

Hortonville Area School District Four-Year-Old Kindergarten Family Handbook



Our 4K Mission

The Hortonville Area School District (HASD), in partnership with our community, will provide ALL students with challenging and diverse opportunities to become enthusiastic lifelong learners who will build the future. Four-Year-Old Kindergarten (4K) is based on the fact that children learn at different rates, in different ways, and at different times. It is our responsibility to view each child as a unique individual capable of great things!

HASD Mission Statement

Our community ensures every student learns at the highest level

Webpage: [Hortonville Area School District - New - 4K Programming \(hasd.org\)](https://hasd.org)

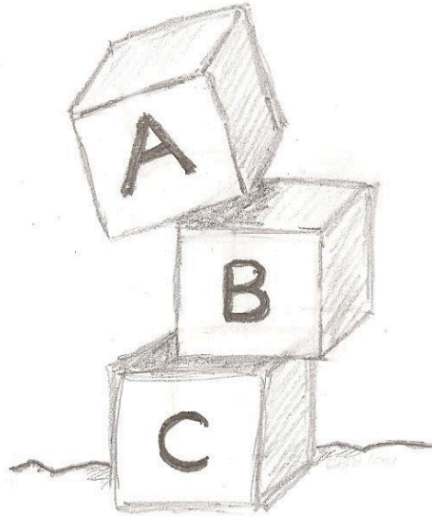
Our Philosophy on the Importance of Play

Children learn best through using their senses to explore and manipulate the world around them. An old Chinese proverb reads: *Tell me and I will forget; show me and I may remember, involve me and then I will understand.* Children at play are like adults at work, like students at a study that enthralls them, like artists in the act of creation. The idea of play as the central activity of 4K may sound questionable but play is a time for deep concentration in activities which absorb children. Play is a time for contemplating, organizing and investigating. It is an active opportunity to practice language, experience social dynamics and live out fantasies and future grown-up events. Although “free play” may evoke noisy, chaotic images, it is only coined “free” as the choice has been left up to the child as to what and how to play and whom to play with; “free play” is actually the best vehicle to facilitate young children’s learning in a creative, engaging and empowering way. Teachers strategically integrate pre-academic and school readiness knowledge and skills into all adult- and child-directed times. When your child answers your inquiries of what they did at school, be proud when they say, “Just played!” and be confident that they have heard, seen, touched, smelled and tasted all the classroom had to offer, never realizing that they played an integral part working hard in their own learning that day.

Four-Year-Olds and HASD’s 4K

As you’ve already discovered, four-year-olds are energetic and curious about their surroundings. They learn best through playful interaction with their environment and exposure to many different experiences. Through their actions they make hypotheses, predict outcomes, and draw conclusions about their world. 4K programming provides the opportunity to participate in quality early learning to begin building a solid foundation for lifelong learning. Children work towards developing the social and pre-academic skills that contribute to future success in school.

The HASD 4K has implemented a community-collaborative model that builds on existing learning programs, childcare centers, and religious affiliated schools, in partnership with the site providers to offer quality early childhood education for four-year-olds. The program may serve over 200 students at six sites. Community approaches bring together community leaders representing business, schools, childcare, Headstart, parents, recreation, and parent education to explore issues and develop community-based approaches to 4K. We are excited to offer an equal opportunity for all four-year-olds, regardless of where they live. HASD allows a child to attend one school year in the HASD 4K program. Research does not support retention; therefore, repeating 4K is typically not supported. Families that are interested in repeating 4K should reference Board Policy 5410.



HASD 4K Sites

4K District Coordinator – Deborah Lohr

920-757-7030 deborahlohr@hasd.org

Fox West YMCA
W6931 School Rd. Greenville
(920) 560-3417
rhafenbreadl@ymcafoxcities.org

Hortonville Elementary School
240 Warner St. Hortonville
(920) 779-7911
jareddeli@hasd.org

Hillside Preschool
N1615 Meadowview Dr. Greenville
(920) 757-5722
hillside4K@gmail.com

North Greenville Elementary School
N2468 Learning Way Greenville
(920) 757-7030
brittanyschmidt@hasd.org

Expectations

Of Our Teachers:

- Foster a positive environment where children feel safe, comfortable and are nurtured.
- Engage together in age-appropriate activities and hands-on experiences that promote growth in all areas of childhood development.
- Reply to notes, emails, and phone calls in a timely fashion.
- Communicate our classroom and school activities through calendars and newsletters.
- Uphold Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction's requirements for teacher licensing.

Of Our Families:

- Empty backpacks daily, responding to teacher notes and returning permission slips, fees, and correspondence by the requested time in a sealed, labeled envelope placed in your child's folder. Please do not allow toys in your child's backpack unless requested by your teacher for a special activity. Our goal is to share common classroom toys. Challenges arise with sharing personal items and teachers cannot be responsible for managing toys from home.
- Help your child develop a dressing routine and select weather-appropriate clothing to increase your child's success in being an independent dresser. We strongly encourage children ALWAYS wear tennis shoes as we do a variety of physical activities where safety and sure-footedness is a must. Flip flops and Croc's are strongly discouraged.
- Complete all forms and paperwork on time. This helps ensure safety of your child.
- Keep your child home when they are ill. When children do not feel well, their brains and bodies are not ready to learn.
- Arrive at the start of class; please respect your teacher's time for preparing the classroom for exciting learning opportunities.
- Be involved! We encourage active participation through volunteering, chaperoning field trips, attending classroom and district opportunities and, most importantly, engaging your child in conversations about school.
- Provide healthy snack choices for your child only.
- Notify us of any changes in your family's contact information.

Of Our **Children:**

A child must be four years old on or before September 1st of the entering school year to participate in the 4K program. A common question from parents is: What does my child need to know before coming to 4K? Because children come in with a variety of experiences and knowledge as well as up to an eleven-month difference in age, we instead encourage families to ask: How can I help prepare my child for a successful year in 4K? Here are a few teacher suggestions:

- Practice independent dressing and managing of belongings: un/packing backpack, putting away shoes and coat in designated space
- Encourage conversation about specifics from your child's day: What did you eat at snack? Did you play in the housekeeping area today?
- Provide life experiences: visit the library, get them involved while grocery shopping, frequent the park, practice using manners at a restaurant
- Develop routines at home: getting ready for school (for example, eating breakfast, getting dressed, brushing teeth, putting on coat, waiting for bus) bedtime (such as, putting on pajamas, having a snack, brushing teeth, reading books, whispering goodnight)

Curriculum and Assessment

4K is different from five-year-old kindergarten. It is a play-based experience that highlights learning through exploration with an emphasis on social and emotional development. HASD 4K teachers use the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards to guide planning of appropriate expectations, opportunities, and assessment. HASD has adopted the research-based Creative Curriculum because of its close alignment to the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards. Creative Curriculum uses an integrated approach to address social, emotional, early language, literacy, math, social studies, science, and motor development. Skills are taught through a learning center approach that focuses on facilitation of play skills and developmentally appropriate experiences for preschool students.

For more information on Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, please visit: <http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-about.php>

Student assessment is an ongoing process; at this level we are most concerned with the growth each child demonstrates. Conferences will be held twice a year. Your child's teacher is always available should you have questions or concerns throughout the school year.

By the end of your child's 4K year, they will show growth in all areas of development including social and emotional skill application (such as problem solving, self-control and cooperating with peers), increased school behaviors (including following teacher directions and participating in classroom activities) and the ability to identify and write their first name. They will amaze you with all the new things they will learn and do!

Family Outreach Opportunities

HASD 4K classrooms offer a variety of exciting ways to participate in your child's education. Teachers may request chaperones for a field trip, visitors as special readers, classroom volunteers or helpers in big projects for school. **Please be aware that any chaperones, readers, volunteers, or helpers in the classroom must have an approved HASD background check.** Children will bring home activities to encourage a love of literacy that can be shared with the family. To emphasize the importance of literacy, your child's teacher will host periodic family reading nights. Families will be made aware of district and community happenings appropriate for young children including site sponsored 4K Family Fun events such as Dr. Seuss Night at Hillside or swimming at the YMCA.

School Hours, Arrival and Dismissal

The first day of school is the same as the first day of school for K-12 students. Depending on the site, a morning and an afternoon class time may be offered. HASD operates a 4-day program (Mon-Thurs) that runs 3 hours and 15 minutes per day. The morning class begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 11:00 a.m.; the afternoon class begins at 11:45 am and ends at 3:00 p.m. All 4K sites follow the HASD calendar, however, please note: **On early release days, 4K will not meet. Rather, the day will be made up on the corresponding Friday.**

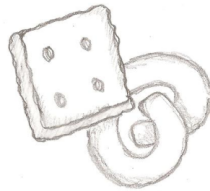
If your family has opted for district provided bussing, specific pick up and drop off location and times will be set. Morning 4K children will be bussed with school-age children on the regular route to Greenville or Hortonville Elementary and then shuttled to their assigned 4K site. After morning 4K, they will be transported to their home or sitter within the sites' boundaries, with only 4K students. Afternoon 4K students will be bused to the sites with only 4K students and at the end of the day, will be shuttled back to the elementary sites, returning home on the regular bus route with school-age children. Our 4K children sit in the front of the buses to ensure safety and closer supervision. If you will be providing transportation, specific information about drop off and pickup information will be provided by each site.

Should weather cause delays, there will not be a morning session, but afternoon session will run as planned. If the district cancels school, there will be no 4K for either session that day.

Supplies and Fees

Supplies are specific to each site and each classroom teacher. Your child's teacher will provide you with this information. Please note that our busy classrooms may request replenishing of these supplies throughout the school year; thank you in advance for your support.

There is a \$15.00 district registration fee to be collected in August at orientation. There will be incidental costs for special activities and field trips. The district will work with families that cannot afford these expenses. Private sites do assess charges for any additional services such as enrichment opportunities, field trips, or childcare before and after the hours of the 4K program which are contracted by the parent and will be managed by each site.



Snack

Your child will have a snack during the school day. Families are responsible for sending snack for their child each day. If students do not come with a snack, a serving of dairy and grain will be provided. Families who habitually do not send snack with their child will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Please note that we adhere to nutritious guidelines which include reading food labels and providing foods which do NOT have sugar (brown, corn sweetener, corn syrup, fructose, glucose, dextrose, high-fructose, honey, lactose, maltose, molasses, sucrose, etc.) listed as one of the first two ingredients. Your child's teacher will explain snack procedures specific to the 4K site as well as provide a list of recommended selections. **In accordance with HASD Policy 8510 If your child's birthday occurs during the school year, you may not send in a treat. Please consider other options such as decorative pencils or stickers.**

Attendance and Sickness

If your child will not be attending school for the day due to illness, appointment or other circumstance please notify your child's teacher as well as the **Transportation Department (757-7045)** if your child rides the bus.

To ensure the safety and health of all students and staff, district policy insists children who are ill do not attend school. Teachers reserve the right to determine if a child is too sick to stay at school. Children must be symptom free without fever/pain reducer medication for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

Below is a non-inclusive list of symptoms:

- An oral temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more
- Severe congestion, complaints of chest discomfort, difficulty breathing/wheezing or other frequent, persistent cough that may be disruptive to classmates
- An unexplained rash
- Thick green drainage from the nose for 3 days or more
- Discharge from the eyes

- Vomiting within the last 24 hours – please check with your site for protocol
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours - please check with your site for protocol

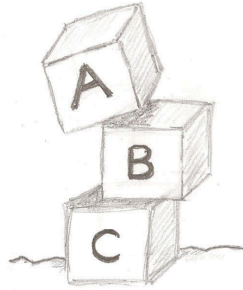
- Head lice or nits – please notify teacher if your child has head lice
- A diagnosed communicable disease or suspected signs of a communicable disease
- If he/she is experiencing persistent pain (ear, stomach, etc.) or is too sick to be comfortable while at school

HASD 4K Progress and Planning Report Definitions

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Health and physical skills are important in their own right and for future tasks in reading, writing, scientific explorations, math, and overall success in school. Health and physical development also affect social/emotional development. As children learn what their bodies can do, in a safe and healthy way, they gain self-confidence. There are three broad goals.

- **Health and Safety** involves children meeting their own self help and physical needs, such as, toileting, dressing and sleep. Health and safety also involves children controlling their body and behaviors in such a way that they keep themselves and others safe.
- **Gross motor development** involves the movements controlled by the body's large muscles, such as running, jumping, hopping, galloping, and skipping, as well as throwing, kicking, and catching. Balance and stability are also important.
- **Fine motor development** focuses on the control, coordination, and dexterity of the small muscles in the hands that allow children to perform simple self-help skills and manipulate objects such as scissors and writing tools.



SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The preschool years are a prime time for developing social and emotional skills that are essential to children's well-being and success, in school and in life. These are the goals.

- **Self-Awareness.** This refers to how children feel accepted and valued by the people who are most important to them. Children may demonstrate pride in accomplishments, state name and show confidence in abilities.
- **Responsibility for self and others.** This goal is about developing habits and character traits such as responsibility, independence, and self-direction, and following rules and routines. Children may demonstrate this by managing personal belongings, taking care of personal hygiene, and participating in group.
- **Prosocial behavior.** This includes traits that will help children get along in the world, such as empathy, sharing, and taking turns. Children may demonstrate this by enjoying peers, recognizing feelings in themselves and others, interacting appropriately with adults, and participation in group activities.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

A solid foundation in language development gives children the skills they need to become successful learners. Children who have rich language and literacy experiences in preschool are more likely to develop strong language and literacy skills. There are two goals.

- **Listening and speaking.** Having a large vocabulary, expressing oneself, understanding the oral speech of others, participating in a conversation, and using language to solve problems are important components of oral language development.
- **Reading and writing.** This goal involves helping children make sense of written language as they enjoy and value reading. Development in this area increases children's ability to handle books, understand the purpose of print and how it works, and comprehends a story. They gain knowledge of the alphabet and write letters and words during their play.



MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Mathematical development is the process of children using logical thinking and early mathematical concepts to meaningfully extend their thinking processes in all areas. There are two broad goals.

- **Logical thinking.** This goal is about helping children to make sense of information. They compare, contrast, sort, classify, count, measure, and recognize patterns to gain a deeper understanding of concepts. Children may demonstrate this by following directions, following routines and applying knowledge during play.
- **Spatial relationships.** This goal involves engaging children in exploring, recognizing, and describing shapes and spaces during play. Children may demonstrate this while building with blocks, creating two and three-dimensional artwork, and during imaginative play, using a box as a car.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND COGNITION

Approaches to learning and cognitive development are the processes of learning to think and reason. Preschool-age children are developing skills that prepare them for work in all the disciplines. These are the goals.

- **Learning and problem solving.** This goal involves helping children to be thoughtful about how they use information, resources, and materials. They think about their ideas, make predictions, and test possible solutions demonstrating curiosity and persistence. Children may demonstrate this by watching, listening, and completing projects.
- **Representation and symbolic thinking.** This goal focuses on how children use symbols. Symbols can be objects (a pot used as a drum), people (pretending to be a mommy), or representations through drawings. Graphs to represent numbers are also examples of representation and symbolic thinking. Children may demonstrate this by applying new knowledge.