THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Prekindergarten Head Start Program

FAMILY INFORMATION HANDBOOK
It’s a Great Day for Pre-K
FROM THE DESK
OF THE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Joy Ditjohn

Welcome to The School District of Philadelphia’s Head Start Program! We look forward to an exciting and rewarding year for all of our children and families. Families play a critical role in school readiness and preparing their children for a lifetime of academic success, our Head Start program is a valuable partner with families in this endeavor.

Head Start provides a comprehensive program in safe, nurturing and secure learning environments. Children are engaged in activities that help them grow mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically. As parents, you are the first and most important teachers and we really need you, working with us, to positively influence your child's learning and development.

This Family Information Handbook has been designed to provide Head Start families with information about our program’s services, policies, and procedures. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with our program and use this booklet as an easy reference throughout the year.
WELCOME
TO
THE PREKINDERGARTEN HEAD START FAMILY
Central Office: 440 North Broad Street, Suite 170, Philadelphia, PA 19130  Main Office Number: 215-400-4270  Website: www.philasd.org
Deputy Chief – Diane Castelbuono
Executive Director Prekindergarten Head Start – Joy Diljohn

School Name - Head Start Center: ____________________________________________

Location: ____________________________________________  Child’s Classroom Number: _______________________________

Center Hours
The centers are opened Monday thru Friday. The hours of service are: _______________________________________

Fridays are half-day sessions in the AM. Teachers plan their lessons and prepare materials for the following week in the PM.
All Prekindergarten Head Start centers follow the School District of Philadelphia calendar for holidays and other closings.

Principal’s Name: ________________________________  School Phone Number: _____________________________

Child’s Teacher’s Name: ____________________________________________  Room # ______________

Teacher Assistant’s Name: ____________________________________________

Education Field Administrator: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________

Instructional Specialist: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________

Social Worker: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________

Family Service Field Representative: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________

Nurse: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________

Special Needs Coordinator: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________

Nutrition Field Representative: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________

Parent Involvement Assistant: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________

Mental Health Consultant: ____________________________________________  E-Mail _____________________________
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PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

Administrative Staff

Executive Director
Senior Project Manager - Operations
Program Manager - Intake
Education Field Administrators
Health Services Coordinator
Disabilities Coordinator
Nutrition Coordinator
Parent Involvement Coordinator
Social Casework and Training Supervisor
Funding Resources

The Prekindergarten Head Start program is federally funded by a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families and the Pennsylvania State Office of Child Development and Learning.

Our program service capacity is approximately 6,599 children funded by federal grant, Pennsylvania Head Start State Supplemental grant and School District of Philadelphia Title I supplemental funds.

The School District of Philadelphia provides comprehensive services to children and families in school-based sites and subcontracts with 34 community childcare agencies to also provide services.

Mission Statement

Prekindergarten Head Start serves eligible children and families in the City of Philadelphia by providing a comprehensive range of essential mandated services. These services are strategically designed to encourage, involve, engage and support each child and family to achieve their maximum potential. Working as partners with families, Prekindergarten Head Start utilizes a team approach that integrates:

- Comprehensive developmental preschool education for eligible children including children with special needs
- Families focused health, nutrition and social services
- Opportunities for parent engagement and education
- Parent and community volunteers

In order to provide these interrelated services, a team approach with advocates for children and families in the program and community is used.

Parents are seen as the lifelong primary educators of their children, and by educating parents, families are empowered.
The vision is realized by providing comprehensive services in the following content areas

PROGRAM DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT
- Program Governance
- Management Systems

CHILD DEVELOPMENT - SCHOOL READINESS
Health and Nutrition
- Child Development
- Child Assessment and Outcomes
- Vision and Hearing Screenings
- Nutrition Service and Education
- Mental Wellness and Education
- Special Needs and Disabilities Services
- Health Education and Resources

PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- Family and Community Engagement
- Parent Involvement and Engagement ERSEA – Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance
Program Policies and Procedures
**Attendance Tiered Procedure**

**KEY**
- ASM – Attendance Support Meeting
- COPA – Child Outcome Planning Administration
- EFA – Education Field Administrator
- FSFR – Family Service Field Rep

**Tier Four**
- Intervention
- Family continues to be absent without cause (medical, transitional living situation, etc.)
- FSFR schedule ASM with Social Worker and content area rep as needed
- Families who do not attend the ASM will be placed back on the wait list and documented
- FSFR complete drop/transfer form
- Teacher receives notification about the family
- Weekly attendance monitored on COPA

**Tier Three**
- Strategies
- Family reaches 5-10 days absences (FSFR contact the family via phone and document)
- 5-10 letter issued by FSFR requesting a meeting to assist the family and provide community resources/ or connect family with needed content area (i.e. Nurse, Nutritionist) and document
- Family does not contact the FSFR to schedule meeting
- FSFR/Social Worker conduct home visit and document
- Weekly attendance data monitored on COPA

**Tier Two**
- Prevention
- (3) days absent Teachers contact families to inquire about absences
- FSFR check attendance folder/COPA daily
- 3-5 day send letter to the family/FSFR remind family about attendance and document
- Data Clerk/FSFR notify EFA of teachers who do not take daily attendance. Weekly attendance data monitored

**Tier One**
- Promotion
- Families receive attendance policy and procedures
- Teachers take attendance within 1 hour of the center opening
- Teachers contact families who have not reported to school/ and record in COPA
- Teachers submit attendance in COPA by 10:00 am
- Data Clerk makes contact with teachers who have not submitted attendance. Attendance percentage are monitored weekly.
- EFA communicate with centers that fall below 85%
- FSFR post attendance percentage at site
- Celebrations for classes doing well
- Celebrations for parents bringing children to school
Program Policies and Procedures

Attendance:
Regular attendance is important for your child’s development in preschool and for kindergarten readiness.

According to Head Start Program Performance Standards 1302.16(3), “If a child ceases to attend, the program must make appropriate efforts to reengage the family to resume attendance. If the child’s attendance does not resume, then the program must consider that slot vacant. This action is not considered exclusion.”

Absences:
- Notify your child’s teacher within one hour of school starting if your child will be absent
- Teacher will call within 1 hour of arrival time if child is not in school and family has not called to report absence
- A doctor’s note is required upon return to class if child is absent 3 or more days
- 5-10 Absences: Social Service Team will meet with parent/guardian to discuss absences and develop strategies to support the family’s well-being. (See attendance tiers procedures)

Lateness
- Children must arrive on time and be picked up on time daily based on the center’s hours of operation
- Repeated late arrivals, or pick up may cause your child to be placed on a waiting list
- If you are late picking up your child, the child will stay with a staff or in the principal’s office
- If no one can be reached regarding your child’s pick up, the child may be considered abandoned and Child Protective Services (DHS) may be contacted

Escorts – Arrival and Dismissal
- The parent/guardian or a chosen adult (18 years of age or older), MUST escort children safely to and from the Head Start center. For your child’s safety and protection, be sure to adhere to the following:
  All escorts (parents/others) must have a valid photo ID (i.e. driver’s license, employer ID, school ID, State ID, etc.) A copy will be taken and kept on file.
  - Children must be signed in and out from the pickup/drop off area
  - Escorts must sign full name on the sign-in/out sheet each day upon arrival and note a daily contact number
  - Escorts must sign full name when picking up the child and record the time
  - Children are only released to persons whose names are on center records as an escort

- If an emergency requires pickup by someone not on the list, a call must be made by the parent/guardian to the teacher giving permission for a one-time pick up. Teacher will call back to confirm. Escort must have a valid ID
- Children will not be released to anyone who is unfamiliar to them

Emergency Contacts
It may be necessary to contact a parent/guardian during the day. Therefore, you must keep your emergency contact information up to date with current addresses, telephone numbers, and names of two emergency contact persons. The emergency contacts must be willing and available to pick up your child in the event that you cannot be contacted.
Please inform the persons that you have provided their names/numbers to the staff.
Custody/Restraining Order
Any custody or restraining orders must be submitted with the application or when the order is granted by the court. The documents will be kept in the child/family record at the school. Any changes to the document must be provided to staff to ensure the safety of your child.

Student Care Packet
- An extra set of clothing, including socks and underwear
- A small blanket
- A small sheet
- A drawstring closure bag to store clothing
- An extra plastic bag for soiled clothes as needed

Your child’s name must be on each article of clothing with a permanent marker. Take home the sheet and blanket each weekend for laundering.

Dress Code
The School District of Philadelphia has a dress code. In order to comply with this policy, check the school colors for uniform at https://www.philasd.org/family-resources/uniform-colors/

Clothing and Accessories
Your child should wear clothing that allow for easy and safe movement as well as full participation in active and messy play. Jewelry, hair beads and other fashion accessories are unsafe and must not be worn.
Footwear must not be slippery, will not twist or come off the feet while running and stay firmly on the feet while climbing, jumping, skipping and crawling. Footwear cannot limit active play, such as shoes with heels, flip-flops, loose boots, or dress shoes. Shoes and socks must be worn at all times.

Discipline - Behavior Management
The School District of Philadelphia and Prekindergarten Head Start Policies prohibit any form of corporal punishment by staff or parents while on school/center premises or during any activity or sponsored event.

Child Abuse and Neglect State Law
All School District staff have been trained on child abuse and neglect laws. They are required by law to report any and all suspected incidents.

The use of foul language, abusive statements and threats to any individual will result in action taken by administrative staff.

Active Supervision
Through Active Supervision, staff provide focused attention to prevent injuries and create a safe environment.

Closing Due to Inclement Weather
When weather conditions cause The School District of Philadelphia to close, the Prekindergarten Head Start centers are also closed. Information is posted on the District website, Facebook page and Twitter feed. For school closing announcements, listen to KYW news radio 1060 am or check the following websites:
https://www.fox29.com/closings
https://6abc.com/community/schoolclosings/
https://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/tag/school-closings/
https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/weather/school-closings/

Pedestrian Safety
Information is provided for all families on street transportation, car, street crossing and neighborhood safety during orientation. This is a federal regulation and requirement for all Head Start programs.

Siblings
Siblings can attend special presentations at the center but siblings cannot participate in classroom activities or go on field trips with the Head Start children.

Trips
Children are taken on trips throughout the school year. You must sign the following permission slips:
- Neighborhood Walk (at the beginning of the year)
- Class trip (must be signed as they are scheduled throughout the year)
Nutrition & Food Services Policies and Procedures
Program Policies and Procedures

Nutrition and Food Services

Mealtime is an integral part of the Head Start experience. The food program includes breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Menus are planned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines and are posted in the center. All mealtime participants must follow food safety and sanitation guidelines.

- Everyone must wash their hands before handling any food products
- All volunteers, parents/guardians must remove coats, hats, and gloves and wash their hands before helping with meals and snacks
- Children must be allowed to serve and feed themselves in a family-style setting
- Assistance must be provided for children with special needs or disabilities, as needed
- No food, including the afternoon snack, can be taken home. All food must be served and eaten in the center

**Breakfast (8:30 am to 9:15 am)**

- Breakfast consists of a grain (cereal or hot entrée), a fruit, and 1% milk
- Each child is offered breakfast as he/she arrives in the classroom. If a child ate breakfast at home, he/she can still have the opportunity to eat breakfast at the center
- No child is ever forced to eat. The full breakfast is made available to all children and they have the option to eat whatever portion of the meal they choose
- Breakfast is not available to staff, parents, or siblings

**Lunch (11:30 am to 12:45 pm)**

- Lunch consists of a meat or meat alternate entrée, vegetable, fruit, bread or other grain, and 1% milk
- Children are encouraged to eat lunch, but are never forced to eat anything
- Food is not used as a treat, reward, or punishment
- **No Peanuts or Tree Nuts!**: Peanuts, peanut butter, tree nuts, and any foods containing these ingredients are not served to children in the center. Please inform your child’s teacher, Health Services staff, and Nutrition Services staff of any food allergies
- Parents who volunteer in the classroom during the morning session are invited to sit and eat with the children when extra food is available. Please assist children as necessary and engage in mealtime conversation with all of the children at your table
- Staff and volunteers must not drink or eat other foods while sitting with the children during mealtime
- Parents/guardians must not bring any outside food or send snacks, candy, or treats to the classroom. An exception to this policy must be authorized by the Nutrition Coordinator and Health Services staff for documented medical or religious reasons

(Nutrition section revised August 2020)

- Lunch will be provided for all children and parents/guardians who attend field trips. Parents must not bring any outside foods for field trips. Breakfast will be served at the center before departing for the field trip and snack will be served when the children return to the center after the field trip

**Snack (2:15 pm to 2:45 pm)**

- Snack consists of two of the following components: 1% milk, meat or meat alternate (string cheese, yogurt, etc.), vegetable, fruit, bread or grain
- Children are served an afternoon snack on each full day at the center. The snack must be eaten at the center and may not be taken home

**Outside Foods & Celebrations**

- No one is allowed to serve home cooked foods to children while in the center. This is to safeguard children from any food allergies and to protect their health and safety
- We encourage celebrations to include non-food ideas like reading the child’s favorite book or wearing a birthday crown. If food is used for celebrations, it must be only healthy food, it must be served after the program snack, and must not be served in place of meals or snacks. Please ask your Teacher or Nutrition Field Rep for ideas of healthy foods for celebrations like a watermelon cake or fruit and cheese kabobs.
- Sweetened beverages (soda, fruit drinks, etc.) must never be served at the center or during celebrations
Health Services
Policies and Procedures
Health Services are provided to help every child get ready to learn. Concerns are identified early and addressed to support school readiness and make sure that health issues do not affect children’s learning.

Head Start Requirements:
- Immunization Requirements:
  PreK students must have the following shots...
  1  Influenza (Flu)
  3  Hepatitis B
  4  DTaP
  3  IPV (POLIO)
  1  MMR
  1  VARICELLA (CHICKEN POX)
- The Flu vaccine has been added to the list of required vaccines to protect children and reduce the spread of influenza. This vaccine is needed each year between August and December
- Waivers for students in temporary living situations and/or immigrants
- Physical Examinations: Due at enrollment & annually
- Dental Reports: Due at enrollment & annually

School Trips & Health:
- Your child WILL NOT be permitted to attend any school trips WITHOUT having a current Physical Examination or Child and Adult Care Food Program Medical Plan of Care Form
  ****THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO FAMILIES THAT ARE CONSIDERED IN TEMPORARY LIVING SITUATIONS****

Consent for Release of Information Form:
- Necessary for communication with primary physicians, dentists, and any medical specialists
- Obtained by nurses

Medications in School:
- Notify your child’s teacher if an as needed emergency medication may be required during Head Start hours.
- A completed MED-1 form must be signed by parent and doctor
- Medication must be in the pharmacy container with label, instructions, and your child’s name
- The teacher will alert the nurse assigned to follow-up with you regarding required paperwork

Dental Hygiene:
- Each child will receive a toothbrush, which is labeled and kept in a sanitized holder
- The toothbrush is replaced every three months
- Children will brush their teeth under the supervision of the center staff daily

Illness/Diseases:
- If a staff member notices that your child appears sick or has symptoms of a disease that may infect others, the nurse, teacher, or a member of the administrative team will call you
- A child may temporarily be excluded with a short-term injury, contagious illness, or other reasons that could affect the health and safety of other children and/or persons who may be exposed to them while in the center’s environment
  A NOTE FROM THE DOCTOR’S OFFICE OR HOSPITAL IS REQUIRED TO RETURN TO SCHOOL IF THE CHILD WAS EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL

FOLLOW-UP OF SEVERE ILLNESS OR INJURY:
Alert Your Child’s Teacher if...
- Your child is admitted in the hospital
- Your child was seen in the Emergency Room the day/evening/weekend prior to coming to school. YOU MUST BRING A NOTE FROM THE DOCTOR/HOSPITAL WHEN THE CHILD RETURNS TO SCHOOL

The nurse assigned to your center will follow-up with you and/or the teacher regarding health management of your child in school.

Keep Your Child Home for:
- a fever above 100° (including having one the night before)
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- Pinkeye, strep throat, chicken pox, measles, mumps

Concerns related to your child’s wellness?
- Discuss with your child’s teacher. The teacher will make a referral to the appropriate member of the Prekindergarten/ Head Start Support Team

Resources:
Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center
https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/physical-health/article/immunization-schedules
Caring for Our Children
https://nrckids.org/
Philadelphia Immunization Requirements for School Entry
School Readiness

Head Start’s approach to School Readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children’s learning and schools are ready for children.

Home Visits

Home visits occur two (2) times a year. The classroom staff, along with other support staff, are required to make home visits during the year. They are not intended to judge you or your family.

- Your child’s developmental progress or your family’s Head Start experience are discussed
- Visits can be at a community location if you choose
- A parent/teacher conference can be also be held at the center in place of a home visit

Transition Activities and Support

These activities focus on your child’s transition into our program and transition out to kindergarten or other early care and education settings. They help prepare you and your child for a preschool or school environment and provide information relevant to your child’s developmental progress.

Kindergarten Registration

Children who will be 5 years old on or before September 1st are eligible for kindergarten and must register at their neighborhood school. Registration begins in January and should be completed by May 31st for neighborhood schools. The Social Service team will host kindergarten transition workshops to provide families with information about registering.

To Register for Kindergarten:

- Identify your school
- Gather your documents
- Register at your school

Find Your Fit

To apply to a school other than your neighborhood school, you must apply the previous year during the School Selection Process window in October/November.

For detailed information regarding the Kindergarten Registration process and the required documents, visit https://www.philasd.org/studentplacement/services/kindergarten-registration/

If you apply to a charter school, you should still register for your neighborhood school until acceptance before releasing your neighborhood slot.
SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

Skills that children need to succeed in kindergarten:

1. Expresses feelings appropriate to the situation
2. Knows own preferences and abilities
3. Can suggest simple solutions to conflict
4. Can follow rules and routines

Social and Emotional Center

5. Recognizes 10 upper case and 10 lowercase letters
6. Recognizes name or other words in print
7. Makes beginning sounds in short words
8. Matches 6-10 letters with their sounds
9. Remembers details from stories
10. Uses cover and pictures to talk about a book
11. Writes own name, with most letters correct

Language Center

12. Plans and tells, draws, or writes a story
14. Responds appropriately to directions and questions
15. Talks with familiar adults and peers
16. Uses few grammatical errors in conversation

Math and Science Center

17. Counts to 20
18. Knows written numbers from 1 to 10
19. Understands simple addition and subtraction
20. Names squares, circles, triangles and rectangles
21. Describes the position or order of objects (first, next to)
22. Compare two objects (bigger, taller, heavier)

Approaches to Learning Center

23. Sorts, counts and compares quantities
24. Shows interest in new experiences
25. Acts out familiar scenarios, gives out and/or takes on roles
26. Persists in chosen activities, even when they get hard
27. Breaks tasks into steps and does them one at a time

Physical Development Center

28. Tries to solve problems in different ways, gets needed help
29. Manipulates small objects
30. Moves whole body with confidence

These 30 school readiness goals are based on the PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Kindergarten Entry Inventory.
Will Your Child be Ready for Kindergarten?

YOU can increase your child’s success in school

Being “ready” means more than counting and saying the alphabet.

Does your child know that the letters make sounds?

Does she know that words are made of those letter sounds?

He can count to 10, but does he understand “more than” and “less than”?

Talk with your child every chance you get. Kids learn by being part of the conversation!

Do these ten things every day!

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1. Show him you are learning, too. Tell him what you learned today.</th>
<th>6. On the bus or at the store, count a new thing every day. Look for numbers and talk about what they mean.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>2. Encourage her to try something new and help her succeed.</td>
<td>7. Listen for what she thinks, knows, or wants to know.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. At bedtime, read a story and discuss it. What was his favorite part? Why?</td>
<td>8. Limit screen time and encourage him to make up his own games.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Walking around, look at signs and point out letters on them and the sounds they make.</td>
<td>9. Tell her what you notice she is good at and offer challenges based on her strengths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Around the house, have her sort and arrange things like forks and spoons, coins or laundry.</td>
<td>10. Show your love, stay close, and say three positives for every negative.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emergency Procedures
School District of Philadelphia
Universal Emergency Procedures for
When Students are in School

A. Evacuation
(Used when conditions outside are safer than inside)
- Take the safest way out as posted
- Assist those needing assistance
- Do not stop for student/staff belongings
- Go to designated Assembly Area
- Check for injuries
- Wait for further instructions

B. Reverse Evacuation
(Used when conditions inside are safer than outside)
When announcement is made or alarm sounded:
- Move students and staff inside as quickly as possible
- Assist those needing assistance
- Report to classroom
- Check for injuries

C. Severe Weather Safe Area
(Used when severe weather emergencies)
When announcement is made or alarm sounded:
- Take the closest and safest route to shelter in designated areas
- Occupants of portable classrooms shall move to the main building to designated safe areas
- Assist those needing assistance
- Do not stop for student/staff belongings
- Close all doors
- Remain in safe area until the “all clear” is given
Wait for further instructions

D. Shelter in Place
(Used in extreme gas or chemical release)
- Students are cleared from the halls immediately and are to report to the nearest available classroom or designated location
- Assist those needing special assistance
- Close and lock all windows and doors and seal the gap between bottom of the door and the floor (external gas/chemical release)
- No one is allowed to leave the room
- Stay away from all doors and windows
- Wait for instructions
- Move students to interior walls and drop
- Shut off light, BE QUIET!!
- Wait for further instructions

E. Lockdown
(Used to protect building occupants from potential danger in building)
- Students are cleared from the halls immediately and are to report to the nearest available classroom or designated location
- Assist those needing special assistance
- Close and lock all windows and doors and do not leave for any reason
- Cover all room and door windows
- Move students to interior walls and drop
- Shut off light, BE QUIET!!
- Wait for further instructions

F. Drop, Cover and Hold
(Used for imminent danger to building or immediate surroundings)
When the command “DROP” is made:
- DROP – to the floor/ground
- COVER – your eyes by leaning your face against your arms
- HOLD – maintain present location/position
- Assist those needing assistance
- Move students to interior walls and drop to the floor
Parent, Family and Community Engagement

PNC Bank, United Way, PKHS Parent & Staff Community Service Day
PROGRAM INVOLVEMENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The philosophy of Head Start is based on the premise that parents are the primary educators of their children. Our program embraces this philosophy and has developed extensive, innovative parent education programs that foster parents/guardians/families as partners in the decision-making, shared governance and school readiness child outcomes activities.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards mandates programs provide every opportunity, for parents, guardians and family members of currently enrolled children, to participate in a variety of ways throughout the program as volunteers, observers and paid employees.

This federally funded program requires 25% match in non-federal share. Parent volunteer hours are an important requirement as part of the in-kind match.

The involvement and engagement of parents/families in the Head Start program is one of the most important aspects in the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework.

Family Engagement also focuses on a Family Partnership Agreement where the family gets to identify a goal to strengthen the family unit such as parent education, housing or employment. Working with the Social Services Team allows the family to achieve their goals.
WELCOME!

A “volunteer” is an individual that provides a free service and will be responsible for a child’s welfare or will have direct contact with student on a regular and repeated basis and/or have unsupervised contact with students.

Visitors – people who come into the school for meetings or special events and are supervised by school personnel – do not need to have clearances on file.

We value our volunteers and are excited for you to share special talents and time with our students! The School District of Philadelphia MUST ensure the safety of all children and staff while on-site in School District facility, therefore the volunteer policy is enforced.

Volunteer Training

Volunteers training will be provided to families and community volunteers.

Go to www.philasd.org/face/volunteer to complete volunteer orientation online or see schedule of in person sessions.

WHO NEEDS CLEARANCES?

In asking for clearances, the School District of Philadelphia is not trying to deter families from being involved in their child’s school, rather we are abiding by Pennsylvania State law and creating the safest environment possible for our students.

WHICH CLEARANCES DO VOLUNTEERS NEED?

Any adult who wants to volunteer in the School District of Philadelphia needs to have the following clearances on file:

1) Volunteer Code of Conduct – FREE! Available at www.philasd.org/face/volunteer
2) Child Abuse History Clearance – FREE! Available at https://compass.state.pa.us/CWIS/Public/Home
3) PA State Criminal Record Check – FREE! Available at https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp
4) Choose ONE of the following based on whether you have lived in PA for the past 10 years:

   If you HAVE lived in Pennsylvania for the past 10 years....
   Signed Volunteer Affirmation Sheet
   Available at www.philasd.org/face/volunteer

   OR

   If you HAVE NOT lived in Pennsylvania for the past 10 years....
   FB! Background Check with Fingerprinting - $21.35
   Available at https://uenroll.identogo.com/

5) Certificate of Volunteer Orientation Completion — Available at www.philasd.org/face/volunteer

Thank you for your service!

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Ways to Volunteer

We focus on parents/guardian because they are:
- The primary teachers and lifelong educators of their children
- Responsible for their children/family’s well-being
- Key partners in the decision-making processes of the program

Our program depends on parents/guardians as volunteers. Your help and assistance is needed in many ways throughout the program.

Listed below are several ideas for volunteers:

**Classroom**
- Field trip chaperone/escort
- Assist in the classroom under the guidance of the teacher
- Work with small groups of children on special activities/projects
- Play educational and socialization games with the children
- Read stories to a small group or to the class
- Prepare materials for art and other class projects
- Demonstrate and teach a special craft or activity with the class
- Assist with mealtime activities (food service, hand washing, etc.)
- Assist with lesson planning
- Participate in home visits and parent/teacher conferences

**At-Home**
- Read to your child and engage in School Readiness literacy activities/initiatives
- Engage child in activities that reinforces the classroom curriculum
- Cut or prepare materials for the classroom
- Recruit other families for possible enrollment, etc.

**Leadership and Advocacy**
- Attend monthly center parent committee meetings
- Serve as elected parent committee officers
- Serve as center representative on Policy Council (city wide group)
- Participate in service area advisory group meetings
- Assist and participate in activities for parents (workshops/training events, career development and continuing education opportunities, etc.)
- Participate in authorized fundraiser activities that generate funds to enrich and enhance learning experiences for the children and families (e.g. field trips to museums, zoo, theater productions, etc.)
- Participate in advocacy activities at the local, state and federal levels of government for the well-being of children and families
Volunteers

HELPFUL TIPS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Remember as You Volunteer....

- Arrive and be prepared to engage in activities under the guidance of classroom staff;
- Every activity or task is important. The more support you give, the more you, your child and the other children will gain from the Head Start experience.
- Document your in-kind volunteer hours and complete the Volunteer Log Form each time you volunteer in any capacity that is related to the center or program activities.

Do

- Be familiar with classroom procedures
- Learn children’s names and use them
- Tell children your name and encourage them to use it
- Set a good example by speaking clearly
- Show good manners- remember to say words like “thank you” and “please”
- Praise the children for good manners, good behavior, curiosity and appropriate responses
- Listen to what children have to say
- Respect each other’s differences, keeping in mind that each person reflects different cultures and values
- Support the emotional needs of children by helping them feel safe and secure
- Raise children’s self-esteem with statements like....
  - “You did a good job putting all the books away”
  - “You have really learned a lot”
  - “You were a good listener when I read the story”
- Help children learn to talk about their problems, so they can learn positive ways to resolve conflicts
- Give feedback to the teacher about the children’s progress as related to an activity you worked on together
- Respect the children’s and parent’s confidentiality in order to avoid possible legal problems and/or lawsuits, sign the confidentiality form
- Expect the children to treat you as a teacher, act like one, ask the teacher for guidance

Don’t

- Eat or drink anything in front of the children that is not part of their menu
- Talk negative to anyone about children or other parents
- Talk about other people’s children to anyone other than the teacher when necessary
- Curse, scream, chew gum or smoke in the presence of children
- Frighten children by threatening them with spanking, bogeyman, etc. Children need to feel safe and secure with you
- Embarrass children or try to make them feel bad about themselves, with phrases like “you’re bad”, “scaredy cat”
- Hit a child or allow children to hit or hurt each other.
PARENTS’ CODE OF CONDUCT

Code of Conduct
All individuals who participate in Head Start activities are expected to set a good example for our children. Head Start regulations require every program to serve eligible children and their families in a safe environment, where everyone feels comfortable and protected. It is therefore, necessary to have approved systems and policies in place to ensure the well-being of each child, family and the program staff.

Please refrain from engaging in the following examples of negative behaviors:

- Interfering with staff’s management of the children;
- Children must not be spanked or subjected to corporal punishment;
- Refrain from use of foul language or obscene gestures;
- Use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on or around any Head Start center or facility; (this includes use prior to entering a facility that houses a Head Start program).

- **PLEASE** sign and return the code of conduct form to your child’s teacher.

**Note:**
The Head Start program reserves the right to restrict any parent/guardian or family member from entering a Head Start facility, if he/she behaves in a manner that is threatening, aggressive or disrespectful to any child, parent, program staff or school staff member.

Parents and Community Grievance Procedures
A community grievance is a written complaint submitted by a Head Start parent or a member of the community that alleged concerns or violations of a regulation or policy, by a representative or employee of the Prekindergarten Head Start program.

To File a Grievance
- All grievance/concerns must be submitted in writing to the
- Prekindergarten Head Start Policy Council within 5 working days of an alleged incident.
- The concern must be specific as to the nature of the incident, the regulation, policy/procedures affected.
- Complaints/concerns alleging a criminal activity that may impede the safety and well-being of the children and staff **MUST** be reported to law enforcement authorities for immediate action.
- Every effort should be made to resolve grievances at the center first.
F.F.A.M.I.L.Y GROUP Male Engagement
Fatherhood/Male Involvement Initiative
Parent and Family Engagement
Fatherhood/Male Involvement Initiative

Parent/Child Trip to Fox Chase Farm
Male Group at Temple University – Symphony for a Broken Orchestra
FFAMILY Park Safety Seminar- Fairmount Park

F.F.A.M.I.L.Y.
Fathers & Females Advocating Male Involvement in the Lives of Youth
“A Brotherhood and Sisterhood of males and females making a difference in the lives of youth”

The F.A.M.I.L.Y. Group was initiated and organized in 1992 as a subcommittee of the Prekindergarten Head Start Program Policy Council, in memory of the late Eric Bradwell, whose goal was to increase male participation in the program. He was tragically killed in a car accident in the winter of 1991. This initiative involves fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers and other community males who are concerned about the well-being of children and youth in the Greater Philadelphia community. The group added to its successes: when featured in the program governance training videos, “Linking Our Voices”, and “Building Blocks” series, on the phases of fatherhood involvement-engagement, both were commissioned by the National Office of Head Start. Other collaborative endeavors include the development of A Resource Book for Male Involvement in Head Start with Temple University, Presenting and speaking at local, state and national conferences.

The group conceptualized the importance of both male and female engagement in the lives of children and that “It Takes a Village to Raise a Child”, and in 2009, officially add the second “F” to move its vision forward as a holistic family approach. Group meetings are held monthly where sessions include skill building, asset building strategies and concepts, parenting education, leadership development and advocacy awareness/empowerment.

The group has engaged in the promotion of literacy enrichment throughout the program and has developed, and coordinated, several activities. These include:
- Read Across Early Childhood – reading to children in the prekindergarten classroom
- Coordinate an annual Save Our Sons Symposium
- Community service at Ronald McDonald House
- Parent-child educational trips and activities on weekends
- Writing and publishing two books
  - My Best Friends Only Speaks With His Hands” - written by male and female parents
  - “Pop-Pop’s Sleeping” – written by fathers/male volunteers
Employment Opportunities

Employment Opportunities for Head Start Families

The Prekindergarten Head Start Program provides many employment opportunities for parents/guardians of children currently enrolled or who participated in the program within the immediate five (5) years of enrollment. These positions may be professional or para-professional as to the qualifications requirement.

All full, part-time or per diem applicants for employment must submit evidence prior to hire of the following documentation:

- A Child Abuse Clearance
- PA Act 126 Child Abuse Training Certificate
- FBI Fingerprints
- Criminal Background Check
- Current TB Test Result
- Current Physical Examination
- High School Diploma or GED
- Highly Qualified Exam
- Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)*

Job Classifications

Para-Professional
- Teacher Assistant*
- Family Services Field Representative
- Parent Involvement Coordinator
- Parent Involvement Assistant
- Nutrition Field Representative
- Food Service Worker
- Maintenance Support
- Customer Service Liaison

Part-time Per Diem Positions
- Substitute Teacher Assistant
- Substitute Food Service Worker
  (MUST register with Kelly Educational Services at www.teachkidsnow.com)
- Special Needs Assistant
  (To apply, call 215-400-6216)

Applicants must be flexible and available to travel to other center locations as needed.
For information and application process, contact the Early Childhood Education Office - Head Start at 215-400-6216.
Notes
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
EDUCATION CENTER
440 NORTH BROAD STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19130

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
PREKINDERGARTEN HEAD START OFFICE
SUITE 170
PHONE: 215-400-4270

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