child's preschool teacher for volunteer opportunities.

Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help their children be better prepared to learn to read, write and engage in other school readiness skills. We invite families to participate in our Open House and Family Night

activities. We encourage the parents/guardians of the children in the Oviatt Preschool Program to consider joining the Preschool School Improvement Advisory Committee.

Families advocate for their children. Together, families and teachers create a shared vision of a child's strengths and challenges. Education is a team effort. We want you to know what your child is learning, and we are interested in your ideas and suggestions.

ENROLLMENT

Eligibility

Children who are four years of age prior to September 15th of the current school year are eligible to attend for free through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Grant.

Children who qualify for an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) for Special Education services with goals beyond speech only are eligible at the date of their third birthday. We do provide tuition-based enrollment for general education three year olds, though spots are very limited. Students who are five years of age prior to September 15 of the current school year are not eligible for preschool programming with Norwalk Schools but are eligible for the kindergarten program.

A four-year old student without an IEP may enroll in the Universal Preschool instructional program of more than one school district. Only the district in which the student attends first during the day/week may count the student as a SWVPP student to receive funding. The parent must notify the Norwalk Schools preschool director and registrar if the student will be enrolled in another Universal Preschool program. A second district or its community partner could allow the student to attend its preschool program the same as it allows other students not eligible for SWVPP if space allows, but the funding for participation in this program must be on a parent-paid tuition basis and must not exclude other eligible students' participation in a single session. Once the child is enrolled in a program, compulsory attendance applies. Both districts are required to take and report attendance. Based on local attendance policies, either (or both) districts may not allow the child to continue participation.

Location and Hours

Preschool classes take place at Oviatt Elementary, 713 School Avenue, Norwalk, Iowa 50211. The school phone number is 515-981-1005.

Multi-Age Three- and Four-Year-Old Program Session Times (IQPPS 10.4)

Programming is offered four days a week. Classes are held on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday for three hours each day. Classes are not held on Wednesday to allow structured time for parent meetings, teacher professional learning, instructional planning, and collaboration with community partners. Preschool follows the Norwalk Community School District calendar, with classes beginning one week later and ending one week earlier.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

AM Session: 8:00am-11:00am

PM Session: 11:50am-2:50pm

Fee Information

Four-year-old students attend free under Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program funds.

General education three-year-old students pay a monthly tuition of \$225 a month. The first payment is due September 1st of the current school year, with the monthly tuition due on the 1st of each month from September through May.

Class Size (IQPPS 10.4)

According to IQPPS standards, the maximum class size in preschool is 20 children. A teaching staff-child ratio of at least 1:10 is maintained to encourage adult-child interactions and promote activity among children.

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. Staff members are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families. The preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

PROGRAM STANDARDS

The preschool program meets the [Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards \(IQPPS\)](#), administered by the Iowa Department of Education.

The Oviatt Preschool Program...

- Promotes positive relationships among all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth and belonging as part of a community, and to foster each child's ability to contribute as a responsible community member (IQPPS Standard 1).
- Implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive (IQPPS Standard 2).
- Uses developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective teaching approaches that enhance each child's learning and development in the context of the program's curriculum goals (IQPPS Standard 3).
- Is informed by ongoing systematic, formal, and informal assessment approaches to provide information on child learning and development. These assessments occur within the context of reciprocal communications with families and with sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which children develop. Assessment results are used to benefit children by informing teachers about sound decisions, teaching, and program improvement (IQPPS Standard 4).
- Promotes the nutrition and health of all children and protects children and staff from illness and injury (IQPPS Standard 5).
- Employs and supports a teaching staff that has the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development and to support families' diverse needs and interests (IQPPS Standard 6).
- Establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture (IQPPS Standard 7).
- Establishes relationships with, and uses the resources of, the children's communities to support the achievement of program goals (IQPPS Standard 8).
- Provides appropriate and well-maintained indoor and outdoor physical environments including facilities, equipment, and materials to facilitate child and staff learning and development. To this end, a program structures a safe and healthy environment (IQPPS Standard 9).

- Implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences (IQPPS Standard 10).

The [Iowa Early Learning Standards \(IELS\)](#) are used to guide expectations for the children and instructional practices. The eight areas within the Iowa Early Learning Standards are:

1. Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Well-Being and Motor Development
3. Approaches to Learning
4. Social Studies
5. Creative Arts
6. Communication, Language and Literacy
7. Mathematics
8. Science

A CHILD'S DAY

Who Works in the Preschool? (IQPPS 6.1-6.6; 10.2-10.3; 10.11)

Program Administrator: An elementary principal is designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool program. The principal meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, holds a State of Iowa PK-12 Professional Administrator's License with Evaluator Approval..

Teacher: Each preschool classroom is facilitated by a full time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holds endorsements in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education.

Teacher Associate: A teacher associate in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher assistant has specialized training in early childhood education, pursuant to IQPPS guidelines.

Health Associate: The preschool program has a Health Associate daily and onsite during the hours preschool is in session who is under the supervision of a certified Registered Nurse. The Health Associate will maintain student health and immunization records and attends to the health needs of the students when they are at school.

Support Staff: Heartland Area Education Agency (AEA) 11 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 Learning Opportunities (IQPPS 3.1-3.18)

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 the outdoors, quiet play with noisy play. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of experiences every day:

- Large-group activities, small-group activities, and time to play alone or with others;
- Indoor and outdoor playtimes
- Teacher directed activities and read alouds
- Learning center activities (art, science, writing, games, books, blocks & wheels, pretend play, etc.)

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

Curriculum (IQPPS 2.1-2.30, 3.3)

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences in all content and developmental areas. 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 Norwalk Schools ([BP 603.4](#)) that curriculum content and instructional materials should reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women and 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 sex, race, color, gender, national origin, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, socio-economic status, religion, and abilities/disabilities. The curriculum should 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.

The preschool program uses *The Creative Curriculum*, a research and evidence based comprehensive curriculum designed for three and four-year-olds, as our core instructional resource. It addresses all areas of early learning: language and literacy, math, science, physical skills and social skills. It is rooted in project-based learning familiar and meaningful to young children. It provides children an opportunity to learn in a variety of ways - through play, problem-solving, movement, art, music, drawing and writing, listening and storytelling. Suggestions for modifications and adaptations are an integral part of the curriculum.

Supplemental curricular resources include *Handwriting without Tears* for pre-writing and fine motor skills, and *Foundations* for phonological awareness and letter sound support in line with our approach to early reading in Kindergarten.

Child Assessment (IQPPS 4.1-4.9)

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 curricular goals and objectives guide teachers' ongoing assessment of children's progress. Teacher teams meet at least weekly to interpret and use the results of formative assessments for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment is never 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 are kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and securely stored.

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- The **Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment System** is an authentic, observational assessment system. It records student progress in all developmental areas at the beginning, middle and end of the year.
- **Early Literacy Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI)**s are given at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to monitor the growth of early literacy skills.
- **Individual Portfolios** are organized by teaching staff and include assessments, observational data and child work samples collected on a regular basis. Progress Checkpoints are established three times during the school year: fall, winter, and spring. At each checkpoint, the teacher reflects and takes a snapshot of how a child is progressing in relation to the objectives and dimensions of our curriculum.
- Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. 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.

The preschool teacher communicates weekly with colleagues, parents and/or guardians regarding children's activities and developmental milestones. Assessment information will be shared formally with families during parent-teacher conferences in the fall and spring. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time.

If, through observations, GOLD Assessment, or IGDIs, 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:

1. A teacher requests Heartland Area Education Agency assistance 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 AEA team is available to all students and teachers in the building.
2. A formal request is made to Heartland AEA 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.

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 (IQPPS 10.15)

The Oviatt Preschool Program implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Like every program that is a part of the Universal Preschool Program Grant, we are audited on an annual basis by the Iowa Department of Education to ensure compliance with program standards. Periodically, we will receive verifications visits to confirm we are meeting these standards. Administrators, families, staff, and other routinely participating adults are 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. A report of the annual evaluation findings are shared with families, staff, Preschool School Improvement Advisory Committee, and other various stakeholders. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

Supervision Practices (IQPPS 3.7-3.9)

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teacher or paraeducator completes the following daily safety checklist indoor and outdoor:

- All safety plugs and electric outlets covered, heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. in working order;
- All cleaning supplies/poisons are out of children's reach and 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 environment – spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to head custodian; and,
- 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 is left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff supervises 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, who are in the library area, etc.).

Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) (IQPPS 1.2-1.9; 3.3-3.6)

Norwalk Community School District promotes a positive and safe learning environment for all of our students. Teaching staff equitably use positive guidance, redirection, and plan ahead to prevent problems. Using a PBIS

framework, they encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent, clear rules, and involve children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. Where the child understands words, discipline is explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property, and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn-taking.

Challenging Behaviors (IQPPS 1.2-1.9; 3.2-3.6)

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 pro-social behavior by:

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

Teaching staff guides children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children are taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff 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 intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage behavior that is more acceptable.

Permissible Methods of Discipline (IQPPS 1.3; 1.8; 10.6-10.7)

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting), staff set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance is 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; and, 5) review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

Prohibited Practices (BP 503.5)

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.

Snacks/Foods and Nutrition (IQPPS 5.9-5.17)

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.

When children with food allergies attend the education facility, the following should occur:

1. Each child with a food allergy should have a care plan prepared for the facility by the child's primary care provider, to include:

- a. Written instructions regarding the food(s) to which the child is allergic and steps that need to be taken to avoid that food;
 - b. A detailed treatment plan to be implemented in the event of an allergic reaction, including the names, doses, and methods of administration of any medications that the child should receive in the event of a reaction. The plan should include specific symptoms that would indicate the need to administer one or more medications;
2. Based on the child's care plan, the child's teachers should receive training, demonstrate competency in, and implement measures for:
 - a. Preventing exposure to the specific food(s) to which the child is allergic;
 - b. Recognizing the symptoms of an allergic reaction;
 - c. Treating allergic reactions;
 3. Parents/guardians and staff should arrange for the facility to have necessary medications, proper storage of such medication, and the equipment and training to manage the child's food allergy while the child is at the education facility;
 4. Teachers should promptly and properly administer prescribed medications in the event of an allergic reaction according to the instructions in the care plan;
 5. The facility should notify the parents/guardians immediately of any suspected allergic reactions, the ingestion of the problem food, or contact with the problem food, even if a reaction did not occur;
 6. The facility should recommend to the family that the child primary care provider be notified if the child has required treatment by the facility for a food allergic reaction;
 7. The facility should contact the emergency medical services system immediately whenever epinephrine has been administered;
 8. Parents/guardians of all children in the child's class should be advised to avoid any know allergens in class treats or special foods brought into the early care and education setting;
 9. Individual child's food allergies should be posted prominently in the classroom where staff can view and/or wherever food is served;
 10. The written childcare plan, a mobile phone, and the proper medication for appropriate treatment if the child develops an acute allergic reaction should be routinely carried on field trips or transport out of the educational setting.

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

Outside Play and Learning (IQPPS 5.4; 9.1-9.8)

We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather and air quality permits 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. Sometimes we spend longer getting bundled up than we spend outside. We use the *Child Care Weather Watch* guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or the Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

In cases when we 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. For example, tumbling mats may be offered for upper body activities or rolling across the mat.

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

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to send a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun. It is expected that parents/guardians apply sunscreen and/or insect-repellent before the preschool session. If necessary, written permission and sunscreen and/or insect repellent will be supplied by the parent for school personnel to apply.

Program staff completes the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance checklist or similar document on a weekly basis.

Clothing

Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes to school. While we encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, we cannot 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. 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.

Toilet Learning (IQPPS 5.5)

Restroom facilities are available for the students as needed. Occasional accidents happen and are not a problem. 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 is only done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the bathroom adjacent to the classroom with a diaper-changing table. Food handling is not permitted in this diapering area.
2. Staff follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standard 5, Criteria 7:
 - Clothes 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 checks children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces every two hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled;
 - Staff changes 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 is clearly labeled to show its intended use; and,
 - Diapering and gloving posters are posted in the changing area showing procedures with visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.
3. Soiled diaper and clothing is removed without contaminating any surface not already in contact with stool or urine.
 - a. Fold the soiled surface of the diaper inward;
 - b. Put soiled disposable diapers in a covered, plastic-lined, hands-free covered can. If reusable cloth diapers are used, put the soiled cloth diaper and its content (without emptying or rinsing) in a plastic bag or into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered can give to parents/guardians.
 - c. Put soiled clothes in a plastic-lined, hands-free plastic bag;
 - d. If gloves were used remove them using the proper plastic-lined, hands-free covered can;
 - e. Whether or not gloves were used, use a disposable antibacterial wipe or alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean the surfaces of the caregiver/teacher's hands and an application to clean the child's hands, and put the wipes, if used, into the plastic-lined, hands-free covered can. Allow sanitized hands to dry completely before proceeding;
 - f. Check for spills under the child. If there is any, use the paper that extends under the child's feet to fold over the soiled area so a fresh, unsoiled paper surface is now under the child's buttocks.
4. Potty chairs are not used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.
5. 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 your child, we ask that you limit toys brought from home. If your child brings an “attachment” item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack. 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.

Classroom Animals and Pets ([BP 606.3](#))

Live animals will not be allowed in district facilities except under special circumstances and/or curricular purposes. The principal will have discretion in these circumstances. Appropriate supervision of animals is required when animals are brought into district facilities.

The person bringing the animal must furnish transportation for the animal. Animals will not be allowed to travel to and from the student’s attendance center in district vehicles.

It is the responsibility of the principal to determine appropriate supervision of the animals and the parameters of its stay in the classroom.

Service animals, assistive animals, therapy animals, or emotional support animals are not intended to be addressed by this policy.

Birthdays (IQPPS 5.9-5.17)

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. Students with birthdays in June, July & August (before school begins) will be recognized on their half-birthday. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially-prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. The teacher will provide families a list of foods meeting the USDA’s Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. Those who have summer birthdays are welcome to choose a school day to celebrate with their class. Invitations to parties outside of school that do not include the entire class will not be distributed at school.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES (IQPPS 1.1; 7.1-7.7)

The program promotes 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 communicate with families weekly. Staff will use these notes to inform families about the child’s experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other topics 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.

Open Door Policy

Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will need to check in using the district security measures in the main office. Visitors are asked not to bring babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt classroom sessions. All parents and guardians are asked to notify the teacher 24 hours prior to a visit. If you are volunteering in the classroom working with students or helping on a field trip, then you will need to fill out the application for volunteers which is on our district website and complete a background check prior to volunteering. You will receive confirmation that you have been approved in our Raptor background check system as a volunteer.

Arrival (IQPPS 10.9)

All motor vehicle transportation provided by parents, legal guardians or others designated by parents or legal guardians should include the use of age-appropriate, and size-appropriate seat restraints. Arrival times are supervised by school staff. Parents or legal guardians must either accompany children to the preschool’s designated arrival location or leave their child in the care of one of the teaching staff.

When bringing your child to the school, we ask that you park your car in the parking lot and turn off the engine before entering the building. Please hold your child's hand as you enter the building to decrease the possibility of an accident. No child is permitted to leave the building without an adult.

When children have arrived, teaching staff will walk the children to the classroom where the preschool teacher will record attendance for the day. 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.

Departure (IQPPS 10.9)

At the end of each session, the teaching staff will begin assisting students with dismissal, which includes packing bags and putting on seasonal outerwear. We ask for your assistance in picking up your child on time. This supports the teachers in their efforts to prepare for the next session and their lunch break schedule.

Other than parents or legal guardians, only persons with prior written authorization (Parent Consent Form) are allowed to pick up a child from the school. Anyone who is unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, shall be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them.

In the interest of students' safety, parents/guardians/authorized individuals are requested to report directly to the office when picking up their child 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. When picking up your child from school, please arrive at the designated dismissal location and on time.

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

Transportation

Oviatt's Preschool Program only provides transportation for eligible students with an IEP. The facility will use a plan based on a functional assessment of the child's needs related to transportation. This plan will address special equipment, staffing and care in the vehicle during transport. Any accommodations indicated in the child's IEP will be implemented as described.

Field Trips (IQPPS 9.12) (BP 606.5)

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. Norwalk Community School District transportation is used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip well in advance.

Adult family members who are asked to volunteer to go on these trips to increase supervision and adult/child ratios should complete a volunteer form and background check prior to the field trip. The district may deny participation in the field trip due to the results of a background check.

Each child will be assigned to an adult for every part of the trip. Before every trip, the teaching staff will instruct children and all adults using the bus about the ten-foot danger zone around the vehicle where the driver cannot see.

During the field trip, all children will wear identifying information that gives the program name and phone number. A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children will frequently be counted while on a field trip. 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 (BP 503.1)

Students enrolled for classes in the Oviatt Preschool Program are expected to be in school for the full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is

necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. Please call the elementary office at 981-1005 with the reason for an absence no later than 8:20 A.M. if your child attends the morning session and by 12:05 if in the afternoon session.

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. If the office does not receive a phone call from the parents/guardians, the office will try to contact you or your emergency numbers.

Ethics and Confidentiality

Staff follows 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 we 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 is shared with another child's parent. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

Parents/Guardians are asked to direct any questions to the classroom teacher and not the classroom associates as the classroom teacher is ultimately responsible for each student's preschool programming.

All teaching staff receives training on ethics and confidentiality on the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct as part of their orientation.

Student Records (IQPPS 5.1; 10.8) ([BP 506.1](#) and [506.1.1](#))

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.

Parents or guardians are 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 Advisory Committee (IQPPS 7.5; 10.15)

The Oviatt Preschool Program has a preschool advisory committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets periodically 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 Advisory Committee.

Grievance Process ([BP 102.r1](#))

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we encourage you to address your concerns to your child's teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for assistance from the Oviatt Principal. If you remain dissatisfied, you may contact the Superintendent of Norwalk Community School District.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT (IQPPS 7.1-7.7)

The Oviatt Preschool Program encourages families to be very involved in their child's education by observing their children during the day, when possible, and meeting with staff. 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 socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year. Ongoing interactions throughout the school year help strengthen the home/school relationship regarding family, their beliefs, and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year. Family-teacher conferences are held twice a year, as well as when either party requests. At least one Family Night is held during the year.

The Oviatt Preschool Program values the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. As the teacher learns from the families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs, goals for their child's growth and development are incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. The classroom teacher is responsive to a family's values, beliefs, and language. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences, or questions with the preschool teacher or administration at any time.

The Oviatt Preschool Program staff invites parents/guardians to become involved in one or all of the following ways, and welcomes other ideas as well.

1. Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs;
2. Attend family meetings;
3. Return all forms promptly;
4. Attend Family/Teacher conferences held twice during the school year;
5. Take time to read the family bulletin board;
6. Check your child's backpack each day;
7. Participate in field trip activities;
8. Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken;
9. Share any of your families' cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs;
10. Help prepare snack and enjoy it with your child;
11. Read all the material sent home with your child;
12. Come to play;
13. Help with special events. Helping takes many different forms such as preparation of materials at home, making telephone calls, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting donations or prizes, photography, setup before the event, or clean afterwards; or,
14. Serve on the Preschool Advisory Committee.

The teaching staff provides information to families about available community resources and assists as requested in helping the family make connections. Staff support, and encourage families' efforts to negotiate health, mental health, assessment, and educational services for their children.

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

It is the policy of the Norwalk Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact Alison Cornwell, 380 Wright Road, Norwalk, IA 50211, (515) 981-0676, acornwell@norwalk.k12.ia.us.

Home Visits (IQPPS 7.1-7.2)

Home visits are scheduled the week prior to the start of preschool in accordance with the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Grant funding guidelines. This is an opportunity for the preschool teacher to get to know you, your child, and your family and for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school to best meet your child's needs. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the teacher understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you would like addressed. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator.

Family-Teacher Conferences (IQPPS 1.1; 7.5-7.7)

The preschool program will have formal family teacher conferences at the same time as the elementary school – fall and spring. The teacher sends home a sheet before the conference asking you to consider what new skills you see your child developing at home or in the community. You will be asked to think about what you would like more information regarding the classroom, and whether you have new or different goals for your child. During the conference, the teacher will share the results of classroom assessments and samples of your child's work. Together, we can make a plan to continue to encourage your child's growth and development.

Family Night (IQPPS 1.1)

Family night is an opportunity for you and your family to come to school to participate in fun as well as educational activities. Based on results from a family survey, the teaching staff selects a topic for the evening. With help from family volunteers, the night is planned to meet the needs of the children and families in the classroom.

Transitions (IQPPS 8.1)

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 collaborate with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff provides information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

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

HEALTH AND SAFETY IQPPS 10.6

Access to Building

Safety and security of students is one of Norwalk's first priorities. Security experts have recommended limiting access to students during school hours as an important strategy in protecting students. For that reason, Norwalk locks all exterior doors during school hours and admit visitors into the building through a single secure point of access.

In an effort to both partner with parents in the safety of their children and minimize the inconvenience caused by this system, parents are asked to notify their school ahead of time of visits or appointments in which they will be at school. This will expedite identification and helps us to be ready to buzz you in when you arrive. This notification could be in the form of a phone call to the building or a note sent with your student.

Upon entry, you will need to:

- Check in through the front office
- Provide a driver's license for scanning in our Raptor system
- Receive a printed badge prior to proceeding.

This process is generally very quick and efficient, and helps us ensure we are not providing inappropriate access to your students.

Health and Immunization Certificates (IQPPS 10.8) ([BP 607.2](#))

Before the child begins the preschool 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 religious exemptions.

Health and Safety Records (IQPPS 10.8)

Health and safety information collected from families are maintained on file for each child in the office. Files are kept current by updating as needed. 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.

Child Health and Safety Records include the following:

- Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency;
- 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;
- Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up-to-date by a specified method during the year;
- Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
- 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);
- Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergies, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support; and
- 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 implements 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 (IQPPS 5.1-5.8; 10.10-10.14)

- All staff 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 is to 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; and,
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric CPR training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children.

Vision and Hearing Screening

Heartland AEA 11 will conduct hearing screenings in grades PK-5th. Students who do not pass this screening may receive individual hearing tests by the Heartland AEA 11 audiologist. Vision screening is completed annually through

the Lions Club. Parents are notified about the results of the test only if there is a concern. If you do not want your child to participate in the screenings, please notify the office.

Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children (IQPPS 5.1-5.8; 5.18-5.19)

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If your 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°F
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- pink eyes with drainage
- cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge

Oviatt Elementary School's established policy for an ill child's return:

- Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications (e.g., ibuprofen or acetaminophen);
- 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; and,

If a child has visited a doctor due to illness, a doctor's excuse, explaining illness, needs given to the school nurse.

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 we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person, and your child's pediatrician. In the meantime, the school 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 (IQPPS 5.3)

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.

Student Absences

When your child is absent, please contact the school's office at 981-1005 within fifteen minutes of the actual start of the school session. If the office does not receive a phone call from the parents/guardians, the office will try to contact you or your emergency numbers.

If your child is not present at 8:05 or 11:50, depending on the session attended, your child is counted tardy. If not present by 8:20 or 12:05, your child is counted absent.

Current research indicates that effective schools demonstrate high levels of student attendance. This is accomplished through careful and consistent monitoring of student attendance and communicating the importance of school attendance to students and parents on a regular basis.

Medication Policies and Procedures (IQPPS 5.8)

Policy: The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Procedure: The school nurse coordinates and/or 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 every two years 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 time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at the school.

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 to over-the-counter medications.

Medications are kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage. 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 are noted on this log.

Cleaning and Sanitization (IQPPS 5.6-5.7; 10.5)

The facility is maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area is made inaccessible to children and the area is cleaned immediately.

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 first cleaned with soap and water then disinfected using a non-toxic solution of one-tablespoon household bleach to one quart of tap water made fresh daily. 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 not be used.

Staff is 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.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency table of the IQPPS manual. A checklist is 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. Non-toxic substances will be used whenever possible.

Hand Washing Practices (IQPPS 2.27-2.28; 3.8; 5.6-5.7; 10.5)

Frequent hand washing is key to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Staff teaches 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; and
- Staff assists 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 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;
- playing in sand, on play sets, and outdoors; and,
- when moving from one group to another.

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

- Checking to be sure a clean, disposable paper (or single-use cloth) towel is available;
- Turning on warm water, between 60°F and 120°F, to a comfortable temperature;
- Moistening hands with water and apply soap (not antibacterial) to hands;
- Rubbing hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears, hands are out of the water stream, and continue for at least twenty seconds (sing Happy Birthday silently twice) (2). Rub area between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, jewelry, and back of hands. Nails should be kept short; acrylic nails should not worn (3);

- Rinsing hands under running water, between 60°F and 120°, until they are free of soap and dirt. Leave the water running while drying hands;
- Drying hands with the clean, disposable paper or single use cloth towel;
- Turning taps off with a disposable paper; if taps do not shut off automatically
- Throwing the disposable paper towel into a lined trash container;
- Using hand lotion to prevent chapping of hands, if desired.

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 does not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal material.

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

First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is located in the preschool classroom next to the door. 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 are inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. The First Aid kit is inspected monthly. The first aid kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

Fire Safety (IQPPS 9.9-9.15)

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. Staff can demonstrate the ability to locate and operate the fire extinguisher within the 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. The classroom teacher or his/her designees use a daily class roster(s) in checking the evacuation and returning to a safe space for ongoing care of all children and staff members in attendance during an evacuation drill.

Inclement Weather

Oviatt Preschool will be closed when Norwalk Community School District is closed. In the event of a late start, there will be no morning preschool. If there is an early dismissal, there will be no afternoon preschool. Please refer to the district website www.norwalkschools.org for up-to-date communication with regard to preschool closings.

Emergency Procedures (IQPPS 9.9-9.15; 10.10)

When an immediate emergency medical response is required, the following emergency procedures will be utilized:

1. First aid should be employed and an emergency medical response team should be called such as 9-1-1 and/or the poison center if a poison emergency (1-800-222-1222);
2. Emergency medical will transport to a local emergency medical facility;
3. The parent/guardian or parent/guardian's emergency contact person should be called as soon as practical;
4. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and will stay with the child until the parent/guardian or emergency contact person arrives.

Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents (IQPPS 9.9-9.15; 10.10)

The Norwalk Community School District has building safety plans in place that describe the following situations and procedures to follow. The building safety plan is 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 his/her 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 is documented on an "Injury and Illness" form and a copy is 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. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member is 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.

Emergency phone numbers are updated at least twice a year. We encourage families to keep contact information updated in Infinite Campus.

Protection From Hazards and Environmental Health (IQPPS 9.9-9.15; 10.10)

Program staff protects 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.

The preschool classroom building has been tested for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, and other hazards that could affect children's health with documentation on file. Custodial staff maintains the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children. Procedures written to protect children and staff from environmental hazards are located in the main custodian's office. The Buildings and Grounds Department of the district maintains proof of certification that facility systems are maintained in compliance with national standards for facility use by children.

The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner, which prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children. The program uses the techniques known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

Smoke Free Facility (IQPPS 10.10)

In compliance with the Iowa Smoke free Air Act of 2008, the Norwalk Community School buildings, and grounds are smoke free. A "No Smoking" sign meeting the law's requirements is posted at the entrance to Oviatt Elementary to inform people that they are entering a non-smoking place. No smoking or vaping is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children.

Child Protection Policies (IQPPS 10.5-10.7)

The health and well-being of every child in our care 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 has direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children. All school personnel must complete a Background Check document that is submitted for evaluation to help ensure the applicant is cleared of 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 school board 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 three years and within six months of employment.

The school district does not tolerate employees physically, 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 independent investigator to look into the allegations.

Substance Abuse (IQPPS 10.10)

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of any building in the Norwalk Community School District. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Volunteers

Parents, friends, grandparents, and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. For safety's sake, if a volunteer will be working with children, he/she is required to complete a volunteer screening application through our district website. Volunteers are subject to a criminal background check and the district reserves the right to restrict volunteers as a result of that check.

Please contact the teacher, elementary principal, office secretary, or access the online volunteer materials if you would like to be a school volunteer.

Water Bottles

Students are allowed to bring water bottles to the classroom during the day. Water is available in the building to fill bottles as necessary. Water bottles should be labeled and not shared. Using water bottles inappropriately may result in privileges being taken away.

STAFF (IQPPS 6.1-6.6; 10.11-10.15)**General Information**

The Norwalk 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, and in some instances, based on IQPPS guidelines, a college degree, personal references and a current health assessment.

Orientation (IQPPS 6.1)

Employees must know their role and duties. New preschool teaching staff is 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;
- 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.

Staffing Patterns and Schedule (IQPPS 10.4; 10.13)

The preschool program complies 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. Staff is provided space and time away from children during the day. Should staff work directly with children for more than four hours, staff is 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 (IQPPS 6.4-6.5)

Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. All teaching staff continuously strengthens their leadership skills and relationships with others and works 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 in and outside the program.

Teaching staff are informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local empowerment areas, and the Area Education Agency. Staff is expected to attend all staff trainings and meetings throughout the year. Trainings focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community.

Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan (IQPPS 6.4-6.6)

All teaching staff are evaluated the first year of employment and then once every three years by the program administrator. All classified staff are at least annually by an appropriate supervisor. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflection 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.

ADDITIONAL DISTRICT-WIDE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- [Annual Notice of NonDiscrimination \(BP 102.E1\)](#)
- [Notice of Section 504 Student and Parental Rights \(BP 102.E3\)](#)
- [Grievance Procedure \(BP 102.R1\)](#)
- [Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harrassment Policy \(BP 104\)](#)
- [Weapons Policy \(BP 502.6\)](#)