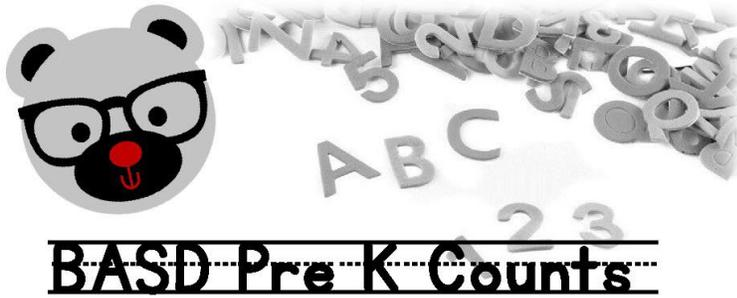


Pre-K Counts Family Handbook

YOUR PRE-K COUNTS INFORMATION



- Email: prekcountsreferrals@boycertownasd.org
- Call: 610-473-5430
- Program Locations:
 - Boyertown Area Senior High School
120 N Monroe St Boyertown, PA 19512
 - Washington Elementary School
1406 Route 100 Barto, PA 19504

Boyertown Area School District

- Safety and Well-Being
- Acceptance and Respect
- Communication and Collaboration
- Learning and Growth



Our Vision: To cultivate an exceptional, innovative learning community that enables all students to succeed in a changing world.

Our Mission: For all students to be future ready by meeting or exceeding established goals, the Boyertown Area School District will implement coordinated, articulated curricula and provide personalized, planned instruction aligned with Pennsylvania academic standards.

Our Goals:

- To ensure responsible and data-informed use of resources.
- To provide a positive, safe, and healthy learning environment.
- To offer research-based, personalized, and growth-oriented learning opportunities for all members of the BASD learning community.
- To foster open communication, active involvement, and purposeful collaboration among all members of the BASD learning community.

Home of the Bears

**BASD Pre-K Counts
Parent Handbook
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide Pre-K Counts parents with some basic information about the local Pre-K Counts Program. This handbook was not designed to be read all at one time but to be used as a resource guide when you have questions about the program. Also, always feel free to call your child's Pre-K Counts Classroom or the office.

Please remember Pre-K Counts policy was designed so that you and your child can have an enjoyable and safe experience. Therefore, everyone is expected to adhere to these policies. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program and/or program activities.





BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRE-K COUNTS

Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts was enacted into Law by Act 45 of 2007. The purpose is to provide high quality Pre-Kindergarten education for at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds in Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts Program: is based on the quality components adopted for pre-kindergarten by the State Board of Education; provides families in participating communities with a choice of quality pre-kindergarten options in a school, childcare center, Head Start, or nursery school; and increases access to quality pre-kindergarten to children and families throughout the commonwealth with a priority in at-risk communities.

BASD PHILOSOPHY

Our program believes in providing a high-quality preschool program for our four to five-year-old children. We have highly trained early childhood staff who provide safe and nurturing environments where the children's needs will be met, and learning will occur through many meaningful activities throughout the program day. Our curriculum uses developmentally appropriate activities that keep the children actively engaged in learning and help provide a foundation for future success in school and life. Parents are essential to their child's education, and we look forward to ongoing communication about their child's progress.

DAILY SCHEDULES

Daily schedules will vary with the classroom. Each teacher is responsible for making sure that each parent receives his child's classroom schedule. Each child will receive a snack and lunch as part of the Pre-K Counts program.

The daily schedule will include various large and small group activities, which will encourage growth and learning in social and emotional development, fine and gross motor development, language skills, self-help skills, and cognitive growth and understanding.

PRE-K COUNTS MISSION & PROGRAM GOALS

Our mission is to provide high-quality, comprehensive services to all enrolled Pre-K Counts children and their families. By partnering with parents, staff, and community members, we offer services designed to promote the healthiest, safest environment where children, families, and staff can thrive and reach their full potential.

- To prepare and teach preschool children the school readiness skills needed to be ready for school success.
 - Developing the whole child socially, emotionally, cognitively, physically, and creatively.
 - Aligning our curriculum with the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards for Pre-K.
 - Create learning strategies that work for the individual child.
 - Encourage children's curiosity about the world around them through the classroom environment and materials.

- Provide opportunities for children and families in our program that will help prepare them for future school and life success.
 - By being good role models
 - Helping parents become advocates for their children
 - Providing positive environments for children to learn and grow

- To build positive self-esteem in children and families by:
 - Treating children and families with respect by providing open and honest communication and respecting cultural diversity.
 - Encourage and provide families with opportunities to engage in their child's Pre- K Counts experience.
 - Facilitating access for families and children to community resources and information, to assist them with kindergarten readiness.

EDUCATIONAL COMPONENTS

In keeping with the philosophy of the Boyertown Area School District, **The Creative Curriculum** has been chosen for the Pre-K Counts Program.

CURRICULUM STATEMENT

Quality programs reflect children's developmental needs, interests and experiences. Providing a variety of learning experiences helps children learn and grow in numerous ways. Teachers who are aware of children's interests have a basis for building a relationship and motivating each child to learn.

The Creative Curriculum Framework:

- Allows teachers to implement developmentally appropriate practice with developmentally appropriate materials to provide learning experiences
- Emphasizes social and emotional development that helps children acquire skills essential for success in school and life
- Provides teachers with a framework for creating quality instruction
- Provides a vision for what our program should look like and a framework for making decisions about how to activate that vision

This curriculum is aligned and cross walked with Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards (infant – 2nd grade) and Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The framework for learning is developed with the Learning Standards. They provide the foundation of information for what children should know and be able to do. The Learning Standards build on information that children have previously learned, creating a continuum of learning that assures consistent and linked learning that begins in infancy and extends through high school. The Learning Standards are kept in each classroom, so that teachers can refer to them in their planning.

The fundamental beliefs that underlie The Creative Curriculum are:

- Building a trusting relationship with each child
- Providing responsive, individualized care
- Creating environments that support and encourage exploration
- Ensuring children's safety and health
- Developing partnerships with families
- Observing and documenting children's development in order to plan for each child and the group
- Recognizing the importance of social/emotional development
- Appreciating cultural, family and individual differences
- Taking advantage of every opportunity to build a foundation for lifelong learning
- Supporting dual language learners
- Including children with disabilities in all aspects of the program

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications will be accepted at the Ed. Center or during application days on dates to be determined in the spring. All applicants must submit a full enrollment packet **and** attend a meet and greet to apply. Applications may not be considered for eligibility if the child did not attend a meet and greet and/or the packet is not complete. For applicants looking to enroll after our application days, an appointment will be made to meet with the Pre-K Counts coordinator. During this appointment, we will meet the child and accept complete applications.

ACCEPTANCE INTO THE PROGRAM

Acceptance into the program is not guaranteed or based on a first-come/first-served basis. Acceptance will be based on income, additional risk factors, and our prioritization plan. All applications will be scored after the application deadline, and 54 spots will be awarded. If you are not accepted into the program but are eligible, you will be offered a spot on our waitlist and given other program recommendations. When a spot becomes available, the applicant with the highest score will be offered the next available spot.

The BASD Pre-K Counts program reserves the right to determine if we can meet the child's cognitive, emotional, and/or physical needs. As part of this process, if the complete enrollment process has been met and the child is deemed eligible, the district may look to complete a developmental screening on the child. If there is continued concern about the ability of the pre-k count's program to meet the student's needs, the PKC program may recommend a two-week trial period to evaluate further and determine the program's ability to meet the child's needs. If we feel outside support is necessary to be successful in the program, acceptance, and continuation in the program could be contingent upon those supports being consistently available and implemented.

When eligibility has been determined, and a student is accepted into the program, the family will receive a letter of acceptance from BASD Pre-K Counts. Once a start date is confirmed, Pre-K Counts may share your enrollment status with other OCDEL funded programs, such as the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) and/or Early Intervention, to ensure proper coordination of funding and services.

ENROLLMENT

ENROLLMENT PAPERWORK

A FULLY COMPLETED enrollment packet is required before a child can begin in the Pre-K Counts program. The packet must be submitted to and reviewed by the Pre-K Counts staff to ensure that all required paperwork is complete. An updated **Health Assessment form** must be completed by the child's pediatrician and submitted at the time of registration (or as noted by state laws). You are required to notify us IMMEDIATELY in writing if there is a change in your address, any of the emergency contact phone numbers, emergency contacts, or those who your child may be released to.

The following is required to have a complete enrollment packet:

- ✓ Pre-K Counts application checklist
- ✓ Completed application
- ✓ Copy of your child's birth certificate
- ✓ Copies of your most recent tax return/W2
- ✓ Immunizations/Physical Form
- ✓ Dental Form
- ✓ Completed Emergency Contact Form
- ✓ Publicity Form Consent
- ✓ Signature Page from Parent Handbook
- ✓ Custody/Court Order (if applicable)

REQUEST FOR IEP

The goal for children with disabilities is the same as for children without disabilities. It is to help the child access the curriculum and maximize their potential. Observation of the child will help to establish their needs. Obtaining an Individual Education Plan (IEP) to help answer basic questions about the nature of a child's disability and what must be done to help meet the child's learning goals will enable the teachers and parents to develop the best strategies to ensure the child's success in the classroom.

In the event that your child has an IEP/IFSP, we ask that you provide us with a copy. We will work with you to develop specific goals to be worked on while your child is in our care.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS

Observation is the key to assessing the goals set forth. All children will be observed during their first 45 days of enrollment. Preschoolers will be assessed using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. Within the first 45 days of enrollment, the students will be assessed using the Developmental Checklist. These screenings will help the teachers and parents to be able to effectively plan activities that will assist the children to strengthen their skills and challenge them to reach their full potential. If a developmental delay is found, a referral may be made for an outside service provider to complete an assessment.

ASSESSMENTS

All children will be assessed several times per year using observations and an age appropriate assessment tool. Preschoolers will be evaluated using the Teaching Strategies Gold checkpoints. Children will be evaluated through ongoing authentic assessments. Skills and milestones will be recorded and discussed with parents. The assessment will aid in individual planning. Individualized planning is then implemented based on children's achievements. Samples of children's work, photos of group and individual skills achieved, and observation notes will be maintained throughout the year and used during transitions into another class or program.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent conferences are offered at least two times per year, generally at the end of the first and second trimester after observations and assessments are completed. During these important conferences, parents and teachers review the child's progress and work together to develop goals and strategies for the child. Parent conferences are documented, and a copy of the conference notes is placed in the child's file for future reference. Parents are asked to make every effort to participate in conferences with the teachers. Working closely with your child's teacher will help to build a positive relationship that will enable everyone involved to successfully meet the needs of the child and keep a connection between home and school.

ATTENDANCE

We want your child to get the most out of his/her experience in the Pre-K Counts Program. Our goal is to enhance school readiness for young children. Research shows that your involvement is critical to your child's success. All Pre-K Counts children are expected to attend the Pre-K Counts program five hours and 45 minutes per day, five (5) days a week, for one hundred eighty (180) days during the school year. Every effort should be made to schedule appointments before or after school hours.

DAILY ATTENDANCE

Attendance will be taken daily upon a child's arrival to the program. As a courtesy, we ask that you contact the program by 8 am if your child will not be attending that day.

Your child is part of the PA Pre K Counts Program. Please be aware that regular, daily attendance is a **MANDATORY REQUIREMENT** in order to participate in these programs. You will be made aware of the minimum number of days that your child will need to attend in order to maintain participation in these programs. Since our sites are regulated by the state for these programs, we are required to report attendance on an ongoing basis. We will make every effort to alert you if your child is in danger of being disqualified because of lack of attendance. However, if your child's funding is revoked, we may be forced to fill your child's spot in the program with a child from the waiting list and we may not have room to accommodate him or her in our regular program. Please make every effort to have your child at school on time every day.

We ask you to commit to the following:

Regular, on time daily attendance is essential to school success. Each time your child is absent, you must:

- Email your child's teacher the morning of the absence or fill out the online absence form.
- Send a note to the teacher on your child's return. If your child is absent for 3 or more consecutive days due to illness, a doctor's note is required to return. Extended absences of 3 or more days due to family circumstances must be reviewed by the school 2 weeks before your absence. Not all requests will be honored.
- If a child is frequently absent and/or tardy (with 10 or more unexcused absences), he or she may be replaced with another child from our waitlist.

DROP OFF/LATE ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE/LATE DEPARTURES

It is important for children to maintain a regular schedule to fully benefit from their Pre-K Counts experience.

We value adherence to class times and daily routines. Drop off and pick up times will be shared prior to the start of the school year. It is expected that your child arrives and departs on time. We understand that emergencies do occur, however, unexcused lateness cannot continue.

If you are late arriving or picking up your child late the following steps will occur:

1. **First Notice:** Will be a notice of warning.
2. **Second Notice:** You will be required to meet with the Pre-K Counts teacher and coordinator in a timely manner to determine a solution to the problem of late drop-off and/or pick up and complete an improvement plan.
3. **Third Notice:** Your child will be suspended one day from the program. The suspension will count towards your child's unexcused absence. If your child continues to arrive/get picked up late, your child may be excluded from the program if a solution is not reached.

Appointments for your child that may require you to be late for daily drop off or picked up early must be verified with documentation from the physician or social services office you visited.

Late Pick-Up

If you are running late for any reason, please make every effort to call the program and provide an estimated time of arrival. The staff will attempt to contact the parent to alert them that the child is still at the school if no call has been received. If unable to reach a parent, the other people listed on the emergency contact list will be contacted. If the staff is unable to reach anyone and the child is still at the school an hour after close, the police will be contacted to pick up the child.

Consistent lateness in picking up your child may result in the child's dismissal from the program.

TRANSPORTATION

All children must be transported to the program by an adult and be placed under direct supervision of your child's teacher. Children must also be transported by an adult when leaving the building at the end of the day.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

School Health

Health service is an important part of our school system which supports school aged students so they can achieve their highest potential to learn and succeed. Parents and guardians have a critical role and responsibility to ensure a student's health for academic learning. During school hours, a certified school nurse or licensed staff nurse will provide health services by assisting students with first aid, administration of authorized medication(s), medical emergencies, notifying parents of illness or injury that may require further medical treatment or continued care at home, mandated health screenings, maintaining health records, and providing education on health related matters. These services are provided for illnesses and or injuries that occur during the school day. For any illness or injury that occur before and after school or at home, the parent/ guardian should contact their health care provider for further directives regarding treatment and care. Therefore, a student should not be sent to school to be evaluated by the school nurse.

Illness or Injury during school

Students who become ill or injured during the school day will be escorted by staff directly to the nurse's office. The nurse will evaluate the illness or injury and provide services according to BASD first aid procedures as written and reviewed by the BASD School Physician. A parent/guardian will be contacted regarding any illness or injury that may require outside medical attention or if the student must be sent home.

Below are guidelines for keeping your child home from school. We recommend that you consult with your child's primary health care provider for:

- A cough interfering with your child's sleep or ability to participate in school activities or is associated with shortness of breath(check with your health care provider immediately).
- Fever: A temperature equal to or greater than 100 degrees without the use of fever reducing medication. Your child must be fever free for 24 hours without medication prior to sending him/her back to school
- Vomiting, diarrhea or nausea
- Unusual skin eruptions, hives or rash.
- Redness or drainage from eyes.

EXCLUDABLE CONDITIONS: according to Pa code 27.71, students may be excluded from school for these specific diseases and infectious conditions until deemed non-infections by a physician/school nurse: Diphtheria, Measles, Mumps, Pertusis(whooping cough), Rubella, Chickenpox, Respiratory streptococcal infections, scarlet fever, infectious conjunctivitis (pink eye), ringworm, impetigo contagiosa, Pediculosis capitis/Pediculosis corpora (lice*), Scabies, Trachoma, Tuberculosis, and Meningitis.

***BASD Lice Procedure:** Prevention and control of head lice begins in the home; therefore, parents should routinely check their children for head lice and not allow them to share hats, clothing, brushes, combs, or sleeping bags with other children. Parents/guardians are to contact the school if their child is found to have head lice so the school nurse can discuss proper treatment to allow the student to return to school. Head lice procedures can be found at <https://www.boyertownasd.org/page/605> or by contacting the school nurse. If the school nurse detects head lice or nits (eggs) on a student, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. The student will be excluded from school and riding the bus until they have received proper treatment with an approved pediculicide and are deemed non-contagious by the school nurse. Parents must provide proof of the pediculicide used for the treatment (empty box or receipt). The school nurse will discuss the second treatment procedure with the parent/guardian. Students who do not return to school within three calendar days will be deemed unlawfully absent. Unless, at that time, the parent/guardian brings their child in on a daily basis to be checked by a nurse until deemed noncontagious.

PREVENTION AND ILLNESS

Please be assured that staff do everything possible to inhibit the spread of germs. Toys are cleaned regularly and as needed, and soiled clothes are sent home to be laundered at the end of each day.

Good hygiene practices are incorporated into our daily routine. Universal precautions are followed in all Pre-K Counts classrooms.

This information is based on fact sheets provided by the Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics, unless otherwise noted.

Cooperation between staff and parents result in healthy and happy children!

Immunizations

Federal, state and local guidelines require that children be properly immunized and have periodical physical examinations. Children in the Pre- K Counts program must have a current health assessment on file within 45 days of enrollment.

Children with diagnosed disabilities or medical conditions must have a health assessment on file prior to the start of Pre-K Counts.

Immunization records must be provided with a full health assessment and history. You will be given a health assessment form for your child's physician to complete.

If your health assessment is completed after enrollment, please give it to staff in your child's classroom. Failure to comply with a request for a copy of an updated physical could result in suspension and/or termination of services. The staff will notify you when a new health assessment is required.

Medication

The school district has established a medication policy to allow a student to take (or be given) medication at school, on field trips or at extra-curricular activities. For purpose of BASD policy 210 "medication" shall include all prescription, over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, alternative medicines, or any other substance used for medicinal purposes.

Medications are defined as:

- Any prescribed medication
- Inhalers
- EpiPens®
- All over-the-counter medications, vitamins and herbal supplements

Guidelines for Medication Administration:

- Complete a Medication Authorization form, which needs to be signed by the parent/guardian AND the prescribing physician.
- All medication must be hand-delivered by the parent/guardian or designated adult. Medication will not be accepted without the appropriate documentation.
- All medication, whether over-the-counter or prescription, must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name, drug name, dosage, and time to be given in school.
- It is the responsibility of the student to come to the nurse's office at the time designated for administration of the medication.
- The parent will accept responsibility to provide a physician's note and parent written instructions if the medication is to be changed or discontinued.
- Each time the parent/guardian/adult brings the prescribed medications to school, the number of tablets will be counted and documented by both parent/guardian/adult and school nurse.
- At the end of the school year, a parent/guardian or adult designee must pick up any unused medication. Any unclaimed medication remaining will be discarded on the last day of school.

PLEASE NOTE: Medication Authorization Forms are active for the current school year only. A new Medication Authorization Form must be completed yearly for ALL medication administered in school or on field trips. If the above procedures are not followed, the nurse will not be able to administer the medication at school. For any student participating in a school sponsored event outside the regular school hours, please make arrangements with a building nurse for medication administration.

Standing Order Medications

Guidelines for Students Using Inhalers and EpiPens®

In compliance with the PA Health Bill 1113 (2003), ALL students at the elementary and secondary level, may carry and use his/her prescribed inhaler or EpiPen® during the school day and after hours. For your child to carry and administer these medications, the following steps are also required:

- An asthma and/or allergy emergency care plan must be completed and returned to the nurse.
- The physician and parent must agree the student is able and responsible to carry and self-administer his/her inhaler/EpiPen® during school activities.
- The school nurse will assess the health status of the student, document the use of the medication, and arrange for further medical attention as needed.
- If a student uses his/her inhaler or EpiPen® during the school day, the student must notify the school nurse as soon as possible.
- Emergency Epi-pen is used to counteract anaphylaxis, a rapid, severe, life-threatening allergic reaction that can cause skin itching and hives, throat tightness, wheezing, and inability to breathe, and may result in death. Common allergens that can cause anaphylaxis include food, bee sting venom, medications and latex. A life-threatening reaction can occur within minutes or hours after exposure to an allergen. The treatment for anaphylaxis is prompt administration of epinephrine and transport by emergency medical services (EMS) to the nearest hospital emergency department.
- Under section 1414.2 of The Pennsylvania Public School Code, allows a parent to exempt their student from receiving the epinephrine auto injector in the case of anaphylaxis, please contact the Certified School Nurse to complete the Emergency Epinephrine Opt/Out form. This form must be completed at school and witnessed by a nurse or administrator.

HAND WASHING

All parents, children and staff are encouraged to wash hands upon arrival each day. This is an important step in helping to reduce the spread of germs and illness within the Pre-K counts program. Teach children the proper way to wash hands by having them sing their ABCs and washing inside, outside, and all around, ensuring that the backs of their hands and in between fingers are washed.

NUTRITION

In programs where meals are provided (Pre K Counts, etc.) parents shall not be providing meals from home without a medical or religious exemption. In these programs, breakfast or lunch will meet the nutritional guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture and are served free of charge to all enrolled children regardless of race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, limited English proficiency, age or sex.

SMOKING POLICY

The Boyertown Area School District is a smoke-free environment and will adhere to the following guidelines:

Smoking/vaping is prohibited at all times in all spaces utilized by the Pre-K Counts program. This includes classrooms, staff offices, kitchens, restrooms, parent and staff meeting rooms, hallways, outdoor play areas, and any vehicles used for transporting children.

This smoke-free policy shall apply to all on/off site activities and functions.

SUPERVISION

Supervision is one of the key requirements in the prevention of accidents, injuries and/or any harm occurring to a child within our Pre-K Counts programs.

Children in the Pre-K Counts programs shall be supervised at all times according to state mandated ratios for each particular age group. The phrase "supervised at all times" means that each staff person shall be assigned the responsibility of supervising specific children.

TRANSITION POLICY.

When children are transitioning and/or transferring to another educational facility, parents must provide a written request for records 30 days prior to their departure from the program.

Children and families transitioning to kindergarten from Pre-K will participate in activities coordinated between teachers and other elementary buildings. These activities may include, but are not limited to, visits to kindergarten classrooms, open houses at elementary schools, kindergarten transition meetings facilitated by the school with participation of kindergarten teachers and administrators, reading books about kindergarten, and community resources provided to parents regarding transition, kindergarten readiness and enrollment procedures. Students will also be invited participate in a kindergarten launch event hosted by each elementary building.

CHILD ABUSE

Whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, school officials are required by law to report these cases to county and state agencies. These agencies have the legal right to interview students at school without parental consent.

SCHOOL SECURITY

All Boyertown Schools have implemented the Raptor Identification System. This system is located in each school office. All visitors are required to report immediately to the school office using the designated entrance. Upon entering the school, all visitors will be required to provide a driver's license or other government issued identification card. School personnel will swipe the card through the Raptor Identification System. In most cases the visitor will be given a temporary badge and will be able to proceed into the school as planned. Individuals who need to drop off or pick up materials in the school office will not be required to use the system.

Parents/Guardians are expected to meet their children for appointments or at dismissal at the office or other designated areas and not at the classroom. All school employees will be enforcing these regulations. Doors are locked for security.

TRUE EMERGENCIES, EMERGENCY DRILLS, AND FIRE DRILLS

Intruder or Run–Hide–Fight Drills and Fire Drills are very important practices in any school. The signal for an Intruder Alert will be a PA announcement with the location of the intruder with staff then deciding how to move forward. In the case of an Intruder Alert Drill, a follow-up announcement will be made giving notice of it being a drill. During a drill, all students shall conduct themselves in the same manner as they would during a true emergency by listening and following all staff instructions. The signal for a fire drill is identical to that for a fire emergency—the continuous ringing of the fire alarm in the corridors. Fire alarms should never be ignored, whether they sound during the regular school day, in the evenings, or on weekends. All must evacuate the building BUT shall do so only after checking the corridor for possible intruders or other safety concerns. General instructions to facilitate the evacuation of the building are as follows: 1. Students will leave in an orderly fashion. 2. The students that are seated nearest to the windows shall close all windows prior to exiting the room. 3. In case any exit is blocked, please go directly to the nearest exit. 4. As the students leave the room, all talking must cease. Exit quickly & quietly. 5. The first students to approach an exit will hold the doors open. 6. The teacher or staff is the last person to leave the classroom, closing the door behind them. 7. In the event that a non-ambulatory student is in the classroom, that student shall shelter in the nearest tower with their teacher or another evacuating staff member. 8. Teachers or staff should take an accurate roll call outside the building and report anyone not accounted for to the principal per the Emergency Response binder. Students will return to the building in an orderly fashion when instructed to do so.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Gross motor development is an important part of every child's development. For this reason, weather permitting, the children in the Pre-K Counts program will go outside every day. We go outside when the wind chill is above 25 degrees, and the temperature is less than 90 degrees. If there is poor air quality or there is an advisory, we will not go outside. The children will also engage in gross motor activities inside when the weather does not permit outside play. Please remember to dress your child appropriately.

RELEASING YOUR CHILD

A child will be released only to parents(s) or person(s) designated in writing by the enrolling parent or guardian. This written permission must be presented in advance to your child's teacher. The person authorized to pick up your child must be at least 18 years of age or older. Please remember to have the pick-up person bring a valid picture ID. Please be aware that you may be asked to provide a valid picture ID at any time. This is for the safety and security of your child. You must sign your child in and out of the school when arriving late or leaving early.

INTOXICATED OR IMPAIRED INDIVIDUAL

If a person, authorized or not, who arrives to pick up a child appears to be under the influence of medications, alcohol, or otherwise impaired, staff will make every attempt to discourage that person from picking up the child. Staff will be directed to take the following steps:

- Delay the individual
- Every attempt should be made to contact another parent/emergency contact person to come pick up the child.
- Explain to the individual that arrangements have been made for "INSERT NAME" to pick up today and that the child shall remain in our care until then.
- If the individual becomes threatening or violent, ask them to leave and contact the police if they do not go.
- Staff cannot legally deny release to a parent (without a court order), but we need to consider the safety of the children without putting others in harm's way.
- If the individual snatches the child and leaves, contact the police and notify them that an intoxicated/impaired individual is leaving the school with a child.
- Also, let them know that attempts were made to delay until other arrangements for pick up could be made, but we were unsuccessful.

CUSTODY AND PROTECTION OF ABUSE ORDERS

It is the district's position not to get involved with custody issues between parents.

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to notify the school principal and teacher of the circumstances regarding custody of the child.

The position of the school district is as follows:

- When a court establishes custody, the school-parent relationship will be maintained to be consistent with the decision of the court.
- When custody is not formally established, the school will presume the parent with whom the child resides is responsible for reports, excuse forms, and authorization of any deviation from the routine transportation arrangements for the child.
- The non-custodial parent may receive progress reports and/or review the child's permanent record by contacting the classroom teacher unless the non-custodial parent's educational rights have been terminated by a court order.

BEHAVIOR POLICIES

Procedures for Incidents

Our staff will help your child develop self-discipline by:

- Establishing rules that encourage behavior that is respectful of self, others, and the environment.
- Serving as positive role models and using techniques that teach children how to set personal limits and boundaries.
- Applying positive reinforcement to encourage appropriate behavior.

Should a child's behavior require more intensive support, it is important that you and the school staff work together. Therefore, you can expect the following to occur:

- Ongoing communication from the school staff, which will tell you:
 - the date of the incident
 - a description of the incident
 - strategies used to help your child learn more appropriate behaviors
- A conference between you and your child's teacher to discuss the behavior and next steps in our shared efforts to support your child.
- Should the situation continue, the school staff may request that you join them in meeting with the Pre-K Counts Coordinator to discuss the use of additional supports and strategies including outside agency referrals.
- Once safety care protocol is put into place, if behaviors continue for longer than 30 minutes, the child may be sent home for the day due to unsafe behaviors.

In the rare occasion that the staff and Pre-K Counts Coordinator agree that the situation cannot be resolved and the safety of your child and/or other children is affected, your child may be terminated.

TERMINATION OF SERVICE

Boyertown Area School District reserves the right to terminate services, including but not limited to the following reasons:

- Violation of pre-k policies
- Failure to update the required registration forms in a timely manner
- Failure to update required medical forms
- Continued late pick-up from school
- Lack of viable emergency contact
- The parent/guardian fails to comply with recommendations to access resources to benefit the child.
- The program is unable to meet the physical, and/or cognitive, and/or emotional needs of the child.
- Incompatibility between the program and the needs of the family
- The child is a threat to themselves or others

WEAPONS POLICY

The possession of a weapon on school property or a school bus has been classified as a misdemeanor of the first degree in accordance with Act 167 of 1980. Similarly, assault on a fellow student or school staff member is a misdemeanor of the first degree. Students and parents should be aware of several conditions in this law:

A misdemeanor of the first degree is punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and/or imprisonment for up to 5 years.

A weapon is defined broadly as any instrument which can do bodily harm.

Any attempt to cause bodily injury to a member of the school staff, a school official, or a fellow student is classified as aggravated assault and is a misdemeanor of the first degree.

BULLYING

Per Boyertown Area School District Board Policy #249, bullying is not permitted at school or at any school or district functions. All Boyertown schools offer education for students, training for staff, and information for parents to work toward the elimination of bullying. You may find additional information related to this plan and the work of our Anti-Bullying Task Force on our district website. Students or parents/guardians who have questions or concerns related to bullying should contact their building principal.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Heavy snowfall, other serious weather conditions, or other emergencies may make it necessary to delay openings, close schools, or dismiss early. In such cases, Boyertown Area School District will utilize our Infinite Campus Messenger Service to notify our staff, families, and communities via text, email, and telephone. Because the distribution of messages through IC Messenger can take some time due to the volume of messages being sent, we will post a pop-up message to all district homepages and update the district's Facebook page, Twitter, and Instagram. Please note that the pop-up messages and social media posts may appear prior to receipt of IC Messages. Finally, we will use the following additional media outlets to complement our emergency preparedness procedures. Philadelphia KYW-AM (1060) - District #893 <https://www.radio.com/kywnewsradio/schoolclosings/> Allentown WFMZ-TV - Channel 69 www.wfmz.com

On inclement weather/emergency closing days, families may be asked to complete work for a Flexible Instruction Day. More information will come from your child's teacher with specific information.

If inclement weather arises during school hours, children will be sent home after clearance from the school district. It is the parent's responsibility to update Pre-K Counts of any change of contact information.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT FOR CACFP

The Boyertown Area School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability and/or handicap, age in its admissions procedures, educational programs, services, activities or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 and/or any applicable federal statute.

The Boyertown Area School District will assist students who have Limited English Proficiency to participate in all programs, services and activities.

For information regarding civil rights, admissions, grievance procedures, bilingual education and accessibility of programs, services, activities, and facilities that are usable by handicapped persons, please contact the building principal or the assistant superintendent by mail at Boyertown Area School District, 911 Montgomery Avenue, Boyertown, Pennsylvania, 19512 or by telephone at 610-369-7548.

CELEBRATIONS

We know that holiday celebrations are an important part of each child and family's culture. Pre-K Counts respects and values each family's customs, values, and traditions and encourages the sharing of these in the classroom. However, our program does not initiate the celebration of

holidays, birthdays, or any religious events in the classroom. Instead, celebrations are child initiated with the purpose of fostering family engagement and eliciting participation from each family.

Pre-K Counts has a firm policy that no food prepared at home may be served in the schools. As we deal with food allergies more frequently, it becomes more important that all ingredients in foods are known. Because some children do have food allergies, they are often excluded from food provided by those that are not accustomed to meeting those needs. Our program seeks to include all children in classroom activities. Sweets are served minimally in order to teach proper nutrition.

You are invited, but certainly not required, to send a treat to school for your child to share with the class on their birthday. Here are a few guidelines to help things go smoothly:

- Please contact your child's teacher ahead of time- we try to limit our celebrations to one per day.
- The snack must come in with your child during their arrival time. This is to help minimize distractions within the classroom learning time.
- Suggestions of snacks include Munchkins, cookies, rice crispy treats, individually wrapped snacks such as Goldfish or Cheez-its, & pretzel nuggets.

PERSONAL ITEMS & VALUABLES GUIDELINES

Children in the Pre-K Counts program have a very active day. The Pre-K Counts program provides ample supplies to help your child learn and grow.

We ask that you do not send toys unless requested by the classroom. Children can bring a small backpack. Backpacks should have child's name in or on it. Also, the Pre-K Counts program cannot assume responsibility for lost or stolen jewelry and/or other valuables. Please refrain from sending your child to school with such things.

PICTURE TAKING POLICY

Periodically throughout the year, your child's teacher may take photos of your child for classroom documentation in your child's portfolio or for classroom activities. A signed permission slip will be kept on file, in the program office and in individual child files. In addition, individual and group photos will be taken by a photographer. The pictures will be sent home to the child's family.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Student medical information is only shared with school district personnel directly involved with your child's education. Due to the enactment of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in April 2003, many medical offices will not fax forms and medical information to the school. It will be the parent's responsibility to bring it to the school.

MY RIGHTS AS A PRE-K COUNTS PARENT

- To volunteer in the program.
- To be welcomed in the classroom.
- To choose whether or not I participate without fear of endangering my child's right to be in the program.
- To be informed regularly about my child's progress in the program.
- To be treated with respect and dignity.
- To expect guidance for my child from teachers and staff, which will help their growth and development.
- To be able to learn about the operation of the program.

MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PRE-K COUNTS PARENT

- To learn as much as possible about the program.
- To check and respond to daily teacher communication via email, seesaw, or notes in backpacks.
- To seek additional support for my child when recommended by the classroom teacher.
- To accept Pre-K Counts as an opportunity through which I can improve my child's life.
- To take part in the classroom as an observer or a volunteer and to contribute my services in whatever way I can toward the enrichment of the program.
- Attend parent meetings and workshops when available.
- Help your child work on a family activity sent home by the teaching staff.
- To explain the program to other parents and encourage their participation.
- To work with the staff, teacher, and other parents in a cooperative way.
- To foster and protect the safety and dignity of all.
- To provide guidance to my child; which is both loving and protective.
- To take advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge about child development.

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Partnering with families to ensure they have a role in their children's education is an important part of the learning experience. Parents should be offered a variety of ways to be involved. Through partnerships with their parents, teachers develop the best strategies for teaching the children in their care most effectively. Children thrive in environments where there is a cooperative relationship between families and teachers.

Please try to read the information sent home to you with your children or via email. Your understanding of and cooperation with all policies is basic to meeting your child's needs and the smooth operation of the program. Please feel free to discuss your child's experience with the staff as soon as a question or a problem arises.

We will periodically ask you to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the program through surveys. Your feedback is essential in helping us to provide programs and services that meet your needs. Parents are always welcome to share their time, talents, culture, and interests with the classroom. Please let us know if you ever want to volunteer to help with a project or participate in our program in any way. Volunteer Clearances will be required for all those wishing to volunteer their time.

PARENT/STAFF COMMUNICATION

Parents/guardians are welcome at school at any time during the regular hours of operation for brief observations or interactions. Due to safety reasons, we may not permit visitors to stay for prolonged periods, and clearances are needed on file to volunteer. If you are ever concerned about your child during the time he or she is in our care, feel free to call us, and we will be happy to let you know how your child is doing.

Each teacher will send out monthly newsletters and communication. Periodically, we will provide you with health, safety, and developmental information and articles, as well as transition information and community resources as needed. If you or your family requires written information in a language other than English, please speak to your child's teacher so that efforts can be made to accommodate your needs.

Parents should speak to their child's primary teacher first about any issue or concern that they may have. The teacher will bring any concerns to the attention of the pre-k coordinator. However, parents are encouraged to speak to the teacher at any time if they feel that their needs are not being heard or addressed.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES/REFERRAL

Your child's teacher and guidance staff can be a wealth of knowledge and can assist you with community resource information about topics including health and human services, wellness, nutrition and fitness, crisis management and prevention, and/or child development.

Based upon observations of a child's behavior and results of developmental screenings and assessments, our teaching staff may feel that a child is in need of additional support services. In this case, the teacher will share these concerns with the coordinator, along with any supporting documentation. The coordinator will schedule a meeting with the child's family to discuss what resources may be at the family's disposal. Together, the teacher, coordinator, and family will come up with a plan of action to address the concerns and enlist the help of outside agencies, such as Early Intervention, if necessary.

PRE-K COUNTS AND COMMUNITY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Section 1 – Purpose

To establish a procedure that will offer guidelines for Pre-K Counts parents and community to seek proper mediation of a grievance.

Section 2 – Policy

In situations where a specific grievance is registered, Pre-K Counts parents and community shall have the proper channels open to them in order to air their complaints and grievance with the goal of providing a resolution to the same. A grievance is defined as the complaint or charge of injustice to, or unfair treatment of, an individual or a group resulting from an act, occurrence, omission or condition, which is presented for solution through the grievance procedure. Parents or the community may have a representative of their own choosing in the processing of the grievance during all the steps. A group of aggrieved parents will elect one member as spokesperson. This person will be responsible for serving as a spokesperson while pursuing the grievance to its conclusion.

Section 3 – Procedure

A chain of command is to be followed during the airing of a grievance. This will allow for communication of the grievance through the proper channels with the goal of reaching a resolution at the lowest steps of the grievance procedure. There will be no deviation from the chain of command. The process is as follows:

Step 1: A written grievance should be presented to the Boyertown School District Pre-K Counts Program within ten (10) working days of the occurrence. The written statement must indicate the nature of the grievance and the efforts, to date, by the grievant to resolve the grievance. The Assistant Director of Early Childhood and Student Services will schedule a meeting with the grievant in order to discuss the grievance and, within five (5) working days, provide the grievant with a written response. If the grievant is dissatisfied with the response, the grievant can proceed to Step 2.

Step 2: If the grievant is dissatisfied with the response from Step 1, a written grievance shall be presented to the Boyertown Area School District Office within five (5) working days of receipt of the decision. The written statement must indicate the nature of the grievance, the efforts, to date, by the grievant to resolve the grievance, and the responses from Step 1. The ECSS Administrator will, within five (5) working days, provide the grievant with a written response. If the grievant is dissatisfied with the response, the grievant can proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: If the grievant is dissatisfied with the response from Step 2, a written grievance shall be presented to the BASD Executive Director within five (5) working days of receipt of the decision. The written statement must indicate the nature of the grievance, the efforts, to date, by the grievant to resolve the grievance, and the responses from Steps 1 and 2. The Executive Director will, within ten (10) working days, provide the grievant with a written response. If the grievant is dissatisfied with the response, the grievant can proceed to Step 4

Step 4: If the grievant is dissatisfied with the response from Step 3, a written grievance shall be presented to the BASD Board of Directors within five (5) working days of receipt of the decision. The written statement must indicate the nature of the grievance, the efforts, to date, by the grievant to resolve the grievance, and the responses from Steps 1, 2, and 3. The BASD Board will, within ten (10) working days, inform the grievant of the date of the next regularly scheduled BASD Board of Directors' meeting, at which time the Board will render a decision. A written response will be provided to the grievant within five (5) working days of the decision. The response of the BASD Board of Directors is final.



Pre-K Counts Family Handbook Signature Page
Parent Copy

My child and I have read this booklet and recognize the need to have rules. We support following the rules of the school will make it a better place to learn and grow.

Student Name

Parent/Guardian Signature(s)

Date

Pre-K Counts Family Handbook Signature Page
School Copy

Please sign and return to your child’s teacher.

My child and I have read this booklet and recognize the need to have rules. We support that following the rules of the school will make it a better place to learn and grow.

Student Name

Parent/Guardian Signature(s)

Date
