

Head Start

FAMILY HANDBOOK

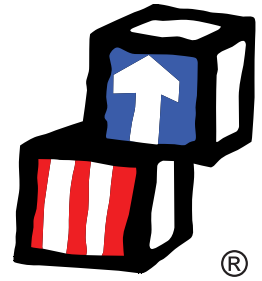




Kansas City Public Schools

HEAD START PROGRAM

1215 E. Truman Road
Kansas City, MO 64106
(816) 418-7735 • Fax (816) 418-5269



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Whether you are new to our Head Start family or are joining us once again, I am grateful you trust us with your child's care and educational experience. We have an exciting year ahead of us and we cannot wait to partner with you and your child.

You may wonder what makes a Head Start program so special and unique. The Head Start model is more than an academic experience. It is a "whole child" experience, taking into account the child and family's health, social-emotional well-being, and family and community experience. While your child will learn the academic skills that are important for kindergarten such as letter recognition, early writing, and age appropriate math and science, they will also learn to socialize, care for others, think critically, recognize healthy choices and manage those strong emotions that arise from frustrating and stressful situations.

In addition to providing high quality early learning experiences, we are very interested in partnering with you! We welcome you into our classrooms through a variety of volunteer opportunities and invite you to participate in our Parents Are Leaders (PALS) meetings that occur several times throughout the year. Please reach out if you have any questions or exciting ideas that will benefit the program. Here's to a great year!

Welcome aboard!

Michelle Pendzimas

Director of Head Start

Bridgette Crutchfield

Site Supervisor - Woodland

Theresa Brandt

Site Supervisor - Richardson

WELCOME!

We are happy to have you join the Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS) Head Start Early Education Program. This Family Handbook was prepared to help you understand the program and demonstrate examples of how we can work together to best serve you and your child. Please review this handbook carefully and contact your building supervisor or family advocate if you have questions regarding this information.

Kansas City Public Schools Vision Statement:

Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS) envisions its schools as places where every student will develop deep understanding of the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue higher education, obtain family-supporting employment, contribute to the civic well-being of the community, and have the opportunity for a rewarding and fulfilling life.

CONTENTS

PAGE

Parent Code of Conduct.....	3
Head Start Performance Standards	4
Program Locations, Hours, Extended Learning	4
Arrival and Authorized Release.....	4
KCPS Custody Issue Policy	5
Appropriate School Clothing	5
Attendance, Tardy Policy, Severe Weather Closing	6
Safety, Firearms, Crisis/Emergency Plan.....	6
Curriculum Overview	7
Field Trips	7
Birthday/Special Celebrations,	7
End of Year Celebrations/Transitions	8
Health/Nutrition.....	8
Handwashing & Toothbrushing.....	9
In Case of Illness	9
Medication Guidelines	9
Mental Health & Social-Emotional Supports.....	10
Guiding and Supporting Children.....	11
Disability Services	11
Screenings and Assessments	11
Parent Engagement.....	11
Home Visits/Conferences/Parent Involvement Activities.....	12
Grievance Procedures.....	13
Kindergarten/Infinite Campus.....	14

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

In order to ensure a safe environment for all, KCPS has the following expectations for KCPS families and staff:

- Parents and visitors will exhibit patience and self-control in managing their child's behavior as well as any complaints or grievances they or their child may have. Hitting, spanking, dragging and yelling at children is not allowed.
- Adults will supervise children at all times in the building and parking lot. Bus loading zones must remain open for bus arrival and departure.
- Parents will adhere to all attendance policies and ensure their children arrive and depart school on time. The program begins at 8:00a.m. and ends at 2:30p.m.
- Children and adults will be treated with respect. Visitors and staff will refrain from loud talking or shouting, cursing, name-calling, quarreling, verbal or physical fighting, displays of anger or making rude remarks to or about staff, children, or other visitors/parents.
- Parents and visitors are encouraged to dress with care when visiting school, volunteering in the classroom, or bringing and picking up their children, e.g., refrain from wearing clothing with obscenities or that refer to drugs/alcohol, or clothing that is of a revealing nature, and to refrain from excessive displays of affection.
- Parents and visitors will not smoke; will not bring alcohol or any other drugs, firearms or weapons onto the school property including the parking lot area.
- To address a concern or complaint, parents and visitors will follow the KCPS grievance procedures provided at the end of this handbook.
- To maintain a safe and educational environment for the children, parents and visitors will follow the direction of the KCPS staff and employees, including administrators, teachers, custodial and kitchen staff, bus drivers, and aides.
- To support children's social, emotional and intellectual growth, parents agree to be supportive of the goals of the classroom and the school in assisting their child.
- To ensure parents are aware of important program guidelines and regulations, parents will review and adhere to the Head Start Family Handbook.

I understand that by signing this document I, and all individuals associated with me, agree to abide by the above code of conduct and confirm that I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook. I also understand that failure to follow these guidelines by me, or anyone associated with me, may result in KCPS taking action, including but not limited to the following:

- Restricting my access to the school building;
- Removing my child from the KCPS Head Start program; or
- Any other action KCPS deems appropriate.

HEAD START

Head Start is one of the most successful and longest-running national school readiness programs in the United States. It provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services for income eligible children and their families. For Kansas City, the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) manages the Head Start grant and KCPS delivers the services. There are many regulations called Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) that we must follow. For more information, you can explore the following links:

Head Start Program Performance Standards at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy>
History of Head Start at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/history-head-start>

PROGRAMMING

Kansas City Public School’s Head Start program offers families a 6½-hour program option, five days a week, and our Early Head Start program offers care for infants and toddlers of students attending high school.

Early Head Start Program Location at Central High School

3221 Indiana Avenue, KCMO 64128(816) 418-2088

Head Start Program Locations

Richardson Early Learning Community School(816) 418-2601
3515 Park Avenue, KCMO 64109

Woodland Early Learning Community School(816) 418-5901
711 Woodland Avenue, KCMO 64106

Classroom hours and days:

Early Head Start School hours: 7:10a.m. – 2:30p.m., Monday through Friday.

Head Start School hours: 8:00a.m. to 2:30p.m., Monday through Friday. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to school on time. Please see the “tardy policy” on page 6.

Full-Day Option

Full Day classrooms are available at Richardson and Woodland for Head Start parents who are working or are in school. Capacity is limited so early enrollment is encouraged. The hours are 8:00a.m. to 5:30p.m. Proof of employment and school enrollment is required.

FEES

LATE FEES for full-day students will be charged for any child picked up after 5:30p.m. The late fee will be **\$1.00 per minute until the child is picked up.**

ARRIVAL AND AUTHORIZED RELEASE

To ensure the safety of children, parents or approved designees must accompany their child to the classroom and sign him/her in. It is our policy that all parents sign their child in and out. Please make sure the child does not arrive before the assigned arrival time and is picked up by the closing time. **In cases where children have not been picked up and parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, local law enforcement officials and/or Missouri Department of Social Services may be contacted. Continued late pick-ups will require an in-person meeting with the Site Supervisor and Head Start Director to determine the cause and help resolve the issues.**

Head Start records must contain written authorization provided by the parent or legal guardian, stating the name, address and phone number of those persons who have been authorized to pick up the child from school or take the child from the school. Updated address and phone numbers are needed throughout the school year. Please contact your Family Advocate when phone numbers change.

Children may only exit the school with a parent/guardian or other designated adult. **NOTE: By law, either parent named on the child's birth certificate is permitted to pick up the child unless KCPS has on file a legal court document stating otherwise.** Persons other than the parent picking up the child must present photo identification. Children will not be released to an adult not on the approved list **without prior arrangement and photo identification. The person responsible for signing out a child must be sixteen (16) years old and have photo identification.**

All programs use the visitor management system called "Hall Pass." Hall Pass is an effective way of ensuring families and visitors can get access to their schools while also keeping potential predators and other restricted individuals away from children and staff.

- At time of orientation, individuals must present a government-issued ID at the front office.
- The ID is scanned and if the visitor is cleared, up to two (2) fobs will be provided to each family.
- Families check in daily by scanning their fob in the front office.
- If an emergency contact/designee brings the child to school, they will present a government-issued ID at the front office and Hall Pass will print them a time stamped and dated photo badge to wear while on school grounds.
- Anyone failing the Hall Pass clearance process will be politely escorted off the property.

KCPS CUSTODY ISSUE POLICY

Kansas City Public School's Head Start program encourages parents to be actively involved in their child's education. Further, Missouri law states a preference for continuing and meaningful contact with both parents. Therefore, in accordance with district policy, the district will not prohibit parents from accessing records, attending activities or participating in conferences pertaining to their child unless otherwise required by court order or law.

DEFINITIONS

Parent – A biological or adoptive parent, including parents who are unmarried; a guardian; or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of the parent or guardian.

Joint Legal Custody – Parents share decision-making rights, responsibilities and authority relating to the health, education and welfare of the child.

Joint Physical Custody – Each parent has periods of time, not necessarily equal, during which the child resides with or is under the care or supervision of that parent.

Visitation Schedules Visitation schedules and parenting plans are agreements between parents and are not binding on the district. The district will release a student to either parent in accordance with district policy unless otherwise directed by a valid court order.

GENERAL PROGRAM PROCEDURES

APPROPRIATE SCHOOL CLOTHING

Dress your child in comfortable clothes. We discourage children from wearing flip-flops, jackets or sweatshirts with long dangling drawstrings, or long scarves. This clothing can create a safety hazard when your child plays on playground equipment. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather or for safe play, they may have to stay inside.

Children play outside daily. Young children can have bathroom accidents or may be involved in messy play throughout the day. The child's parent or guardian must provide a clean change of clothing to be kept at the school at all times. When a child wears home the change of clothing left at the school, we ask that the parent/guardian provide the school with another set of clothing as soon as possible.

ATTENDANCE

Student success in the Head Start Program directly relates to regular attendance. Federal regulations require that Head Start maintain a minimum average daily attendance of 85%, missing no more than three (3) days per month. Please follow the below guidelines:

- If a child is sick or has another legitimate reason for being absent, please call their Family Advocate to report and explain the absence by 10:00a.m.
- If a child is unexpectedly absent and a parent has not contacted the program by 10:00a.m., a Family Advocate must attempt to contact the parent to ensure the child's well-being.
- Head Start is required to conduct a home visit or make other direct contact with a child's parents if a child has multiple unexplained absences.
- When a child's attendance falls below 85% (absence of more than three (3) days per month), Head Start must inform parents that unless there is improved attendance, the child is at risk of losing their Head Start placement. Head Start maintains an active waitlist for children in need of Head Start programming.
- Any absence of nine (9) or more days in any one-month period will initiate an attendance improvement plan with the Site Supervisor and/or Head Start Director.

TARDY POLICY

A child is tardy when they arrive after the scheduled classroom start time (school starts at 8:00a.m.). Tardiness can disrupt the current learning activity in the classroom and can make your child feel uncomfortable as they enter an activity that is already in progress. Arriving late means your child could also be missing critical learning opportunities as well as important classroom routines such as picking out their "jobs." Chronic tardiness will result in a mandatory meeting with your child's Family Advocate and the Site Supervisor.

SEVERE WEATHER CLOSING

Head Start classes are canceled when schools in the Kansas City Public School District are closed due to severe weather. Please listen to all major radio and television stations for information regarding school closings. If school is canceled midday due to severe weather, parents must pick up their child immediately.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Head Start follows the KCPS District Calendar for scheduled early release days, holiday observances and winter, spring, and summer breaks. The calendar is available on the district website at www.kcpublicschools.org or by calling the individual schools. Richardson and Woodland will have additional days when school is closed to accommodate parent/teacher conferences, home visits and professional development training. Please refer to the Head Start school calendar that is provided and posted within the building.

SAFETY (FIREARMS)

The following are not allowed on school property: firearms, pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded), darts, bows and arrows, cap pistols, stun guns, paint ball guns, or objects manufactured for play as toy guns.

CRISIS/EMERGENCY PLAN

KCPS enforces emergency crisis response plans for the following risks: Fire, smoke, tornado, bomb threat, live electrical wires, gas leaks, hazardous material spills, building damage, traffic or violence.

- No entry, lockdown, restricted movement or emergency exit procedures will be enforced according to the presented threat. **When the building is on lockdown, parents may not enter the building.**
- A Head Start staff member will stay on the scene and give basic support until the person designated to handle emergencies arrives (medical or EMS personnel).
- Any severely injured child will NOT be moved unless absolutely necessary for immediate safety following appropriate safety guidelines. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will be called to arrange for transportation of the injured child, if necessary.
- In the case of an injured child, Head Start staff will notify the parent/guardian of the emergency as soon as possible to determine the appropriate course of action. Emergency contacts will be called if necessary.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The Head Start Early Learning Program implements the Creative Curriculum. Creative Curriculum creates an environment where children learn through exploration, discovery, and intentional teaching strategies. In addition to Creative Curriculum, the Head Start program uses the Project Approach. Building upon children's interests, teachers guide the children through inquiry and critical thinking around a topic of interest. Classroom projects can last one week, or they can last the entire year! Teachers may invite you to join them in the classroom as the children learn information about their new topic of investigation. They may also ask if you would like to do some simple activities at home with your child or send some materials for their work in the classroom. Enjoy this opportunity to learn with your child!



Lesson planning utilizes the curriculum and builds upon interests of the children and in doing so, addresses each area of development. Those areas include physical development, social-emotional development, cognitive (which includes their thinking skills and the areas of math and science), and language development. Below is an example of a typical daily routine for a Head Start classroom.



DAILY ROUTINE

A typical Pre-K class includes:

Breakfast

Group Meeting

Learning Centers/Small Group

Clean-up Time

Outdoor Play/Gross Motor

Lunch

Nap

Snack

Learning Centers/Group Meeting



FIELD TRIPS

Parents will be notified in writing of all field trips before the event. Permission slips are provided with the date, location, address, and times of departure and return. **Only children with signed permission slips may attend field trips.** Verbal approval over the telephone will not be accepted. The minimum adult/child ratio for a field trip is four (4) children to each adult. If there are not enough adults available to assist, the field trip will be canceled. **Classrooms must have participation by parents in order to go on a field trip.**

BIRTHDAY/SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

Children's birthdays are celebrated in various ways in our classrooms and we want all children to feel special when celebrating birthdays. **In keeping with our Nutrition Policy, we do not allow families to bring any food or treats into the center due to the possibility of foods containing allergens.** Parents/guardians are welcome to celebrate by doing a special activity with the children in honor of their child's birthday.

END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

This celebration may be held for children exiting the Head Start program. Celebration is limited to activities that allow for parent, child, and staff interaction – not the performance of children. Examples include a field day or other family-fun activities. Wearing of caps and gowns or other graduation attire reduces the importance of true graduation from high school. Children do not graduate from Head Start. They transition on to kindergarten. We want children to graduate from high school.

TRANSITIONS

Starting school for the first time may be a major change for your child. It is important to help your child make this transition a smooth one. Here are a few steps you can try! **These are also great ideas to use when your child first begins Head Start or moves on into Kindergarten.**

- Visit the school & classroom before the first day of school. The school will have an Open House at the beginning of the program year. You can meet your child's teacher and see the classroom where your child will spend his/her days.
- Talk with your child about his/her feelings. Talk with them about their day at school. Talk about the daily routine and keep a regular routine at home as well.
- Talk about going to school in a very positive way. For example, after visiting the school, talk with your child about the things he/she liked. Help your child look forward to the fun things he/she will do at school (playing with play dough, building with blocks, painting a picture, playing with dolls, reading books, etc.)
- Make sure that your child gets enough sleep at night. Create a routine that is followed each night with your little one. Make it a relaxing time without TV or electronic games. Reading a story is a great idea! Remember, preschoolers need 11 – 13 hours of sleep a night!

HEALTH/NUTRITION

The KCPS Head Start Program requires the following:

- Children must have up-to-date immunizations, an in-progress card, or an exempt card by the first day of school. Failure to remain on the Missouri Department of Health's recommended schedule for immunizations will result in the exclusion of your child until the required immunizations are received.
- In the event of an outbreak or suspected outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease in the facility, children who are not immunized must be excluded from school following the control measures instituted by the KCMO Health Department.
- Parents will be asked to sign the Healthcare Information Exchange (HIE), a consent form that gives Head Start staff permission to retrieve health information from the Missouri State health information databases. This will help us meet our health requirements by quickly obtaining physical and screening results as required by Head Start Program Performance Standards.
- Any required screening not completed on your child's EPSDT doctor visit will be offered through Head Start and community health providers with prior parent permission.
- Referrals are made when potential problems are identified during health screenings.
- Medical dietary needs, with appropriate documentation from your physician, are taken into account for meals of children with dietary restrictions.
- Meals are served family style to provide an enjoyable learning experience for the children and staff. The KCPS Food Service Department determines menu planning. No pork products are served in our district.
- A nourishing breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided to children. Foods served are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt. No child will be forced to eat or be denied food for any reason. Food is not used as a reward or punishment. Children arriving after breakfast hours will be served a "staple" late breakfast option.

- Due to many allergies - **NO OUTSIDE FOOD IS TO BE BROUGHT IN BY CHILDREN OR ADULTS.**
- Our Head Start schools are nut-free environments.
- As a result of participating in the state CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program), food items cannot be removed from the classroom. Unfortunately, this means that children cannot take unfinished snacks home with them.

HANDWASHING AND TOOTHBRUSHING

Healthy habits are established with daily toothbrushing and the emphasis on handwashing and other habits that help reduce the spread of illness.

Children will brush their teeth once daily during the program hours of operation. Head Start will supply toothbrushes for every child in the program. Toothbrushes are provided two times a year, at the beginning of the school year and after children return from Winter Break.



IN CASE OF ILLNESS

Students should remain at home if they show signs of illness. Do not send a child to school until the symptoms are gone and he/she is free of abnormal temperature, without medication, for 24 hours.

Unusual behavior will be monitored closely and parent(s) will be contacted if the behavior continues or if other symptoms develop. These behaviors include, but are not be limited to:

1. Is cranky or less active than usual
2. Cries more than usual
3. Feels general discomfort or seems unwell
4. Has loss of appetite

Based on the KCPS Health policies, a child must be sent home if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- **Fever** – a temperature over 100° Fahrenheit by mouth or 99° Fahrenheit under the arm.
- **Diarrhea** – an increased number of bowel movements (uncommon with the child's normal bowel pattern) along with watery, bloody and/or mucus containing feces.
- **Vomiting** – vomiting two or more times within 2 hours.
- **Ringworm** – typically a red, itchy, scaly, circular rash. Child must stay home until treatment has begun. However, the child may remain in school if the rash can be covered.
- **Pinkeye** – tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation, followed by swelling or discharge of pus.

If a child is found to be exhibiting signs of an infectious illness, parents will be contacted by the Health Assistant or Family Advocate to arrange for pick-up of the child.

MEDICATION GUIDELINES

Parents must inform staff of any medications their child is taking or any special health care needs their child has which may necessitate specialized care by KCPS staff. Only prescription medication can be administered at school. If a child requires asthma medications or an EpiPen for potential allergic reactions, a *Medication Administration Consent* form and a current copy of an *IHCP (Individual Health Care Plan)* **must** be provided before a child is allowed to attend school.

The Health Assistant will maintain a written log of all medication administered while a child is at the Head Start Program. If it is necessary for the child to take a medication during school hours, parents must follow the process outlined below:

1. For any child who may have special health care needs, diagnosed by a physician, which necessitates specialized care by KCPS staff (i.e., asthma or allergies requiring an EpiPen, seizures), an IHCP (Individual Health Care Plan) must be completed by a physician or professionally qualified individual.
2. Children with chronic health conditions not requiring medications at school must also have an IHCP (Individual Health Care Plan) to keep staff informed of the child's condition in the event any related issues arise.
3. The top portion of the Medication Administration Consent form must be completed, signed and dated by the parent/guardian.
4. Prescription medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, instructions for administration, including the times and amounts for dosages and the physician's name. All medication will be checked-in and approved by the Health Assistant.
5. The prescription medication must not be expired.
6. All medications kept at school must be stored in a locked container, away from the child's access at all times. Medication will be returned to the locked storage immediately after use.
7. Medication needing refrigeration will be kept in the refrigerator in a container separate from food.
8. Medication will be returned to the parent(s) or disposed of immediately when expired, no longer needed or at the end of the school year.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The KCPS Head Start Program promotes the emotional well-being of all children in our program. Our goal is to assist children and families in recognizing the importance of mental health to a young child's healthy development and to provide assistance that is respectful and responsive to the individual child's needs.

To support a program-wide culture that promotes all children's mental wellness and social and emotional well-being, we employ Mental Health Consultants that will provide classroom observations to support teachers and students by providing strategies and resources to build on the social and emotional skills in the classroom.

During the enrollment process, parents will be asked to sign for permission, allowing the Mental Health Consultants to conduct these observations.

If a Mental Health Consultant or program staff believe a child may benefit from individualized mental health services, parents will be contacted to share concerns and discuss a possible referral. A referral by Head Start for mental health treatment services can only be made with the parent's written permission. All information collected by the Mental Health Consultant will be kept confidential and can only be released with the parent's written consent. The Mental Health Consultant can provide the following support:

- Partner with parents to talk about concerns and to share ideas and information.
- Partner with teachers and parents to meet the individual needs of the child.
- Provide opportunities through personal appointments to help parents connect to a community agency or access resources.
- Present on special topics.

Strategies and resources may be recommended after an observation of the child within the classroom setting. Intervention techniques may be suggested until the child is able to increase their self-control within the classroom.

Young children deal with many of the same emotions that adults do. Children get angry, sad, nervous, happy or embarrassed, but they do not know the words to talk about how they are feeling. Sometimes, they may act out these emotions in physical or inappropriate ways. Learning to understand and identify their feelings is the best way to help children develop healthy social emotional skills and a positive self-concept of themselves.

The KCPS Head Start Program uses a comprehensive social-emotional and classroom management program called **Conscious Discipline**. All Head Start Staff are trained in this program and the same information and language is used in all areas of the school. Using the latest brain research information, we teach children to understand their feelings, how to express themselves, and how to behave/act in difficult situations. For more information on how to use Conscious Discipline, please visit <https://consciousdiscipline.com/>.



Head Start Staff and students also use the **Trauma Smart®** Program, in collaboration with Crittenton Children's Center of Kansas City. The Trauma Smart® Program helps us build on our ability to adjust or adapt to traumatic events in our lives. Children that have been exposed to trauma or chronic stress may live with their brains and bodies on high alert at all times. The Head Start Staff have learned to look at children and ask, "What has happened to this child?" instead of asking, "What is wrong with this child?". Through Trauma Smart® we use techniques to reverse the negative impact of trauma to help children feel in control, by the use of praise, positive reinforcement, setting limits and positive behavior management strategies. These skills will help children make decisions that are good for them and help them to reach their goals without barriers caused by trauma.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Federal Regulations require that at least ten percent (10%) of the total Head Start enrollment include children with disabilities. This includes children with speech and hearing impairments, physical, visual, health and developmental delays. Head Start works closely with Missouri First Steps and the KCPS Exceptional Education Department to screen, evaluate and provide special education services to any child that qualifies.

If a parent has concerns regarding their child's development, they should contact the Head Start Classroom Teacher, Site Supervisor or Family Advocate to discuss the concerns. Parents may also contact the Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator. Parents have the right to request an evaluation of their child.

A Request for Intervention may be completed and provided to the KCPS Exceptional Education Department, if needed.

SCREENINGS AND ASSESSMENTS

Head Start requires that all children receive a developmental and social emotional screening within 45 days of entry into the program. We use the Brigance® Screen III to assess gross and fine motor skills, cognitive skills, and language skills. We will ask guardians to complete the DECA-2® (Devereux Early Childhood Assessment) at their orientation to assess social-emotional development. Guardians are notified of all screening results and follow-up will be made if further evaluation is needed.

A vision and hearing screening is also required within 45 days of a child's enrollment. The Head Start Program makes it possible for all children with special needs to be identified early in the program year.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parents have the greatest impact on their child's education and development. For this reason, parents are invited and encouraged to take an active part in their child's education by participating in Home Visits, Parent-Teacher Conferences and volunteer opportunities.

HOME VISITS

Head Start Program Performance Standards requires that we conduct two (2) Home Visits per year. The purpose of the Home Visit is to highlight the parents' roles as lifelong educators of their children. Home Visits are typically scheduled at the beginning of the school year and the end of the school year. Your child's teacher will schedule the Home Visit with you. The teacher, teacher assistant and sometimes family advocate will come to your home to share developmental screening results, educational outcomes, and examples of your child's learning experiences. During this time, parents will be asked to share successes and concerns to support a team approach for your family. We hope you will participate in this experience as children truly love seeing their teachers come to their home.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

In addition to the two Home Visits, we are required to hold two Parent-Teacher Conferences at your child's school. These conferences follow the same schedule as the KCPS district calendar and occur typically in October and February. Updated educational outcomes and learning experiences will be shared at this time.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES – SUPPORTING OUR IN-KIND REQUIREMENT

There are many ways to be involved in your child's school, which can include volunteering in the classroom, sharing a special hobby or talent, reading to the classroom, preparing classroom materials at home, translating learning materials for the classroom, and participating in parent trainings and parenting classes.

Head Start Program Performance Standard 1303.4 states that Head Start programs must receive 20% of their funding through a donated service that we call In-Kind donations. Being involved in the program is the easiest way to support our In-Kind donation efforts. Every hour you spend with us is calculated into a dollar amount. When volunteering, you will be asked to sign-in. If you would like to volunteer on an ongoing basis, we have a formal process that is outlined on the KCPS district website. You can ask your child's teacher or your Family Advocate for details. All parents are encouraged to participate at some level. Your input and participation are valued! Ask your Family Advocate or your child's teacher for suggestions.

NOTE: Parents cannot bring younger or older siblings when volunteering.

PARENT TRAININGS

Parent trainings offer opportunities for families to get more information on various topics (e.g., education, health/nutrition, social services, mental health). These will occur in a variety of formats so watch for flyers and bulletins around the school building.

FATHERHOOD INITIATIVES

Over the past several years, Head Start has placed a special emphasis on engaging fathers in their child's education. We encourage fathers to volunteer in their child's classrooms and to fully participate in Home Visits and Parent-Teacher Conferences.

PARENTING CURRICULUM

Sometimes we can use a little help understanding child development and the impact of stress and trauma on children. We may find that our discipline strategies are ineffective or we simply need the support of other parents. In the fall and spring, we will offer research-based parenting curriculum at no cost. Parents have enjoyed these classes in the past so we encourage you to participate when the classes are in session.

PARENTS ARE LEADERS (PALS)

Parents are an integral part of our Head Start Program Governance. We have an established parent committee meeting format called Parents Are Leaders (PALS). These meetings occur four (4) times per year at each school and provide opportunities for program input and decision-making, as well as updates on program operations, such as fiscal reports and health outcomes. Special topic learning opportunities are presented, as well.

All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend. At the first scheduled meeting, a parent representative and alternate will be elected from each school to represent KCPS Head Start at our MARC Policy Council meetings. More information will be made available as the meeting date approaches.

FAMILY GOAL SETTING

We know that children do better when their parents do better! Your Family Advocate will be completing a family assessment looking at your family's strengths and needs. Results from the assessment will guide you in setting a goal that you would like to work on throughout the year. Goals around financial stability, work, education, health, transportation, safety and transitions to kindergarten are some of the choices for setting a goal.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The KCPS Head Start Program supports the following procedures for hearing and working to resolve parent or community complaints about the program:

- Often, complaints are due to a misunderstanding or miscommunication and can be easily resolved by talking with the employee (if applicable) or Site Supervisor about the concern. Support with this conversation can be provided by the building Site Supervisor or the Head Start Director as appropriate.
- If a verbal conversation is not the best course of action, please submit the complaint in writing with details of the complaint including:
 - Specific nature of alleged violation or complaint
 - Time or place of violation or complaint
 - Related details:
 - Name of Complainant
 - Address of Complainant
 - Telephone number of Complainant
 - Signature of Complainant
- Complaints are to be submitted to either the Site Supervisor or the Head Start Director.
- Complaints determined to be in violation of Federal or State Laws, Federal or State Regulations or District Policies will be referred to the KCPS legal Counsel in accordance with KCPS Procedure SCH-P 9090.
- Complaints determined to be pragmatic in nature will be addressed as follows:
 - Within five (5) working days of the complaint, attempt resolution of the complaint at a meeting including the Site Supervisor, Director of Head Start and others as applicable.
 - Resolved complaints will be documented with a follow-up letter to the complainant that brings closure to the initial complaint.
 - Unresolved complaints along with efforts to resolve the complaint and the recommended course of action shall be reported to the Student Support and Community Services Committee of the KCPS and the KCPS Superintendent for advisement.
 - After advisement from the Student Support and Community Services Committee and the KCPS Superintendent, the issues remain unresolved, the complainant will be invited to present the complaint to the Mid-America Head Start Policy Council and be advised of the procedure for obtaining permission to address the MAHS Board of Directors.
- All communications are to be recorded, copies provided to the Family Community Engagement Coordinator and retained per KCPS record retention policy kc3630.

KINDERGARTEN TRANSITION

When your child is enrolled in the KCPS Head Start Program, s/he will also be enrolled for kindergarten in your neighborhood school. There are many reasons to choose KCPS for your child’s continuing education, but the most important reason is that we are a fully accredited learning institution.

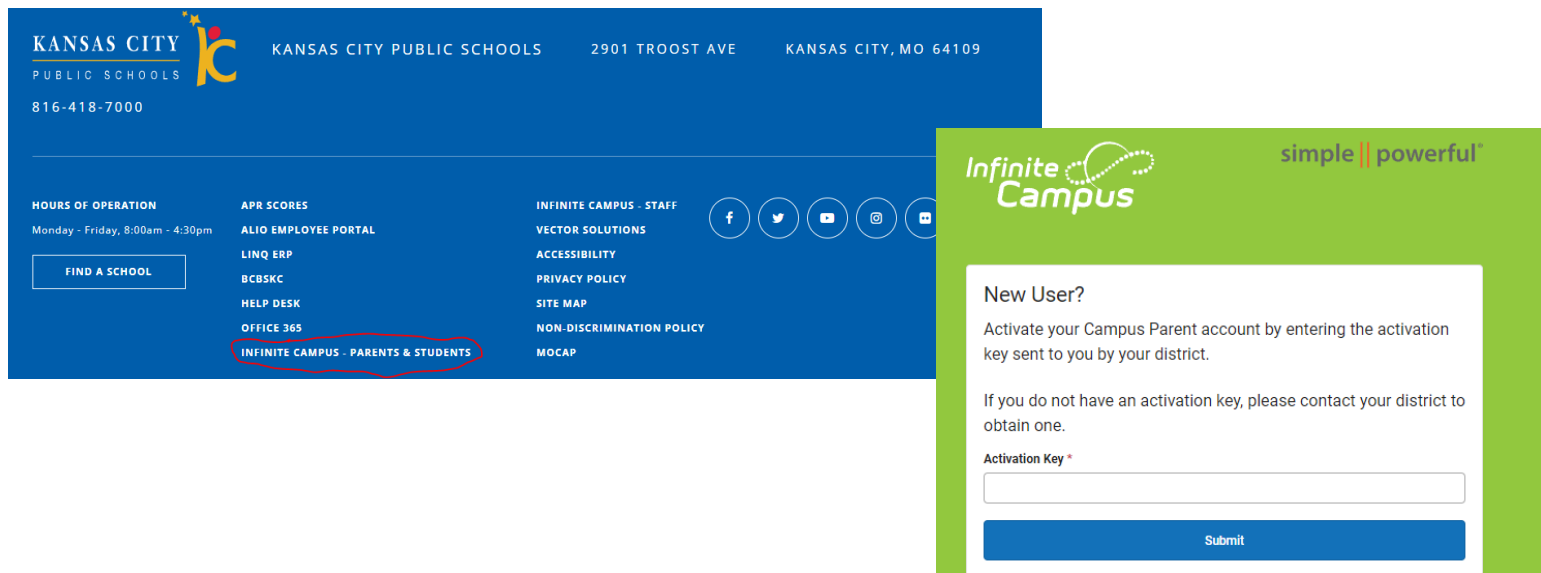
Throughout the school year there will be opportunities to take tours and participate in kindergarten transition activities. Beginning in October, you will receive information on how to enroll in a Signature School if that is the path you want for your child.

To stay connected to KCPS, log on to our website at www.kcpublicschools.org.

INFINITE CAMPUS PARENT PORTAL

Kansas City Public Schools uses Infinite Campus to communicate with families, to process enrollment applications, to assess fees, and to document academic information. To prepare you and your family for kindergarten, it is important to activate your Infinite Campus Parent Portal so you can receive notifications and you can apply to Signature Schools and Summer Academy when transitioning out of the Head Start program.

Once enrolled in Head Start, you can activate your parent portal. Visit www.kcpublicschools.org. Scroll to the bottom and click on the link: INFINITE CAMPUS - PARENTS & STUDENTS, then GO TO PARENT PORTAL:



You will be directed to a new web page that will guide you on how to activate your parent portal. Your Head Start School Secretary and Family Advocate can provide the Activation Key, in addition to the supports outlined on the website.

KCPS Board of Education:
2901 Troost Ave., Kansas City, MO 64109
816-418-7000



WOODLAND Early Learning

711 Woodland Ave. Kansas City, Missouri 64106

(816) 418-5901

www.KCPublicSchools.org/Woodland

Facebook: KCPSWoodland

Twitter: KCPS_Woodland



RICHARDSON Early Learning

3515 Park Ave. Kansas City, Missouri 64109

(816) 418-2601

www.KCPublicSchools.org/Richardson

Facebook: KCPSRichardson

Twitter: KCPS_Richardson

Central Early Head Start



3221 Indiana Ave. Kansas City, Missouri 64128

(816) 418-2088