

# ANNANDALE ISD 876 COMMUNITY EDUCATION

KINDERGARTEN CONNECTION PRESCHOOL  
BRIGHT BEGINNINGS PRESCHOOL



A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS  
ANNANDALE COMMUNITY EDUCATION  
P.O. Box 190  
Annandale, MN 55302  
320-274-3058

## MEET THE TEACHING STAFF

The quality of the staff is the most important determinant of program quality. All teachers are licensed educators. The staff has years of experience in early childhood and love what they do. Staff development is on-going each school year with district and state training. Feel free to ask questions of the teachers or Director of Community Education at any time.

### Annandale Community Education Preschool Staff

#### Bright Beginnings:

Preschool Teacher	Heather Wirth
Educational Assistant	Lindsay Bronder

#### Kindergarten Connection:

Preschool Teacher	Angel LeMieux
Educational Assistant	Shelly Burns

Preschool Teacher	Michelle Rassier
Educational Assistant	Barb Groth

Preschool Teacher	Ashley Cook
Educational Assistant	Nicole Neutz

#### Early Childhood Special Education Team:

EC Special Ed. Teacher	Kathryn Anglin
EC Special Ed. Teacher	Gabbie Becker
EC Sped Paraprofessionals	Carrie Lundberg
	Vikki Johannes
Speech-Language Pathologist	Kari Dircks
Occupational Therapist	Laura Scheer



## Welcome to the Annandale Community Preschool - 2020-2021 school year

A Community Education and Services Program of the Annandale Public Schools

We are very glad that you have enrolled your child in our School Readiness preschool program. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with this handbook. It contains information that will be useful to you throughout the school year. We are very proud that our preschool programs have received 4-star ratings, the highest rating possible in the state's Parent Aware Quality Rating System. We use state approved curriculum and assessments and are committed to providing the latest training for our teachers as well as providing daily routines and play spaces that help children learn. Be sure to check your child's bag for the latest information including newsletters and activities.

Due to the uncertainty that COVID19 has brought, there will be some changes to this handbook. This information can be found under the 2020-21 Preschool Learning Model at the end of this handbook. We want to reassure you that we will prioritize relationships, staff and student safety, and the social emotional well being of our youngest learners.

Again, we want to express our joy in having your child in our preschool and look forward to a year full of discovery, imagination, school readiness skills, and above all, new friends, smiles and laughter.

Sincerely,

Your Preschool Teachers

### OUR MISSION

The mission of the Annandale Community Preschool program is to provide a safe environment where young children of all abilities can grow and experience success, and their parents can be partners in learning.

We believe:

- Children learn through active, hands-on involvement with their environment
- Children's learning is a cooperative effort by home, school and community
- Children grow in self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-image through interactions with others
- Children develop a positive attitude towards school and life-long learning opportunities by being encouraged to try new ideas, make choices, and use materials creatively

- Parents bridge the worlds of home and school and are an integral part of the educational process

## PROGRAM GOALS

In the Annandale Community Preschool program we will intentionally help children to:

- Develop a sense of trust and security that promotes self-esteem and cooperative play with peers; develop physical and emotional well-being
- Use their creativity and curiosity about the world to develop confidence and competence in their own abilities, as well as an appreciation for all people's abilities
- Acquire concepts and information which will help them think, reason, solve problems and make decisions to meet their needs
- Expand their communication skills to further thinking and learning

## CALENDAR & HOURS

The preschool program operates from Sept. 8, 2020 through May 30, 2021 (please see calendar for last day) and generally follows the I.S.D. 876 school year. Please refer to your preschool calendar for these dates. The hours of preschool are as follows:

<u>Preschool Option</u>	<u>Mornings</u>	<u>Afternoons</u>
Bright Beginnings	8:00 - 10:30 am	12:20 - 2:50 pm
Kindergarten Connection	8:00 - 10:30 am	12:20 - 2:50 pm

The Cardinal Kids Club program (an extended day service) is available to families from 6:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. throughout the calendar year. To register for this program, please contact the coordinator, Christy Dougherty at (320) 274-3058 or email her at [cdougherty@isd876.org](mailto:cdougherty@isd876.org)

## PLAYGROUNDS

Preschool classes at the Annandale Elementary school will use the age appropriate playground located on the Community Education side of the elementary school. They may also utilize the outside grassy area on the side of the building.

## REQUIRED FORMS

We require the following forms for each child in order to attend preschool:

- Emergency Information
- Parent Permissions
- Immunization (or waiver)

## ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in the program is open to the public. Community Education & Services is committed to the policy that all persons have equal access to its programs and facilities. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis.

A waiting list is maintained for all classes that are full. When space is available, we notify parents in the order they were taken. A \$50 non-refundable registration fee is due when

enrolling. This reserves your child's place in the preschool program. All children must be toilet trained (no "Pull Ups"). Children who turn age three before September 1<sup>st</sup> may begin preschool.

## TUITION

Preschool is supported by tuition and state aid. It is very important that tuition be paid on time so financial obligations can be met. The tuition you have selected on your registration form is what you will be charged each month for the entire school year.

**\*Fees are due on the 1st of each month. If payment is not received each month a late fee of \$10.00 will be added to your account.** If fees are not paid or a payment plan has not been established within 2 weeks of payment due date then we reserve the right to remove your child from the program. If payment deadlines cannot be met, please contact the Community Education office immediately at 320- 274-3058. MasterCard, Discover and VISA are also accepted. If you need to cancel out of the preschool program, a 30-day written notice is required. If there is one month's tuition unpaid, a student will not be able to return to preschool the following month until it is paid in full.

## CURRICULUM

The preschool curriculum is play-based through exploration of units and themes. Concepts are taught through large and small groups as well as on an individual basis in Learning Centers. The materials and activities in the Learning Centers relate to the curriculum unit.

At the preschool age, children learn best by doing and by playing. Teachers encourage each child to use the materials according to his/her own level. The staff guide each child so that he/she may enjoy the learning experience and feel successful. Children are encouraged to explore and experiment with their own interests.

A balanced curriculum will include activities that promote cognitive, physical, sensory, social and emotional development. Lessons are planned to introduce children to basic learning concepts set forth by the Minnesota State Department of Education. The children will receive personalized learning as the teachers develop "themes" to engage and promote kindergarten readiness skills.

Through the use of themes, we will help children develop the skills, attitudes and behaviors that are essential to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. We design environments that enhance and expand children's understanding of the world as they make their own choices for individual activities, as well as learn to participate in group learning situations.

Activities that promote kindergarten readiness skills are introduced and practiced through study exploration during the preschool year. Children's emerging literacy skills are developed through group learning and parent-child reading programs.

The Annandale Preschool environment includes a variety of learning centers that include blocks, dramatic play, art, literature, small muscle activities such as cutting, matching, manipulatives, sequencing activities, science, sensory and scheduled large muscle activities. Social skills are fostered as children interact with their peers in a variety of

situations and practice solving their own problems. This helps them to develop better relationships, self-directed learning and a healthy self-esteem. The teachers will encourage each child to use materials in the centers, realizing that each child experiences success at his or her own developmental level.

Our program is committed to multi-cultural, gender-fair and ability-sensitive education. We strive to create a program that reflects the lives of our children, families, staff, local community and the world. We celebrate and respect human differences and recognize the impact culture makes on all of us.

## SAFETY

Parents dropping off and picking up children should park in the Annandale Elementary Parking Lot near the community education entrance. *Be sure to hold your child's hand* when crossing over any district parking lot to enter into the school building(must use crosswalk). Please cross at the cross walk looking before doing. Please do not allow your child to run ahead of you as the entrance and lot are a busy place! Also, discuss this safety procedure with your child so he/she will learn that it is important to hold your hand both coming to and going from preschool. I.S.D. 876 is a tobacco-free school district. This means smoking or chewing tobacco is not permitted anywhere on school district property. At this time no parents can enter the building unless needing assistance with billing. Must have a face covering.

## DEPARTURE TIME

When preschool class is over, your child will remain with the classroom teacher until you or an authorized person comes to pick him/her up. If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child, a written or verbal notice is required in advance. For the security of your child, identification will be requested from anyone other than a parent. When talking to other parents at departure time, it may be easy to become distracted, so be sure to keep an eye on your children. At this time no parents are allowed in the building. (Please do not allow your student to run around after departure time the hallways are busy with other students transitioning).

## LATE PICK-UP FROM PRESCHOOL

In order to preserve the preparation and break time for our staff, parents are required to pick up their child no later than 10 minutes after the end of the preschool class each day. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, there will be a late fee due to the early childhood office when you pick up your child. The late fee schedule is as follows:

Up to 10 minutes.....no charge  
10-15 minutes.....\$5  
15-20 minutes.....\$10  
25-30 minutes.....\$15

For every additional 5 minutes there will be an additional \$5.

*\*Please note tardiness may result in disenrollment. Please make a backup plan today to ensure your student is picked up on time.*

If an emergency occurs, and a parent cannot pick up their child, the parent should contact the Community Education office at 320.274.3058. Children can only be released to a non-parent when permission is given in **writing**. If custody/divorce arrangements are involved, please provide copies of legal documentation. Please have a backup plan ready in case of an emergency!

## Behavior Expectations:

Working with groups of children, we are often faced with the task of managing behaviors that may occur when children are together. Children are encouraged to verbally express their feelings in an acceptable way. The staff is trained to focus on positive behavior rather than negative behavior.

The basic expectations for students to remember are:

1. We respect others, ourselves and property
2. We behave in a safe and orderly way
3. We act as responsible citizens
4. We follow directions

Unacceptable behaviors: Any violation of the District Policies

1. Fighting verbally or physically
2. Weapons (real or pretend)
3. Destruction of property
4. Unsafe activities (such as, leaving the grounds without permission, outbursts which endanger others, spitting, or sanitary risks, social distancing concerns, etc.)
5. Behaviors that disrupt activities

Consequences for Unacceptable behavior:

1. Verbal reprimand
2. Loss of privileges
3. Meeting with staff, parents and children involved
4. Dismissal from Preschool

## SEPARATION

Entering a new environment requires a time of adjustment for children. When it is time to separate, your child may become anxious. Talk to one of the teachers about separation concerns and make a plan together. Some children may cry when left, especially the first few days, and we're prepared to support you and your child with this learning experience. Most children stop crying a few minutes after parents leave. If you would like a phone call after you leave, just let your teacher know. If your child is truly not doing well, the teacher will always call you.

**BUS TRANSPORTATION:** Students who are 4 years of age by Sept. 1 School bus transportation is available through M & M Bus Service for an additional charge. **All requests for school bus transportation must be made when registering your child in preschool through Community Education.** Families who contact the Bus Company will be referred to Community Education. If you choose busing, M & M Bus routes determine what session (morning or afternoon) your child can register for. Call the Community Education office if you have questions.

### **TO AND FROM KIDS CLUB (extended day)**

The Cardinal Kids Club staff will escort each child to the preschool classroom or sign-in area when it is time to start his or her class. The preschool staff will escort each child back to Cardinal Kids Club after class is dismissed.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION**

The special education buses will drop off at the rear entrance of the school. They will remain there until a staff person comes to greet the children and assist them off the bus. Children are then escorted to their classroom. When preschool dismisses, the special education staff will escort the children to the preschool door and then out to the buses for the ride home.

### **ABSENCES**

Please call or email your teacher if your child cannot attend a class session. You may also call the community education office.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM PRESCHOOL**

Enrollment is expected for the entire school year. Parents must notify the Director of Community Education in writing **30 days** in advance if they plan to withdraw their child. This allows us to notify others of an opportunity to enroll in the program. If you withdraw from the program without giving 30 days' notice, one month's tuition is still required from the time notice is given.

### **CHILD ILLNESS**

Please keep your child home if she/he has any of the following symptoms within the last 24 hours: fever, diarrhea, severe nasal congestion, vomiting, enlarged glands, earache, sore throat, harsh cough, any undiagnosed rash, the contagious stage of any communicable disease, head lice, undiagnosed eye infections.

Parents should notify the teacher if their child contracts a communicable disease and has exposed children at preschool. Staff will notify the parents of those children exposed.

Please notify us (within 24 hours if possible) if your child has a communicable disease (flu, chicken pox, head lice, mumps, whooping cough, strep throat etc.) and has exposed other children in the program. If this should occur, the information about the disease to which your child has been exposed will be sent home. Parents are responsible for keeping their emergency contact information up-to-date. Parents are requested to pick up their child within 30 minutes of notification of illness.



## ACCIDENTS

*Please keep your emergency information up to date!*

It is important to state that serious accidents very rarely occur, and services outlined below are merely a precautionary measure to provide maximum protection for the children and a procedure for parents and staff to follow.

If a child has an accident while at preschool, a staff person will attend to your child's needs and will have a written accident report for you when you pick up your child. If a serious accident occurs which might need medical attention, we will contact you immediately so you can take your child to a doctor or dentist, or use a back-up individual to do so.

In an emergency when immediate attention is needed, we will call 911 for assistance, and immediately contact you. At that point, the paramedic professionals will decide on a further course of action. You will be responsible for any medical expenses.

## ALLERGIES

Parents are required to connect with teachers about their student's allergies. If there are severe food allergies, a Food Allergy Action Plan signed by a doctor is required to be on file in the classroom and office along with an epi pen.

## MANDATED REPORTING

Preschool staff members are required by state law to report any observance or suspicion of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect of children to Child Protection Services or local police. This includes school district employees, parents, or other adults in contact with your child.

## STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All new school employees are required to submit to a Minnesota Criminal Background Check in order to screen staff members that work directly with your child at school. All staff will wear a name badge in the building as well. At this time there are NO Volunteers. Minnesota State law requires police departments to notify local residents when a convicted adult sexual offender moves into their jurisdiction. In the event that a school building receives such notification, this information will be relayed to the building users and kept on file in the school office. For further information contact the local police department.

## FIRE OR TORNADO DRILLS/ LOCK-DOWNS

Each classroom has the escape routes posted inside the doorway and teachers are familiar with emergency procedures. A crisis management plan is also on file and five practice drills are required during the school year at all three sites.

## EMERGENCY CLOSING

If Annandale Schools are closed due to severe weather, information will be broadcast on WCCO, KARE11, and KSTP.

There will be **NO** preschool if schools are **CLOSED**.

If schools are **2 hours late**, there will be no morning preschool, but afternoon classes will meet.

If school is **called off in the middle of the day**, afternoon preschool class will not be held.

## CONFERENCES

We value these opportunities to review together your child's developmental progress and to set continuing learning goals. At the conference, teachers will share with parents an assessment summary sheet, anecdotal records and samples of their child's work.

## COMMUNICATIONS

We welcome your ideas and thoughts on making the preschool experience a successful one for you and your child. If you have concerns or questions that you would like to discuss with your child's teacher; we encourage you to make an appointment before or after class time. The teachers and the Director of Community Education are always open to meet with you. Parents may leave a message on their teacher's voicemail anytime, 24 hours a day, and receive a return call as soon as possible. We will also be communicating via email so please make sure your email addresses are current! Please check in our office.

Also we use BLOOMZ as our communication app for our classroom.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

One of the unique features of the Annandale Community Preschool program is the many opportunities for parent involvement in their child's education. We believe that parents are children's first and most important teachers, and are our partners in preschool. As staff we welcome the opportunity for parents to be involved in preschool. We will provide at home activities for you to do with your student.

Here is a list of some areas in which parents can be involved.

- **Advisory Council** - Parents are encouraged to be a part of the Community Education Council. The council meets 4-5 times a year. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to advise the Community Education (CE) Board in the administration of the program, and provide information on such issues as outreach, program development, and evaluation, class scheduling and other issues that arise.
- **Conferences** - Assessment of each child's progress is made throughout the year. The instructor looks for growth, not necessarily mastery of specific skills. Your classroom teacher will give you more information regarding conferences.

## CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS

Please send a backpack or bag with your child each day that is big enough to hold a folder or large artwork. Each child has the use of a locker in which to store belongings while at

preschool. Mark your child's name on any items she/he brings from home. Children are only allowed to bring toys or games from home if there is a designated sharing day. Toy guns or other toys of violence are *never allowed*.

## CLOTHING

Your child should come to preschool in comfortable play clothes that could become stained with paint, grass, dirt, etc. Clothing that is easily managed by the children encourages self-help skills and independence. Many toilet accidents are prevented when children can unbutton and pull down pants without a struggle. If you wish, you can send an extra set of clothes and a plastic bag to keep in your child's backpack in case of potty accidents or other activities that might get your child's clothes wet. Please mark your child's name on his/her belongings.

## NUTRITION & SNACK

Nutritional snacks are served at preschool each day. (Children should eat breakfast or lunch before coming to preschool.) Parents are requested to help out by bringing snacks for their child's classroom during their assigned day or week. Please bring up to 20 for the class, snacks must follow healthy guidelines and be commercially made. Due to peanut allergies of many children, please refrain from sending peanut butter or peanut products unless otherwise told by your classroom teacher.

In studies, children may participate in snack preparation as a learning experience. Snack time provides an opportunity for your child to experience their senses, take turns, make choices, follow rules and help themselves. Hand-washing is an important part of snack preparation. Reminder if your child has special food needs because of allergies or other reasons please fill out an allergy action plan before starting preschool.

**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS** - Parents are not expected to bring something in for students on their child's birthday. If you wish to send something, it needs to be a store bought item. Thank you for your support!

## OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) offers classes for all parents and their children age's birth to kindergarten. This program focuses on enhancing parent-child relationships, while offering developmental information and parent education through discussion groups that build a network of support and friendship. ECFE also offers special family events and activities throughout the year. Check the Community Education catalog sent out three times a year to district residents or go on-line to our website for a listing of classes and events.

Early Childhood Developmental Screening is recommended for all children when they reach age three and is required for all preschool students within the first 90 days of enrollment. Its purpose is to affirm each child's development and identify any early needs for educational assistance. It is also a state requirement for kindergarten enrollment. This free screening involves a review of immunizations, vision, hearing growth

and development. Your child plays a series of games and activities with the screener. All results are then summarized with parents. To schedule an appointment call Screening Coordinator Ashley Cook at 320.274.3058 EXT. 4200. If your child is on the school census, you may receive a call from the screening assistant to schedule an appointment.

Special Education Services provides programs for children who meet criteria for intervention programming. You may discuss your child's needs with the preschool teachers or directly with the Special Education staff if you feel your child may benefit and qualify for these services. See listing and phone numbers in this handbook.

## 2020-21 Preschool Learning Model due to COVID19

### What is In Person - Preschool Learning Model?

**In Person - Preschool Defined:** Students engage in learning at Annandale Preschool, in a classroom with other students licensed teachers and an assistant teacher. This model is the "Traditional" school pre-COVID.

### What Modifications will be made to help keep my child safe?

Early Education was not included in the Back to School plan for the 2020-2021 school year through the Minnesota Department of Education so we have developed our plan off of CDC guidance for child cares along with some of the requirements by MDH for Back to School.

Here is a list of some of the modifications that will be made for students that attend Annandale Preschool:

- Screening for COVID symptoms by students and staff
- Face coverings will be required by **ONLY** staff working inside the Annandale Elementary School building and Community Education. According to the MDH children 5 years of age and under are not required to wear a face shield or face

covering in Early Education or Child Care settings. They will however be required to wear a face covering if they ride the bus to and from school.

- Students will go to their classroom as soon as they get off the bus escorted to class by a Paraprofessional.
- Only staff will be allowed in the building before, during and after school unless participating in the ECFE class or their child has a screening appointment. Parents can come into the community education office to do necessary business however drop off and pick up of children will be done outside the building. We highly encourage and recommend all registration is done online or via phone.
- Preschool students will have a majority of their own supplies and not have shared supplies. There will still be times they will share materials ex. paint brushes, legos, blocks, manipulatives. Hand washing with soap and water will be enforced before and after participation in activities. All shared items will be cleaned and sanitized.
- Students will still participate in large group activities including music and movement, dramatic play, centers, etc.
- Disinfecting of high touch surfaces will occur frequently throughout the school day.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom and throughout the building however handwashing with soap and water will be the method preferred in our Early Childhood programs and child care.
- Social distancing stickers will be placed throughout the building and planned routes will be used as students travel throughout the building.
- Back to School conferences will be the week of Sept. 8 - 11 an email will be sent out the week of August 24 by your classroom teacher for you to sign up for a 20 minute conference. This will be a great time for you to come into the building, meet your child's teacher, tour the classroom, bring your supplies, and make connections.

### **AM PRESCHOOL DROP OFF and pick up:**

Parent drop off will be from 7:45 AM - 7:55 AM on the East side of the building by the Cardinal Nest playground and the Community Education Entrance outside.

- If getting dropped off by an older sibling who attends AES. The older sibling must walk the early education student down to their teacher and check them in and then walk back on the sidewalk to the main entrance of AES.
- If no older siblings, that is okay. You can use the drop off line however, that child must be able to unbuckle and get out of the car on their own and exit to the sidewalk side while the parent stays in the car. If your child is not able to do that you can park in the parking lot, cross at the crosswalk and walk your child over hand in hand to your child's teacher.
- What happens if I am late? Please park in the parking lot and call into the office at 320.274.3058 and someone will meet you outside. However, please try to be ontime as our teachers and paras are teaching and we don't want to interrupt the other students' schedule.

- End of AM preschool Pick Up at 10:30 AM: Please park in the lot and cross in the crosswalk. Your child will be dismissed out the East side of the building by class at 10:30 AM.

### PM PRESCHOOL DROP OFF and Pick Up:

Parent drop off will be from 12:10 PM -12:15 PM on the East side of the building by the Cardinal Nest playground and the Community Education Entrance outside.

- Please park in the lot and cross hand over hand through the crosswalk to the east side of the community education entrance.
- The drop off line is CLOSED
- What happens if I am late? Please park in the parking lot and call into the office at 320.274.3058 and someone will meet you outside. However please try to be ontime as our teachers and paras are teaching and we don't want to interrupt the other students schedule.
- Parents picking up at the end of the day 2:50 PM can park in the lot and cross at the crosswalk to the East Side of the building to pick up their preschoolers at 2:50 PM. If older siblings are to be picked up they can walk on the sidewalk and meet you on the east side of the building at the end of the day as well and then cross hand and hand back to the lot together. The Drive up/Drop off line is closed at the end of the day for preschool families due to the time of dismissal. Reminder class is out at 2:50 PM, preschool kiddos need to be picked up at 2:50 PM teachers will be outside with your child in the same spot you dropped off for class.

### Transportation VIA BUS:

If you have registered to be transported via bus there a few changes that we would like you to note:

- Students coming in or going home via bus will be required to wear a face covering for the entire duration of being on the bus.
- Students getting on the bus in the AM or Mid-day must have a parent walk them to the bus stop or the bus and put them on the bus or give a wave to the driver to recognize them. If getting on at a daycare we understand that daycares cannot leave the home, just a wave from the front would be greatly appreciated.
- M and M will have all the transportation info by the end of next week August 17 so if you have questions please call them with any pick up/ drop off times you may have, contact info is 320.274.8313.
- When students arrive at school they will be escorted off the bus by an Early Childhood paraprofessional to their classroom. Students will also be placed on the bus hand to hand by the Early Childhood paraprofessional.
- Just a reminder that bus schedules must be consistent for the entire year - same day each week.

Questions in regards to preschool and transportation please call our office at 320.274.3058.

If you have added the transportation option to your students day the bussing invoice for payment will be sent out at the end of August for the first months bussing fees when all routes have been established & confirmed through M and M.

Two questions that might rise to the top for you as a parent:

**Question #1 - What cleaning measures will occur to help ensure safety of students and staff?**

Fortunately, our custodial staff has a strong history of keeping our school clean and pristine. They will also be adding rotations to clean and sanitize high touch surfaces. Staff will be given additional cleaning supplies to use in their classroom. Large group and small group classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized before a new group enters their classroom. Cleaning measures will be reviewed on a regular basis, and we will continue to make cleaning and sanitizing practices a top priority at AES.

**Question #2 If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID, what happens next?**

The Minnesota Department of Health gives guidance through a decision making process ([click here](#) to view document). We will consult with the health experts in our school district, county and state to make the best decision for our staff and students, using the guidance given by the state.