



# Parent Handbook 2026-2027

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# Welcome:

Dear Palatine Park District Preschool Families,

Welcome to the Palatine Park District Preschool! We are so excited to have your family join our preschool community and are grateful that you have chosen us to be your partner in your child's early education.

We believe that children learn best through meaningful, play-based experiences. Our classrooms are designed to spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and foster a lifelong love of learning. Through hands-on activities, creative play, and engaging interactions, we will help guide your child as they build important academic, social, and developmental skills.

A strong emphasis of our program is helping children develop social-emotional skills. We will support your child in learning how to build friendships, communicate their feelings, solve problems, work cooperatively with others, and grow in confidence and independence. These skills provide the foundation for future success both in school and beyond.

We look forward to getting to know your family and creating a positive, nurturing environment where your child feels safe, valued, and excited to learn each day. Thank you for trusting us to be part of this important journey. We can't wait to make this a wonderful year together!

Best,  
Savannah Martin, Early Childhood Coordinator  
Palatine Park District Teachers

| Contact Information                             |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Birchwood Preschool                             | 847-496-6345                                                                          |
| Eagle Preschool                                 | 847-202-2845                                                                          |
| Maple Preschool                                 | 847-705-5115                                                                          |
| Parkside Preschool                              | 847-705-5113                                                                          |
| Savannah Martin,<br>Early Childhood Coordinator | 847-496-6239 <a href="mailto:smartin@palatineparks.org">smartin@palatineparks.org</a> |
| Registration & Billing Questions                | 847-991-1960 *Birchwood Recreation Center                                             |

## Palatine Park District Preschool 2026-2027 Calendar

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August    | <b>31-</b> Parent Orientation Night                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| September | <b>3-4-</b> Meet the Teacher<br><b>7-</b> Labor Day- No School<br><b>8-</b> First Day of School                                                                                                                                             |
| October   | <b>12-</b> Columbus Day- No School<br><b>13-</b> No School                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| November  | <b>23-27-</b> Thanksgiving Break- No School                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| December  | <b>21-31-</b> Winter Break- No School                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| January   | <b>1-</b> Winter Break- No School<br><b>4-</b> School Resumes<br><b>18-</b> Martin Luther King Jr. Day- No School<br><b>19-20-</b> No School<br><b>28-29-</b> Parent Teacher Conferences- No School<br>*Eagle will be in attendance on 1/29 |
| February  | <b>15-</b> Presidents Day- No School<br><b>16-</b> No School                                                                                                                                                                                |
| March     | <b>22-26-</b> Spring Break- No School                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| April     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| May       | <b>18-19-</b> Last Days of School                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

The Palatine Park District Preschool follows the District 15 Calendar. For days that the school district closes for weather or decides to have an e-learning day we also will close. If the district has a late start due to weather preschool will operate as normal. Weather related closes are listed on District 15's website ([ccsd15.net](http://ccsd15.net)) and the Park District website ([palatineparks.org](http://palatineparks.org)).

## Philosophy and Goals:

The Park District's goal is to provide a warm, accepting environment where learning is fun! Experienced teachers offer a variety of developmentally appropriate activities designed to help children learn and grow socially, emotional, physically, and intellectually. We recognize that children come to us with differing abilities, interest, and needs. We provide opportunities for each child to reach their potential. We encourage the children to be creative and curious.

Our preschool program focuses on the development of the whole child. Our play-based curriculum incorporates a variety of learning opportunities designed to develop problem solving skills, creativity, self-expression and academic skills. Children participate in a variety of activities everyday including art, music, creative movement, dramatic play, math, science, block play, group activities, and gross motor play.

Our qualified teachers work to meet each child where they are at developmentally and tailor their instruction accordingly. They accomplish this through a combination of child-initiated and teacher-directed learning to develop a child's physical, social, language, cognitive, and creative skills. Through encouragement understanding and respect, we provide a positive, safe, and nurturing atmosphere for learning.

We provide children with a curriculum that fosters growth and aims to help children:

- Develop independence and a positive self image
- Learn relationship building social skills with teachers and students
- Grow conflict resolution skills and responsibility
- Grow in self regulation skills and expressing their feelings
- Experience working together and sharing
- Build their fine and gross motor skills
- And so much more!

## Early Learning Standards:

The Palatine Park District Preschool utilizes the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) from the Illinois State Board of Education. The IELDS provide guidance to teachers and provides reasonable expectations for children's growth, development, and learning in their preschool years. The IELDS categories cover language arts, math, science, social studies, physical development and health, the arts, and social emotional development. For exact details on the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards please visit [www.isbe.net/Pages/Early-Learning-Standards.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Early-Learning-Standards.aspx)

## Family Communication:

Palatine Park District Preschool will be utilizing Class Dojo as their primary way for teachers and families to communicate with one another. Prior to the start of school you will receive an invite from Class Dojo, please follow the instructions to download the app and sign into your account. The Early Childhood Coordinator will be listed as a teacher in the classes, this is just so they can see the information as well.

## ePACT:

The Palatine Park District Preschool utilizes ePACT to collect child's paperwork and waivers. Your child's ePACT forms must be complete prior to the first day of school. Children cannot attend without having this completed.

Information pertaining to the admission, progress, health or discharge of an individual child shall be confidential and limited to park district staff that directly interact with them, unless the parent of the child granted written permission.

## Payments:

The first month's tuition was debited on June 1 or at registration. The remaining tuition is collected monthly and will be debited on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month from September through March. Those starting school after January 1 will pay tuition through April. Credit will not be given for days that your child does not attend due to illness or vacation. Credit will also not be given for school closure due to snow or bad weather.

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) is required for tuition payments. If your EFT is rejected you will incur a \$25 return check fee, make-up payment is required within one week, even if your child is absent during that period. Payments must be made for your child to attend. If you are having a hard time making your payments please reach out of the Early Childhood Coordinator.

## Withdrawals:

Preschool registration is for the full nine-month school year. Withdrawals up to two weeks before school begins will receive a full refund minus the registration fee. After that time, we require a two-week notice or two weeks payment in lieu of notice, should a child be withdrawn from the program. A Withdrawal/Refund application must be completed. If a child is not at school for more than a month with no notification from the family, they will be dropped from the program.

## Arrival and Dismissal:

Drop off and pick up will be held outside for each building. Teachers will give specifics for each building.

For pick up teachers will greet the parent or guardian and child outside and another teacher will bring them into the classroom.

For drop off teachers will bring the child to their parent or guardian. Please be prompt when picking up your child from school as it can be upsetting for the child to wait for you and may cause you to accrue additional fees.

***If anyone other than the parents are to pick up a child they must be on the approved pick up list in ePACT and be prepared to show the teachers an ID. Parents will be notified via Class Dojo if there are any changes to pick up and drop off.***

## Late Pick Up Fee:

If a child is not picked up by 5 minutes after class, late fees will apply. We will attempt to contact the parents first before moving onto emergency contacts. After 30 minutes if teachers are unable to reach a parent or guardian, we will contact local law enforcement. First late pick-up will receive a warning unless you are more than 30 minutes late, then you will be charged accordingly. Subsequent late pick-ups will incur a \$1 late fee for every minute past scheduled pick-up time. The preschool cell phone clock will be used as the official clock for timing purposes; we will allow a 3-minute grace period. If a late fee is being charged the teachers will have you sign a form and the card on your account will be automatically charged. Frequent late picks up could result in your child being dropped from the program.

## Separation:

For some parents and children, separation is much more difficult than for others. Our teachers are great at helping each child feel welcome and if need be show special attention to those having a harder time separating. Preparing your child ahead of time with what to expect and assuring them you are coming back can be beneficial. If needed your child can also have a transition/safety item, this could be a stuffy from home, a picture of their family, or anything that is small enough for them to hold onto and helps to bring them comfort as they separate and enter the classroom environment.

## Bathroom:

All children who attend preschool must be toilet trained (no diapers or pull ups, and no “potty seats”). Please have your child use the bathroom before they come to school. We ask that you send your child in clothing that is easy to maneuver as staff are restricted in assisting children with personal hygiene.

If your child has an accident and is wet, the staff will supervise the child in changing themselves. If your child has a bowel movement accident, a parent or other contact will be called to come change the child.

If a child is having frequent toileting accidents there will be a discussion as to if they are fully toilet trained and able to continue in the program.

## Snacks:

Children will bring their own snack to school each day. We request that the snack you bring be in accordance with the USDA food requirements. The USDA recommends that snacks contain two out of the four meal components: dairy, vegetable, fruit, grain. Please avoid sending candy, cookies, cupcakes, popcorn, snack cakes, and chips. Refer to the snack guidelines at the end of this handbook.

***Please inform your teacher in your child has any food allergies or restrictions. We are a nut sensitive facility, please do not pack any snacks containing any type of nut.***

***The young 3's class will not be having snack because the class is only 2 hours long.***

## Clothing:

Our preschool teachers plan many wonderful but potentially messy activities for the students. Smocks are available for art activities but children may still get paint on their clothes. Children should wear gym shoes or comfortable closed toed shoes.

Since we visit the playground every day (weather permitting), please make sure children have appropriate clothing and outerwear for the season. All personal items should be labeled with your child's first and last name.

## Supplies/Items from Home:

Each site will have a short list of supplies needed, these should be brought to the Meet the Teacher day. The teachers will inform you if anything needs to be replaced during the school year. **Children should bring a full size backpack to transport art projects and anything else from class, as well as a water bottle.** We do request that children not bring toys from home, except for security items while adjusting to school.

## Assessment Reports

Formal and informal assessments are completed throughout the school year to monitor your child's progress. Occasionally, preschool screening may be suggested through a nearby school district. The assessment reports are aligned with the curriculum's goals and objectives. Assessments help the teaching staff to identify children's interests and needs, while also allowing them to modify and adapt their teaching practices accordingly. Parents will receive assessment reports periodically throughout the school year and they will be discussed at the Parent-Teacher Conference.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held during class time at the end of January. Further information will be available closer to the day. Feel free to discuss your child's progress at anytime throughout the year with your child's teacher.

## Discipline Policy:

Positive statements and redirection of behavior are used to help children learn self-control, problem-solving, negotiation and assume responsibility for their actions. When more discipline is needed, removal from the group may also help a child regain control. Children will only be removed from the group for short periods of time, not exceeding one minute per age of child. Parents will be informed of problems involving their child if deemed necessary. If behavior persists, a meeting with the Early Childhood Coordinator, the teacher, and the parent will be held.

## Behavior Support Plan and Transition Policy:

In a situation of behavior concerns with a child, a behavior support plan will be created. This plan will include the child's current behavior, desired behaviors, strategies and interventions, support from home, and a communication plan. This support plan will be created with the support of parents and NWSRA as needed. The Palatine Park District reserves the right to suspend or exclude from the program any child whose behavior seriously disrupts the program or is a danger to themselves or others. No child will be removed without previous conversations between the Early Childhood Coordinator, Teacher, and Parent. If it becomes necessary to exclude a child, we will make every effort to assist the parents in locating an appropriate program to meet their child's needs.

## Northwest Special Recreation Association (NWSRA)

The Palatine Park District participates in a cooperative agreement with NWSRA. The NWSRA team of full-time therapeutic recreation professionals and trained part-time staff provide fun, quality, and year-round recreational opportunities to individuals with disabilities of all ages and ability levels.

Inclusion assistance is provided by NWSRA to those individuals who wish to participate in their home park district programs. When registering, the parents should inform the park district of any accommodation needed for their child to successfully participate in the program. The park district staff will then contact NWSRA for assistance with the accommodation.

If a teacher believes that a child requires assistance with activities because of behavior, physical challenges or other differing needs, the Early Childhood Coordinator may contact NWSRA to perform an observation. Permission from the parent will be secured prior to the observation. If NWSRA believes that additional staff would benefit your child, the NWSRA staff members and the Early Childhood Coordinator will meet with the parents to discuss next steps. The additional staff will work one-on-one with your child, while interacting with all children in the program.

## Emergencies and Injury:

In case of serious illness, accident, or injury of a child while attending the program, parents will be notified immediately. If all means of contacting the parent have been unsuccessful, the Palatine Park District Preschool staff will contact emergency services for transportation to the nearest hospital. **All teachers are trained in CPR and First Aid.**

If a child has a minor injury at preschool, the teachers will apply proper first aid. If the injury is beyond a minor scratch or bump, the parents will be called, otherwise parents will be notified at pick up. In minor illness or accidents, if parents cannot be contacted, the child will be kept in a safe and quiet area until the parents can be reached.

## Integrated Pest Management Program:

The Palatine Park District Preschools contracts with Anderson Pest Solutions for our Integrated Pest Management Program. The focus of the program is to identify and eliminate conditions inside and outside of the facilities that could cause pest problems. Non-chemical devices will be used to help monitor for and control pests. As a last resort, applications of the least toxic materials may be used to eliminate a pest problem in the safest manner possible. If pesticide application is needed, the families would be notified in advance. Children would not be present during the application and for at least two hours afterward.

## Health Policy:

A parent is an expert when it comes to knowing their child and we rely on your judgment when it comes to keeping everyone healthy. For the protection of all children, we ask that you keep your child home should they have any of the following symptoms:

- A fever (100.4 or higher)
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- A rash
- Discharge of the nose, ears, or eyes.

Please notify your child's teacher or the Early Childhood Coordinator if your child will not be attending class. If a child develops a contagious disease such as, COVID, Influenza, Strep through, Pink Eye or Chicken Pox, the Early Childhood Coordinator must be notified so other parents can be notified. Identity of the individual with the illness will be kept anonymous.

Children must be fever-free, without the aid of fever reducers for least 24 hours before returning to school. If a medication is required the child should be on it for at least 24 hours before returning to school. A doctors note may be required for your child to return.

## Medication:

Any child requiring any type of medication, including epi-pens and/or inhalers, must have a signed medication release form on file with the teacher. These forms are available upon request. Medication cannot be administered without this release form. If you child is taking medication and needs it during class time, please send the medication in its original container with the prescription label attached which includes child's name, dosage, and expiration date. Medication will be kept in a locked cabinet in your child's classroom.

## Vision & Hearing:

The Palatine Park District will be conducting vision and hearing screenings on site. You will be informed as to when the screening will take place.

## Birthdays:

If you would like to bring a treat for your child's birthday, please follow our health snack guidelines. Homemade baked goods cannot be served. Birthdays can also be acknowledged in other ways than treats such as, goodie bags without food for each child, bringing in a special book or activity. Your child's teacher can give you more ideas on how birthday's can be celebrated in their class.

## Donations and Fundraisers:

Preschool is always looking for materials to enhance our learning environment. Children need representation for play; the possibilities are endless! If you would like to donate any materials such as real-world items like old phones, laptops, etc., dress up clothes, toys, books, craft materials, and so on please reach out to the Early Childhood Coordinator.

The Palatine Park District Preschool also sponsors various fundraisers throughout the year. All funds raised are used to improve the preschool program. Your support is greatly appreciated!

## Family Events:

Join fellow classmates and their families for our fun family events! We will have at least one every year in November with the possibility for more throughout the school year.



## APPROVED SNACK LIST

Must send at least one item from two different components (Example: Carrots and Ranch)  
If sending in any bar type snacks please ensure they are nut free

### Grains

Bread  
Pretzels  
Pita Chips  
Nutrigrain Bar  
Graham Crackers  
Club Crackers  
Tortilla Chips  
Mini Bagel  
Animal Cracker

### Fruit

Berries  
Applesauce  
Apples  
Bananas  
Melon  
Oranges  
Peaches  
Pears  
Pineapple

### Veggie

Broccoli  
Carrots  
Cucumber  
Salsa  
Celery Sticks  
Bell Pepper

### Dairy

Yogurt  
Danimals  
Milk  
Cream Cheese  
String Cheese  
Cheese Slice  
Ranch