

RANDOLPH COUNTY COLLABORATIVE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

“FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS”

July 7, 2023

The following information is being provided with the hope that it addresses some of the more routine questions that most parents/guardians have when it comes to preparing to send their child to school, (*in many instances for the first time in the child's life*). Some information is in response to regulatory mandates, intended to create an environment of universality throughout the state/county school systems, while others are expectations regarding routine practice. With that in mind, please know that there may be variations between individual classrooms and/or schools for some of the categories that follow. To that end, it is always a good idea to confirm with your child's teacher regarding that particular location's routines and/or procedures.

Q: What is the correct Birth Certificate?

A: The “**Certified Birth Certificate**” recognized for enrollment in a West Virginia school is the document issued from the Bureau of Vital Statistics. This “document” can be obtained by sending an application to the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state where the child in question was born. [A good deal of confusion exists regarding the other forms of certificate recognizing an individual's birth, including what many hospitals provide new parents as a beautiful souvenir of the event depicting the child's basic information and an ink foot print from the new born. However, these are *not* to be confused with the official documentation issued by the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the child's birth state.]

Q: How many shots are needed for Preschool? Kindergarten?

A: Shots, or “Immunizations”, and the number of doses for each, include the following: **[Requirements are subject to change]*

1. **DPT/DTaP** = (4 Required) & (Booster 4-6 years of age);
2. **POLIO** = (3 Required) & (Booster 4-6 years of age)

AFTER 12 MONTHS OF AGE:

1. **MMR (MEASLES/MUMPS/RUBELLA)** = (2 Required) & (Booster 4-6 years of age);
2. **TB** = (Assessment);
3. **Hib** = (4 Required; 3 doses if Pedax® or Comax®);
4. **HepA**:(2 Required for Pre-K entry);
5. **HepB** =(3 Required);
6. **PCV** = (4 Required/completed by age 5)
7. **VARICELLA/CHICKEN POX** = (2 Required) (or) **Medical Exemption**

Q: What bus will my child ride? How long? Will my child have to change busses between home and school and/or school and home?

A: (1) Depending upon the site a child is assigned, transportation options vary. This is impacted by such things as parent preference to drop off and/or pick up their child at schools and/or whether or not busing is provided by the Board of Education.

In some instances, transportation is not available for Pre-K participants. This would occur if/when a parent preference for placement in a Pre-K site would be outside the participating child's attendance district based upon the address of the child's place of residence.

- (2) Bus ride lengths vary depending upon the option and distance between a child's home and school. School systems are required to make every effort to keep bus transport time from home to school or school to home as short as possible. It is however, difficult to indicate exact amounts of time needed for any individual child for the above reasons.
- (3) Depending on bus "runs", some children experience a need to change buses. When this occurs, *especially for our younger children*, bus drivers are very careful to deliver the child involved to the next driver so as not to risk the safety of the child.

Q: How do I pay for lunch for my child?

A: Randolph County is County-wide Community Eligibility Provision which means that all students are eligible for a free breakfast and lunch each day.

Q: What materials will my child need?

A: The Randolph County Board of Education recognizes that many parents feel the need to purchase certain school supplies for their child at the beginning of each school year. This continues to be the parents' prerogative, however, is *not* a requirement. To that end, some teachers prepare a list of the kinds of school supplies which they anticipate will be something that children will be using during their year together. Contacting the teacher with whom your child is assigned, (*usually available sometime during the month of August*), for the school year would be the best way to determine recommendations. The North Central West Virginia Community Action Association Head Start, a collaborative partner of the Randolph County Collaborative Preschool program does not *require* participating children to provide any materials as a condition of enrollment.

Q: What happens at "rest time"?

A: "Rest Time" is usually a time intended for children of younger age to be able to relax and re-energize. In many instances, children in our Preschools require this midday nap time as part of their normal routine, as they continue to do so at home. Which child is in need to rest, and how long, varies as our children mature, however, to respect the need of all of their classmates, every child is expected to at least remain quiet for the allotted time each day (approx. 1 hour per day). During this time it is routine that soft music is played in order to create a calming, relaxed atmosphere. In accordance with regulations, adult supervision of students also continues during this "quiet time" in order to respond to any unanticipated needs a child may have.

Q: Will my child learn to write his/her name?

A: Yes, part of the preschool program includes opportunities for children to learn such things.

Q: How can I help my child prepare for his/her school experience?

A: Probably, the most important thing a parent can do to prepare his/her child for their school experience would be to approach it in a very positive manner. Making preparations for going to school should include:

- **Providing a positive outlook about the importance of "getting to be in school", meeting new friends and learning many new things. (*Pressuring a child to "know" or "master" any specific skills before entering school is highly discouraged and may turn them against school before they actually arrive.*)**;

- **Providing opportunities for your child to interact with other children his/her age.** (*Socializing with age-appropriate peers can go a long way when it comes to getting ready for group activities. Believe it not, in some instances, school attendance can be the first time some children are around others their age.*);
- **Exposing your child to a variety of food types.** (*Children often experience anxiety when they are presented with foods they have not previously seen. This anxiety causes them not to eat, which can deplete their energy and compromise their learning potential.*);
- **Providing your child with opportunities away from his/her parent or guardian.** (*In some instances, children who have never been separated from their parent(s) have a great deal of difficulty when being expected to be in the classroom without them. This can also occur when being put on the school bus for the first time. While it doesn't usually take long for the child to adjust to the new surroundings, anything a parent can do to encourage independence would be a service to their child.*)

Q: What is the attendance policy for Preschool?

A: In accordance with Policy 2525 – WV Universal Pre-k, enrollment in an approved participating WV Pre-k program is voluntary; *however*, once a child is enrolled, attendance must follow W. Va. Code § 18-8-1, et. seq., -“Compulsory School Attendance”.

In addition, the Randolph County Collaborative Preschool program has an approved “Pre-k Attendance Policy” that should be a part of the information distributed and discussed with parents as part of the initial meeting with their child’s Preschool site FRC – Family Resource Coordinator. An alternate means for accessing this information would be to contact either the child’s Preschool teacher; LaDonna Rosencrance -Randolph County Board of Education (636-9150 Ext. 126); or Gene Purkey- North Central West Virginia Community Action Association Head Start (636-2188).

Q: How do I do the notes for when my child is “tardy” or absent?

A: Notes should be sent to school with your child. In most instances, classroom teachers set up a process for communication between school and home through use of some form of “parent information folder” or Agenda books, etc. Check with your child’s teacher regarding the particular method they recommend.

Q: When do I keep my child home if they aren’t feeling well?

A: Parents are usually the best judge as to when their child is not feeling well enough to attend school. With the amount of information presently being expected for children of all ages in any one school day, it is our hope that only during those times when a child is truly ill, and not just tired from a previous evening’s activities, that he/she would remain home rather than attending school. We encourage parents of any child not believed to be able to participate in the normal activities involved in a daily routine due to illness to make alternate arrangements for their child’s day. In addition, it would be a good idea to talk with your child’s teacher regarding any specific recommendations pertaining to guidelines for keeping your child at home. Please contact the school to notify them of the child’s absence.

Schools are required to maintain a record of attendance for all children enrolled. Whenever a child has been absent from school parents need to provide a written explanation of the reason for the absence. Written notes from home are then reviewed and categorized as either “excused” or “unexcused”. Please refer to the school’s student handbook, Randolph County Pre-K Handbook and/or the Randolph County Board of Education attendance policy for specific information pertaining to attendance laws for our state.

Contact can also be made with either the child’s classroom teacher, the school principal or Mrs. Rochelle Chenoweth Director of Technology and WVEIS for the Randolph County Board of Education, by calling 636-9150 ext.140

Q: Should my child ride the bus or should I bring him/her to school?

A: County Boards of Education are not currently required to provide transportation for children participating in a regular Preschool program. However, while there are some exceptions, whenever possible, the Randolph County Board of Education tries to offer transportation if the child lives in the attendance zone where busing is available.

In some instances, there are parents who prefer not to take advantage of this service. In this case, parents are asked to drop their child off at the school’s designated “student drop off” location.

Please note that from time to time, some school “student drop off” locations can become congested with increased traffic and a longer wait time. With this in mind, parents are asked to assist with limiting any possible confusion by having their child ready to disembark their vehicle when it is that child’s turn to do so. (Otherwise, those behind in the line are forced to wait while items are gathered up from the car, making everyone later than necessary.)

Q: Can I volunteer in my child’s class?

A: Parents are encouraged to be a part of their child’s educational experience. All volunteers must complete volunteer training in Randolph County before volunteering at the school. It is important to remember, however, that some instructional programming needs to occur with as little distraction as possible. With this in mind, parents are asked to contact the school whenever interested in joining their child, to make sure that the plans for the day will not be compromised if too many “visitors” are present. This is not to suggest that parent volunteers are not appreciated. In fact, many schools enjoy having the additional hands when preparing materials, etc. *[For safety purposes, when present in our schools, parents may assist as requested, however, they are asked not to intervene in the supervisory decisions of the classroom teacher.]*

Please contact your child’s school classroom teacher and/or the school office to learn when/how you might be able to visit and/or help out. *[Volunteers should pre-arrange/schedule visits. Some sites require that parents attend provided “Volunteer Training” prior to beginning their volunteer “services”.]*

Q: Can I come to visit my child’s class without calling ahead?

A: As mentioned in the previous answer, parents are asked to make contact with the classroom teacher whenever interested in visiting the classroom. This will help prevent too many distractions in any one classroom at any one time.

Q: Are there parties, (including “Birthday” parties)?

A: Parents will not be able to attend parties because of Covid19.

Most schools/classrooms have procedures to follow when it comes to offering opportunities for recognizing birthdays, etc. There are also certain regulations which delineate which foods, etc., are acceptable in accordance with “Child Health and Nutrition” guidelines. In order to learn what those limitations are, please contact your child’s teacher/school for specifics. In addition, we appreciate parents who are sensitive to situations where some children have been identified as having extreme allergies to certain foods such that their health and safety may be jeopardized if not protected from the identified allergens, (*i.e., peanut butter, peanut oils, peanut products, etc.*) To do otherwise could place said children at great risk.

Q: What kind of clothes does my child need to wear?

A: There is no exact description of what would be considered appropriate clothing other than most children find it easier and more comfortable to wear clothing that does not limit their mobility. To that end, children should be encouraged to wear whatever they prefer, keeping in mind the following suggestions:

- Limit outfits that have snapping fasteners. Elastic waist jeans and trousers are a bit easier when children need to use the rest room and are learning to do so independently.
- Your child’s class will frequently take advantage of the outdoors. Keeping this in mind will assist in purchasing clothing that can help them be comfortable when going outside on those days when the weather is cool/colder.
- Layered outfits help address the occasional shift in temperature that is sometimes characteristic of larger spaces such as a classroom or cafeteria. [*Although these places are climate controlled, there are situations when not everyone feels the same comfort level in a particular temperature.*]
- Tennis shoes are probably the most comfortable and practical for school wear. High heel shoes would not be a safe choice.
- Boots are appropriate for colder, snow-related weather.
- Please remember, also, that the time spent waiting for a bus, as well as walking to and from bus stops can be very cold when a child does not have a warm coat, gloves/mittens and a hat.
- Should it become a problem for you to provide any of the aforementioned clothing items, please contact your child’s teacher/school to discuss options for making these items available.

Q: Do I need to send in an extra set of clothes?

A: If possible, it is always a good idea to provide an extra set of clothes (*including socks and under garments*) for your child, as an occasional accident or spill can occur. Having the extra set of clothes available can ensure that any potential embarrassment your child might experience, if/when an accident were to take place, will be minimal.

Q: What can I do to help my child at home?

A: By all means, provide your child with as much positive encouragement as possible. This positive encouragement can be in many forms, including but not limited to:

- Reading to and *with* your child as often as possible! Take turns reading books and/or passages together. Also allow them to read to you; (*The more exposure to print the better. It's never too early to do this.*)
- Ensuring that a regular bed time is practiced to guarantee sufficient rest is obtained (*Children require far more sleep than many realize. A tired brain is less capable to receive and process new information than a rested one.*) [*Children ages 3-4 years may need as much as 10-12 hours of sleep per night.*];
- Providing a quiet, organized location for your child to review school work, complete homework, etc, (*The less distracting an environment is, the better the chances a child will be able to remain focused of the information being addressed*);
- Provide your child as many opportunities to talk about what he/she is learning in school (*The more we talk about, or explain, what we are learning the better we are able to remember it.*);
- Model good study and healthy eating habits for your child. Allow them to see you reading, completing work on time, meeting deadlines, and consuming nutritious foods, etc.; (*It is never too soon or too late to set a good example.*)

Q: What items are required for a completed Pre-K application?

A: All of the following are required for a completed application:

- Your child's "certified" birth certificate. (*As indicated in earlier, the "certificate of live birth", issued by the Bureau of Vital Statistics is the only "official" document accepted for enrollment purposes. In the event that a child does not have the "certified" birth certificate, applications to obtain one are available during the screening and/or enrollment process, as well as in the school office.*);
- Your child's up-to-date "immunization" record
- Health check form completed by physician (no more than 1 year old)
- Dental Exam
- Copies of custody papers if applicable.