

# WAKULLA PREKINDERGARTEN FACULTY HANDBOOK

## WAKULLA COUNTY SCHOOLS 2020-2021



Wakulla Educational Center  
87 Andrew J Hargrett Sr. Road  
Crawfordville, Florida 32327  
850-926-8111 -- [http:// https://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org/](https://www.wakullaschooldistrict.org/)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I:	Philosophy/Vision/Mission.....	1
Section II	General Policies .....	2
	Faculty Meetings.....	2
	ID Badges .....	2
	Evaluations and Observations.....	2
	Lesson Plans .....	2
	Parent/Teacher Communication .....	3
	Collection of Other Fees .....	3
	Lead Dollars.....	3
	Recertification for Certified Teachers .....	3
	Recertification for CDA's.....	3
	ePDC Website.....	3
	Safety Inspection Checklist .....	4-5
	Accountability.....	4-5
	Teacher Absence.....	5-6
	Sunshine Committee By Laws.....	7
	Incoming Communication .....	7
	Cell Phones .....	7
	District E-Mail.....	7
	District and School Dress Expectations.....	7-8
	Schedules .....	8
	Teacher's Lounge .....	8
	Guidelines for Teachers .....	8-9
	School Wide Rules.....	9-10
	Field Trips.....	10
	Parties .....	10
	Volunteer Program.....	11
	Parent Involvement Education.....	11
Section III:	Emergency Plans.....	12
	Fire Procedures .....	12
	Student Illness or Accident.....	12
	Lightening.....	12
	Tornado.....	12

	Lockdown Procedures .....	13
Section IV:	Discipline Plan.....	14
	Introduction.....	14
	Discipline.....	14-16
	Closing Comments.....	17
Section V:	Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect Information .....	18-22
	Social Networking .....	23
Section VI:	PreK Calendar for 2020-2021 .....	24
	District Calendar for 2020-2021 .....	25
Section VII	Statements for Handbooks.....	26



# **EAGLET VISION/PHILOSOPHY/MISSION**



## **VISION**

The vision of the Prekindergarten program is an equitable future for all children.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The Wakulla Prekindergarten Program recognizes that the development of the whole child is essential for learning to take place and that human development can be stimulated and encouraged, but not forced. We recognize movement is a natural characteristic of the preschool child and is the mode through which learning takes place. We believe in the provision of timely learning experiences that promote growth and development of children while accommodating each child's unique needs, interests, and abilities. Our purpose is to provide a balanced, nurturing, stimulating, and exploratory program that promotes the total growth and development of the child with a focus on language development.

## **MISSION**

The mission of the Wakulla Preschool Program is to provide a positive, safe and healthy learning environment through play, which stimulates and encourages positive self-esteem. This learning environment will be enriched with developmentally appropriate strategies and parent involvement.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **FACULTY MEETINGS**

**Wednesdays should be set aside for faculty meetings.** Attendance is required at all meetings unless Mr. Hernandez approves the absence. Emergency meetings may be called on other days. Faculty meetings are only for faculty, staff and invited guests when appropriate. In addition to faculty meetings, teachers will be requested to meet periodically as requested.

### **ID BADGES**

Each employee is provided with an identification badge with a photograph. It is to be worn and visible during work hours. A duplicate is available from the principal if the original is lost/misplaced. A replacement fee will be assessed if a third ID is needed.

### **EVALUATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS**

Observations are positive interactions between administration and staff. The principal will conduct at least one scheduled observation and periodic walk-throughs. Two scheduled observations will be conducted for annual certified contract employees. At the end of the year, the principal will meet with each staff member to go over the annual appraisal.

### **LESSON PLANS**

Long range planning and goal setting should be done by the month, semester and school year. Long range plans for the school year should be turned in by the end of August. Lesson plans for the following week should be completed and e-mailed to the Principal before leaving on Fridays AND should include large and small group instruction (specify students/skill/goal/objectives). The PreK lesson template will be used and should be correlated to Creative Curriculum and/or VPK Standards. Lesson plans should be printed out prior to leaving on Friday and kept in the lesson plan book and located on the teacher's desk for review by the Principal. The student textbook is Beyond Centers and Circle Time Theme Series.

### **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Communication is important. Frequent school/home communication is encouraged. Teachers should initiate conferences and keep notes. All Prekindergarten students are to have daily notes sent home from their classroom teacher using the school form. Please invite parents for one conference each semester. Teachers are also required to utilize the school website.

### **COLLECTION OF OTHER FEES**

Teachers will be issued a numbered receipt book at the beginning of the school year. As students turn in money for T-shirts, yearbooks, etc. the teacher will issue the student a numbered receipt. Each morning, prior to lunch, the money envelope and receipts will be turned in to Mrs. Gallamore in the front office. She will then issue the classroom teacher a receipt of these funds. Please do not leave funds in your desk or classroom. Do not refund money to students by giving cash. Submit a Reimbursement Request Form to Mrs. Gallamore for any refunds.

### **LEAD DOLLARS**

Full-Time classroom certified teachers employed by Wakulla County District School Board are issued Florida Teachers Lead Program stipend funds that are appropriated by the Legislature for the sole purpose of purchasing classroom materials and supplies to be used in the instruction of students. Teachers are required to sign a document stating that these funds will be used to purchase school materials. Any unused funds are to be returned to the district school board at the end of the regular school year. 2020-2021 – Office Depot will be the vendor to purchase classroom supplies with lead teacher money

### **RECERTIFICATION FOR CERTIFIED TEACHERS**

Please remember that maintaining appropriate certification is each educator's professional responsibility. Teachers may log on to the Panhandle Area Education Consortium website [www.paec.org](http://www.paec.org) to check the status of their earned points towards recertification. This inservice point bank can be located under: Member Transcript.

### **RECERTIFICATION FOR CDA'S**

CDA's are also responsible for maintaining their CDA certification. Sufficient in-service activities will be hosted on the WEC campus each year and available every other year via a school purchased online subscription the CHILDCARE INSTITUTE. Teachers should take advantage of these opportunities. Attending the necessary in-service activities to earn recertification credits is the sole responsibility of the CDA. Failure to comply with recertification requirements could result in loss of CDA compensation.

### **ePDC WEBSITE**

All certified and classified teachers must register for in-service training activities online at [www.paec.org](http://www.paec.org). After each training, certified teachers are required to complete the online follow up.

## **SAFETY INSPECTION CHECKLIST**

Safety and fire inspectors visit campus on a routine basis. Please adhere to the following to ensure an optimum learning environment.

Do not block Emergency Exits. There should be a clear path to primary and secondary fire exits.

Classroom doors should remain closed at all times.

**Classroom doors must not be propped open AND must be locked at all times.**

No extension cords should be running across the floor in traffic areas.

There should be no inappropriate storage or clutter—rooms and offices must NOT look like “Fire Hazards.” Keep work areas neat **and tidy!**

Nothing may be stacked within 18” of the ceiling.

Do not block or cover electrical panels.

**10 % of the walls may be covered with paper, no paper on the doors.**

## **SCHOOL FURNITURE**

School furniture such as picnic tables, benches, and trash cans may not be moved from their location without permission from the Principal.

Please do not ask the Custodial staff to do so, even temporarily for special events. Picnic tables have been located on campus for your convenience and need to stay in their current location. If you take furniture from your room outside, you must return it before you leave for the day.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Teachers are liable for student safety at all times!

### **Bathroom**

Teachers will walk students to the bathroom together as a class and supervised bathroom areas inside and outside (hallway/breezeway). No students should be left unattended at any time.

**\*DURING ASSIGNED TIMES\*\***

### **Lunchroom**

Teachers will walk students to and from the lunchroom when it’s determined to be safe. Teachers are expected to sit at the tables with the children during each meal. Teachers should encourage proper table manners, stimulate conversation, encourage self-help skills (pouring, serving and cleaning up) and encourage students to try new foods.



### Naptime

Classrooms on the back wing must have window blinds open during naptime to allow visual sight of every child at all times. In an emergency, others entering the room should have enough natural light to locate each student.

### Free Play

Free play should be limited to a period of 30 minutes per day No more than four classes should be on the playground at the same time. Both classroom teachers must accompany the class on the playground. Teachers must circulate while on the playground. Please adhere to the playground assignment schedule of teacher duties.

### Buses:

Faculty and staff will meet students at the bus loading area by 8:45am each morning and walk them to class. In the afternoon one teacher from each class will again escort students to the pick-up hallway or to the buses when called. Please refer to the morning and afternoon drop off/pick-up and bus duty schedule **AND arrive at your daily post ON TIME!**

## **TEACHER ABSENCE**

**Teachers who find it necessary to be absent from school for any reason should notify Louis Hernandez between 6:00 and 6:30 a.m. at 556-8476 on the morning of the absence, if prior notification has not taken place. If an emergency occurs after 6:30 a.m. or if you are unable to contact Louis Hernandez, then call Lorrie Gallamore at 933-1372. Please make certain you fill out the appropriate leave forms immediately upon your return. Also contact your peer teacher informing them of your absence.**

When absent, teachers should have the following available for a substitute:

- Lesson Plans
- Dailey schedule, including any extra duties or activities
- Attendance information
- Seating chart
- Extra notes the substitute might need to have a successful day
- Notes regarding dietary/medical/or custody restrictions for students
- List of PM transportation – Bus information and pick-up student information



At times, teachers may need to leave school during the day due to an emergency. If this occurs, immediately the teacher should notify Mr. Hernandez at once to inform her of the need to leave school and to make arrangements for leaving the campus. If Mr. Hernandez is not on campus at that time, teachers may notify Mrs. Peeples. Due to appointments teachers may sometimes find it necessary to leave school at the conclusion of the student day. Such times should be kept to a minimum and should be cleared with Mr. Hernandez as far ahead as possible. **Work hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily.** Teachers should sign in and out daily in the Prekindergarten office. Failure to do so, impacts payroll reporting. Teachers are allotted ten sick leave days per school year, six of which may be used as personal leave (as long as not more than ten percent of the faculty request personal leave on that same day). The ten days are accumulated one per month. Personal leave must be applied for, discussed and the form completed at least two days in advance.

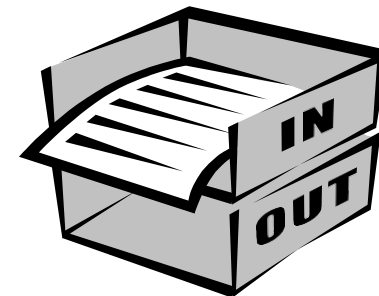
*UPON RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ABSENCE, TEACHERS SHOULD BE SURE TO COMPLETE LEAVE FORMS. SICK LEAVE FORMS MUST BE TURNED IN NO LATER THAN THE DAY AFTER THE DAY OF THE DAY OF ABSENCE.*

Other types of leave may include:

- Jury Duty
- Witness Duty
- Temporary Duty Elsewhere
- Military Leave
- Illness in the Line of Duty
- Professional Leave
- Personal Leave in Excess of 20 days



Personal leave in excess of 20 days will be granted at the discretion of the Board except maternity leave which shall be mandatory upon request. TDY forms must be completed any time that you are out of your class (workshops, in-service programs, conventions, etc.) and a substitute has to be brought in to cover your class.



### **SUNSHINE COMMITTEE BY LAWS:**

Employees are invited to join the Sunshine Club. Sunshine dues are \$10 for the year. These funds are used for:

Birthdays – Sunshine provides a special treat.

Baby showers: Sunshine provides a baby shower cake for first time moms.

Wedding showers: Sunshine provides a wedding shower cake for first time brides.

Flowers for hospitalized members: Sunshine sends a \$35-\$40 arrangement to hospitalized members.

A gift for boss's day- \$40

A gift for administrative assistant's day- \$25 each

If you are interested in joining the Pre-K Sunshine Club, please pay your dues to Patty Cline, no later than October 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **INCOMING COMMUNICATION**

It is the responsibility of every teacher to check and set up their individual mailboxes as they sign in and out and after lunch each day. Telephone messages received during the school day will be placed in the teacher boxes. Telephone calls will be sent to teachers' voice mail during instructional hours unless the office is aware of an emergency situation.

Teachers will keep a communication log by the telephone in the classroom. This log should be used to document dates and times of phone conversations with parents. This log should also include all parent notes and letters received during the school year.

There may be occasions during the school year at which time they will prove valuable.

### **CELL PHONES**

Please remember, personal cell phones SHOULD NOT be in use or visible during the regular school day.

### **DISTRICT EMAIL**

Your district email address is also an official channel of communication. It should be checked morning and afternoon. Problems with email should be reported immediately.

### **DISTRICT AND SCHOOL DRESS EXPECTATIONS**

Dresses, skirts, or culottes should be approximately knee length or longer.

Shirts, blouses or dress tops should be long enough to cover the midriff front and back leaving no exposed skin even when sitting, raising arms or reaching.

Necklines- front and back should avoid open or plunging backs or fronts and should not be revealing.

Sleeveless clothing is fine for women; but spaghetti straps or cut-up shoulders should not be worn-unless covered with a jacket or sweater type garment.

Jogging suits/exercise clothes are not appropriate professional attire for teaching.

Jeans are not acceptable unless worn on “casual Friday,” or fieldtrips, **with a school shirt**. Jeans should have no unusual holes. Pant leg bottoms should be hemmed.

Shorts may be worn (approximately knee length) during teacher planning days, outdoor field trips when worn with a school shirt, or for Summer VPK at WEC when there is an abundance of outdoor activities in extreme temperatures. Please remember, there may be occasions when shorts are not appropriate during a workday, such as parent conferences, district meetings, etc.

## **SCHEDULES**

Daily schedules for breakfast, lunch, outside play, and Library will be determined during pre- planning. This information will be shared at that time.

## **TEACHER’S LOUNGE**

Do not send or allow students (or your own children) to go into the Teacher’s Lounge. It is your responsibility to wash, dry, and put away any dishes or utensils that you use and to clean up any spills that you make in the refrigerator or microwave. Left over frozen products and perishable items should be stored briefly and then disposed of.

## **GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS**

Staff members should be active participants in all activities with children. Teachers can help to stimulate the children’s interests and natural curiosity by asking questions that help to extend play. For instance, two children playing in the block area have built an elaborate system of roads for their cars, but are beginning to lose interest in it. A teacher enters at this point and begins to refocus their play by saying, “Trevor, your car is running out of gas! What can you do about it?” The child may respond by saying, “I have to go to the gas station! Let’s build one, Alessandro.”

Teachers and staff need to be confident and consistent in following through with classroom rules using time out and natural consequences as methods of disciplining. Correcting children should be worded to accentuate the positive. Rather than say, “Don’t run,” or “Stop running.” We will first state the correction in the positive: “We use walking feet.”

It is important to develop a “room awareness,” that is, to be aware at all times of what is going on in the room. Successful teachers automatically possess teacher “with-it-ness.” This is a conscious effort of physically being positioned near possible problem areas of the classroom. When not assigned to a particular area, the staff person should move to the area where he or she is most needed.

Use a quiet, warm, yet firm voice when talking to the children. Always go to the child and speak directly to him or her. It is important to always show respect to the child.

Classrooms should be kept clean and orderly. Involve the children in the housekeeping routines.

Allow and encourage the child to do things for himself/herself. Set up activities designed to be independent of teacher supervision. Let the child work at things without interfering. Give the child sufficient time to try and solve the problems. Be ready to assist when it is necessary. Ask questions that will help the child arrive at the solution.

It is important to keep daily notes on the children and to exchange information with other teachers on problems or progress of a child. Remember to stay up to date with all student assessments and document accordingly.

Work at developing a positive professional rapport with the parents. Be friendly and helpful. Make them feel welcomed in the classroom. Relay messages about a child to other staff members. Relate positive information about the child to the parent on a daily basis. **DO NOT PUT NEGATIVE COMMENTS IN WRITING (e-mail, daily notes, etc.) Conduct a face-face conference if possible. If not, telephone is the next preferred method of communicating with parents.**

Remember, you are a model for the children to follow. Set a good example. Be empathetic, respectful, positive and encouraging.

### **SCHOOL WIDE RULES**

Our school has adopted the following four basic rules to be used school wide and five playground rules. Teachers will encourage all students while out and about the school campus to follow these four rules.

Throughout the school building:

1. We use walking feet.
2. We use helping hands.
3. We use listening ears and looking eyes.
4. We use thoughtful mouths.

On the playground:

1. Be safe.
2. Share all toys and put them where they belong.
3. Listen to all adults.
4. Line up when called
5. Wait your turn.

### **FIELD TRIP**



All field trips must be approved by Mr. Hernandez. Once your trip has been approved, notify the lunchroom manager at least two weeks prior to the trip. Permission forms and Emergency Medical forms must be completed before students are allowed to participate. Parent notification letters/permission slips with the date, time, and nature of the activity must be sent home and collected prior to each field trip. It is the teacher's responsibility to assure each student has these signed forms on file before going on each trip. Only approved volunteers may serve as chaperones on field trips. All students participating in a field trip must use the school provided transportation both ways. Exception to this rule maybe made only if the student is to ride with his/her legal guardians/parents and this exception has been arranged in writing with the principal. –SB4.43

### **PARTIES**

**At this time – classroom parties will not be had unless prior approved by the Principal.**



## **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Due to COVID 19 we will be unable to have volunteers in our buildings. The safety of our students and community is our top priority.-

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT EDUCATION**

Parents are an integral part of the Prek program. Teachers appreciate parent volunteers and look forward to the enrichment it brings to the classroom.. At this time any school activities will need to be arranged and approved by the Principal. The Eagles Nest as well as daily/weekly notes from the classroom teacher or Front Office will help keep parents informed.

## EMERGENCY PLANS

**Emergency Procedures: All teachers will carry a student roster in their ID Badge holder. This roster should include bus or pickup information and be updated frequently.**

### **PROCEDURES FOR FIRE:**

- At the sound of the “fire alarm” signal, line up at the door and wait for an exit signal or return to normal signal. Then if told to exit escort all students in an orderly manner to the nearest exit. Be sure all windows and doors are closed.
- Group students at a safe distance from the school building and check the students present against the student roster.
- Under no condition should anyone re-enter the school building until a pulsating ringing of the fire alarm system indicates the danger/drill is over.

### **STUDENT ILLNESS OR ACCIDENT**

- First aid shall be administered by the clinic aid. If further assistance is needed, notify the office.  
An administrative decision will be made if further emergency care is needed.
- The Clinic Aide will notify the parent or guardian of the student. Information can be obtained from the cumulative folder.
- In case of an injury, an accident report *must* be completed. Forms are in the office. Please see Lorrie Gallamore for assistance.



### **LIGHTNING**

- Students must not be outside during electrical storms.
- Electrical machines should be unplugged and avoided.

### **PROCEDURE FOR TORNADO**

At the sound of the “tornado alarm” (a message on the phone system AND radio), escort all students to the designated area: front wing and back wing against the wall inside the classrooms, portables inside the main hallway, main hallway classrooms into the hallway

- Have students lay face down, knees drawn up, and hands over head.
- .If a school bus is caught in the open when a tornado is approaching, the children should be escorted to a nearby ditch or ravine and made to lie face down, hands over head.



## LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES

**When you are alerted of a Lock Down, secure students inside the classroom away from the window, lock the door, close the blinds, and sit quietly. Do not open the door. Someone with credentials will unlock the door if needed.**

**If you are in the cafeteria and a Lock Down occurs, you will move students to the serving line and doors will be locked. All communication will be relayed through the radio so make sure yours is with you at all times and fully charged.**

ALL CLEAR is given over the telephone intercom and radio. This signifies that normal activities may resume.

\* NOTE: It is critical that you remain alert at all times when supervising children. If you see a dangerous situation developing, report it immediately to the office.



## **DISCIPLINE PLAN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The environment of the Prekindergarten is structured so children can make choices of planned activities and materials. This ability to choose and plan gives the child power and prevents many conflicts during the school day. Children are encouraged to develop language skills that help them to communicate their needs and feelings. Language is modeled for them by adults and other children so that they may learn to use language as a problem solving tool.

If a child is experiencing difficulty being self-directed and using language to solve problems in one area of play, he/she is offered another play activity. In the event that the child is still unable to control his/her behavior and cannot make appropriate choices for him/herself, using language to get his/her needs met, he/she is removed from the problem area and given a personal space away from others. He/she may return to the group or activity whenever the behavior is under control.

Guidelines for behavior are clearly explained to the children. Appropriate behavior is modeled and language is continuously encouraged in order to avoid conflict and allow the children opportunities for decision making and self-direction. The prekindergarten strives to provide an environment that allows child and adult alike to function to their fullest in solitary and group activities. Positive techniques such as redirection, reinforcement of child's effort, and anticipation and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement rather than competition, are employed to guide the children's behavior. The goal of the entire program is to support the development of an internal control system which enables the individual to grow and function within a social setting.

### **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline is not punishment; discipline is guidance; discipline is learning; and discipline is a training process that takes a great deal of time and patience, modeling and positive reinforcement. Rules and procedures are a positive way to guide children and help them learn acceptable behavior. Rules give children limits and encourage them to develop self-control. Rules should be few, simple, and stated in a positive way. Consistent and fair rules help children control their own behavior. They set limits that children can learn and depend on. The rules should be kept simple, few in number, clear, truly necessary, and reasonable for the age of the child. Some adults have only one basic rule: *You may not hurt yourself, others, or things*. Hurt can be explained as either physical or emotional.

#### **Social-Emotional Learning**

Second Step is a program rooted in social-emotional learning (SEL) that helps transform schools into supportive, successful learning environments uniquely equipped to encourage children to thrive. Second Step is more than just a classroom curriculum, Second Step's holistic approach helps create a positive school climate and empathetic society by providing

education professionals, families, and the community with tools to enable them to take an active role in the social-emotional growth and safety of today's children.

Second Step will be used by the Wakulla County Pre-K to guide students on how to thrive in a school and life setting. Students will learn the appropriate way to; listen, pay attention, manage their behaviors and get along with others. These self-regulating and social-emotional skills set students up for success in kindergarten and beyond.

When inappropriate behavior occurs, the following steps are taken:

1. Minor misbehaviors are ignored if there is no danger to the child or others.
2. The adult will use non-verbal communication through eye contact, a gentle touch, or closer proximity in order to encourage on-task behavior.
3. The adult intervenes by placing him/herself between the child and the source of the problem, thereby distracting the child.
4. The child is encouraged to go to another center or area, thereby removing him/herself from the disruptive situation.
5. The child is given "time-out," separated from the other children (1 minute per age of the child), thereby giving the child a time to "cool down" or think about the problem. An adult always takes time to discuss the problem and possible solutions before the child rejoins the group or activity.
6. If inappropriate behavior continues or is severe, contact will be made and maintained with the parents/guardians until the behavior improves. An individualized positive behavior plan will be created to improve the behavior.
7. If a child severely disrupts a class (tantrum, hurting him/herself or others), the child will be immediately removed from the classroom or setting by an adult. The child will be taken to the Principal or Assistant Principal until she/he has calmed down and can discuss the problem and possible solutions. The child will be returned to class and the parents/guardians will be notified. Each parent will receive a copy of the school discipline plan in the Parent Handbook as well as the classroom behavior management system at Open House or during the first week of school. This plan will be fully explained and questions answered at that time.
8. Depending on the severity and frequency of the problem, parents may be called to take the student home.

Discipline is not punishment; discipline is guidance, learning, and a training process that takes time and patience. Rules are a positive way to guide children and help them learn acceptable behavior. Rules give children limits and encourage them to develop self-control. Rules should be kept simple, few in number, clear, truly necessary, reasonable for the age of the child, and stated in a positive way. Consistent and fair rules help children control their own behavior. They set limits that children can learn and depend on. Some adults have only one basic rule: You may not hurt yourself, others, or things. Hurt can be explained as either physical

### **OUR EAGLET RULES**

1. We use walking feet.
2. We use helping hands.
3. We use listening ears and looking eyes.
4. We use thoughtful and kind words.

## CLOSING COMMENTS

Children imitate their parents and teachers. They will react to most situations the same way you do. If you yell at children, they will yell. If you spank children, they will hit. If you ridicule children, they will use name-calling. If you bribe children, they will always ask, “What’s in it for me?” But, if you use words to tell others when you are angry, children will express their feelings without aggression. If you leave a frustrating situation to cool off, children learn to take time to think before reacting. If you share things, children learn to be thoughtful of others. If you are courteous, children learn to cooperate.

Even if you do everything you can to prevent outbursts, fights, and other problems, they will happen. Just as children’s physical development proceeds slowly from sitting to crawling to walking, their emotional development is a bit-by-bit process. Emotional maturity takes time, good examples to imitate, and years of practice.

When you like children as they are, it helps them like themselves. When children like themselves, they are happy!

## Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

### CURRENT LAW AND PRACTICE

Chapter 415, Florida Statutes, requires mandatory reporting of all cases of child abuse. This applies to suspected or confirmed reports against any person, regardless of occupation, who is alleged to be involved or any person who is alleged to have committed any act of child abuse. School personnel **are not exempted** from mandatory reporting of child abuse even when a fellow employee is suspected or confirmed as the abuser.

### WHEN IN DOUBT, REPORT...CHILD ABUSE

As employees of the Wakulla County School Board and out of concern for the safety and well being of children in our community, it is imperative that we continue in an efficient and cooperative manner with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) providing children and families appropriate protection and services. The following information is a guide on policy, procedure, and reporting methods to be used by employees for the District of Wakulla County Schools in filing reports of suspected child abuse or neglect.

### ABUSE HOTLINE NUMBER

**1-800-96-ABUSE**

"**ALL** suspected cases of abuse or neglect should be reported to the Abuse Hotline. This includes all suspected abuse or neglect of children and adults or the abandonment of a child."

## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- ❑ Florida statutes, Chapter 415 defines abused or neglected child as a child whose physical or mental health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm, by the acts or omission of the parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare.
- ❑ Florida law *requires* educators to report child abuse or neglect. As a professional, you are mandated by law to report abuse by calling the abuse hotline. You are not required to follow up the call with a written report.
- ❑ It is illegal not to report suspected child abuse or neglect and is a misdemeanor that is punishable by fine or imprisonment.
- ❑ You are *protected* by Florida law from liability when reporting child abuse or neglect.
- ❑ Anonymous reports may not be made to the Abuse Registry. Mandated reporters must give their names when filing a report.



# FILING A REPORT

## 1. REPORTING PROCEDURES

### a. **Non-School Related Child Abuse**

Anyone aware of suspected or confirmed non-school related child abuse committed by a non-school Board employee, shall immediately make a report by calling the State of Florida Hot Line, Tallahassee, Florida (Telephone 1-800-96-ABUSE-Toll Free). The report should include the child's name and other identifiable information, e.g., date of birth, ethnicity, sex, phone number, directions to home, siblings, reporting date, and very brief narrative of the alleged abuse. Also, the name of the person reporting child abuse or neglect shall in no case be released to any person other than employees of DCF responsible for child protective services.

### b. **School Related Child Abuse (Institutional Abuse)**

Institutional Abuse: When a person is abused by an employee enrolled or residing in an institution, such as a school or hospital, it is referred to as institutional abuse.

Allegations of such abuse are investigated by DCF in the same manner as other abuse reports. In addition, the institution usually conducts an independent investigation.

The Superintendent and DCF make every effort to coordinate their interviews and other fact finding activities.

## 2. When investigating child abuse cases, representatives of DCF or a law enforcement agency may come to the school for the purpose of conducting an interview with a student on school premises during the school day. School staff members will be present at an interview. School staff in this context, *does not* include secretarial support staff.

a. Representative of DCF or the law enforcement agency believes that a school staff member could enhance the success of the interview.

b. The alleged abused child requests or consents to the presence of the school staff member(s) at the interview.

When it has been determined that an interview will be conducted on campus, it should be done in an area which ensures confidentiality and avoids embarrassment to the student. If it is determined that the student is to be removed from the campus, this shall be done in the most inconspicuous and expeditious manner.



3. Representatives of DCF may come to the school and take a child into custody when DCF personnel determine there are reasonable grounds to believe a child is suffering from illness, or is in immediate danger from his/her surroundings, and that the student's removal is necessary, or that the custodian of the child has violated a condition imposed by the courts. *DCF notifies the parent/guardian when a child is taken into custody.*
4. F.S. 415 authorizes a Guardian Ad Litem, who is court appointed to represent a child in judicial proceedings, to inspect and copy student records without parent consent. The Guardian Ad Litem will have access to the child and may speak with teachers and other school staff concerning the child's academic progress, behavior, attention, and physical condition. The statute also requires that the Guardian Ad Litem be notified of any staffings or other proceedings concerning the child, and be notified prior to any action taken (ESE staffings, case reviews, and/or suspension conference).



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CHILD ABUSE REPORTING AND THE LAW

## **Who Must Report Suspect Cases of Child Abuse, and Neglect?**

Florida Statute, Chapter 415.504, states that those persons who are legally obligated to report include physicians, osteopaths, medical examiners, chiropractors, nurses or hospital personnel engaged in the admission, examination, care, or treatment of person; health or mental health professionals; practitioners who rely solely on spiritual means for healing, school teachers or other school official or personnel, social workers, day care center worker or other professional child care, residential or institutional workers, or law enforcement officers.

## **What Happens if One Suspects Abuse and Does Not Report?**

Florida Statutes, Chapter 415.513 states that any person required by Chapter 415.504 to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect who knowingly and willfully fails to do so or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree and may be prosecuted.

## **How Does One Make a Report?**

Chapter 415.504 of the Florida Statute provides for a central abuse registry in the Department of Children and Families (DCF) A report can be made by calling the Abuse Registry toll-free (1-800-96-ABUSE), operated 24 hours per day.

## **What Happens After a Report Is Made?**

After the call is made to the registry, the report is then called back to the county, DCF Child Abuse Investigations Office. An DCF Child Abuse Investigator is assigned to make an initial investigation to assess the family situation and determine the safety of the child.

## **Am I Protected Legally If I Make a Report?**

Florida Statute, Chapter 415.511 protects persons reporting child abuse through immunity from liability. Anyone making a report "in good faith" is specifically immune from any civil or criminal liability which might result.

## **Can an Anonymous Report Be Made?**

**NO.** The reporter is required to give his or her name. Chapter 415 requires that the reporter's name not be released to anyone other than employees of the department responsible for child protective services, the abuse registry, or the appropriated state attorney without the written consent of the person reporting.

## **Social Networking:**

Social networks are rapidly growing in popularity and use. The way we conduct ourselves online impacts our professional image as educators. The following guidelines may help protect your professional reputation:

- Post only what you want the world to see. Imagine students, parents, and administrators, visiting your site.
- Do not discuss students or coworkers, or publicly criticize school policies or personnel that may create discourse among the faculty or harm the reputation of the institution in the community.
- Do not use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous. Exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations.
- Weigh whether a particular posting puts your effectiveness as a teacher at risk.
- No postings or checking social media (FACEBOOK, SNAPSHOT, TWITTER, ETC ...) should be occurring during school hours while you are supervising students.



## Wakulla Pre-Kindergarten Calendar 2020-2021

<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Event</b>
August 4 through August 12	Pre-Planning
8/7/20	Open House
8/13/20	"First day of School, Early release"
9/3/20	Volunteer Orientation
9/7/20	Labor Day Holiday
9/12/20	Teacher Planning Day
9/18/20	Fall Pictures Lifetouch
9/23/20	Professional Development Day (No Students)
10/9/20	End of 1st 9 Weeks
10/20/20	Fall Pictures Lifetouch Retakes
10/26/20	Begin Fall Dress Up Week
10/30/20	Trunk or Treat
10/30/20	End Fall Dress Up Week
11/11/20	Veteran's Day Holiday
11/23/20	Thanksgiving Holiday begins all personnel and students
11/27/20	Thanksgiving Holiday ends
12/7/20	Book Fair Starts
12/10/20	Pictures with Santa/Book Fair Night- 5:00-7:00
12/11/20	Book Fair Ends
12/17/20	Classroom Christmas Parties
12/18/20	End of 1st Semester Early Release Day
12/21/20	Beginning of Winter Break
1/4/21	Teacher Planning Day (10 and 9.5 month personnel return)
1/5/21	Students and 9 month personnel return
1/18/21	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
1/27/21	Professional Development Day (No Students)
2/5/21	Family Fun Day 4:00-8:00
2/11/21	Super Seller Picnic
2/12/21	Classroom Valentine's Day Parties
2/15/21	Presidents' Day Holiday (all personnel)
3/1/21	Dr. Seuss Week Starts
3/2/21	Dr. Seuss Birthday Celebration
3/5/21	End of 3rd Nine Weeks
3/5/21	Dr. Seuss Week Ends
3/5/21	Spring Pictures
3/15/21	Start of Spring Break
3/22/21	Teacher Planning Day (10 and 9.5 month personnel return)
3/23/21	Students and 9 month personnel return
4/2/21	Spring Egg Hunt
4/2/21	Book Fair Starts
4/6/21	Class Pictures / Staff Pictures
4/9/21	Book Fair Ends
4/26/21	Graduation at WEC
4/27/21	Graduation at WEC
4/28/21	Graduation at WEC
5/27/21	Early Release
5/28/21	"Early Release, End of Second Semester, End of Year"
5/28/21	Graduation
5/31/21	Memorial Day Holiday
6/1/21	Post Planning
6/2/21	Post Planning

**WAKULLA COUNTY SCHOOL CALENDAR  
2020-2021**

**July 2020**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**August 2020**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**September 2020**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

**October 2020**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**November 2020**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

**December 2020**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**July**

02 Independence Day Holiday

**August**

04-12 Pre-Planning (10 & 9 1/2 Month Personnel)

13 Students and 9 Month Personnel Return/Early Release

**September**

07 Labor Day Holiday

23 Professional Development Day (No Students)

25 Progress Reports

**October**

09 End of 1st Nine Weeks

12 Teacher Planning Day

16 Report Cards Issued

**November**

11 Veterans' Day Holiday

13 Progress Reports

23-27 Thanksgiving Holidays (All Personnel and students—holiday begins at end of day 11/20)

**December**

17 Exams

18 Exams/Early Release/End of 2nd Nine Weeks/ End of Semester 1

21-31 Christmas Holidays (12, 10, 9 1/2 Month & students—holiday begins at end of day 12/18)

**January**

01 Christmas Holidays (Teachers and students)

04 Teacher Planning Day (NO Students –12, 10 & 9 1/2 Month Personnel Return)

05 Students and 9 Month Personnel Return

08 Report Cards Issued

18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

27 Professional Development Day (No Students)

**February**

5 Progress Reports

15 Presidents' Day Holiday (12, 10, 9 1/2 & 9 Month Personnel)

**March**

05 End of 3rd Nine Weeks

15-19 Spring Break (begins at the end of the day on 3/12) (Students, 10, 9 1/2 & 9 Month Personnel)

22 Teacher Planning Day (10 & 9 1/2 Mo. Personnel Return)

23 Students and 9 Month Personnel Return

26 Report Cards Issued

**April**

09 Progress Reports

**May**  
27 Exams/Early Release

28 Exams/Early Release/End of 4th Nine Weeks/ End of Semester 2

28 GRADUATION

31 Memorial Day Holiday

**June**

1-2 Post Planning

**January 2021**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**February 2021**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

**March 2021**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**April 2021**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**May 2021**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**June 2021**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

**PAID 12 MONTH PERSONNEL HOLIDAYS**

Independence Day 7/2	New Year's 1/1
Labor Day 9/7	Martin Luther King, Jr. 1/18
Veterans' Day 11/11	President's Day 2/15
Thanksgiving 11/23-27	Spring Break 3/19
Christmas 12/21-31	Memorial Day 5/31

**PAID TEACHER HOLIDAYS**

Labor Day 9/7	Christmas 12/25
Veterans' Day 11/11	New Year's 1/1
Thanksgiving 11/28	Martin Luther King, Jr. 1/18

**NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION** The Wakulla County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability in admission to its programs, services, or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals, or in any aspect of their operations. The Wakulla County School District also does not discriminate in its hiring or employment practices.

The lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in our districts' CTE programs.

This notice is provided as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Boys Scout of America Equal Access Act and the Florida Educational Equity Act. Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding these laws may be forwarded to Angie Walker, Executive Director of Human Resources. 69 Arran Road, Crawfordville, FL 32327 — 850.926.0065, ext. 9401 — [Angela.walker@wcsb.us](mailto:Angela.walker@wcsb.us)

