

# CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

DR. DANA FALL - SUPERINTENDENT



## 3K Parent and Guardian Handbook

2023-2024

The district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or disability in admission to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies should be made to the [insert contact information]. For further information on federal non-discrimination regulations, including Title IX, contact the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at [OCR.DC@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.DC@ed.gov) or call 1-800-421-3481.

### Contents

Requirements for Eligibility for 3K Enrollment.....	2
Residency.....	2
Age Eligibility.....	2
Family Income Eligibility.....	2
Immunization.....	3

Application Process .....	3
Screening.....	3
Anti-Discrimination Statement .....	3
Operating Policies & Procedures .....	3
Attendance .....	3
3K Hours.....	3
District/School Calendar.....	3
Tuition.....	3
Transportation .....	4
3K Daily Schedule .....	4
Confidentiality .....	4
Discipline and Guidance Policy.....	4
Educational Policies.....	5
Curriculum .....	5
Creative Curriculum.....	5
Assessing Student Learning.....	5
Health, Wellness & Safety .....	6
Health Records.....	6
Reporting of Abuse or Neglect .....	6
Parent/Family Involvement.....	7
Parent/Family Workshops.....	7
Parent-Teacher Conferences .....	7
Communication.....	7
Classroom Visits .....	7
Parent/Guardian-Teacher Agreement .....	8

## Program Goal of 3K

The goal of the 3K is to provide children and their families with quality preschool experiences necessary for school success. Each program will incorporate the following:

- Provide a healthy, safe and nurturing environment;
- Provide an environment that encourages early literacy, emotional, social, physical and intellectual development;
- Encourage the development of a positive self-image;
- Make learning fun so that children will develop a desire to be lifelong learners;
- Encourage language development, creativity, and an appreciation of fine arts and music;
- Encourage children to interact successfully with other children and adults and to live and work together in a cooperative environment which promotes decision making, peaceful resolution of conflicts and respect for others; and
- Form a cooperative partnership with parents so we can work together to meet the needs of each child and ensure his or her success.

### **Vision Statement**

Preparing Today's Students to Become Tomorrow's Leaders.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Cherokee County School District, steeped in pride and tradition, in partnership with all stakeholders, is to ensure that all students have the education necessary to succeed as responsible, productive citizens by providing excellent opportunities in academics, athletics, and the arts.

## **Requirements for Eligibility for 3K Enrollment**

### *Residency*

Pursuant to statute, priority for participation in 3K had been given to eligible children residing in the school district. The statute directs that each year's appropriations bill sets forth the priority schedule for districts in the state. The eligible districts for 2023-2024 are listed in Appendix B.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of age- and income-eligible children must provide documentation of the children's legal residency within a 3K school district.

### *Age Eligibility*

To be eligible a child must be three years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year based on acceptable documentation, such as a birth certificate or official document from other countries. Proof-of-age eligibility must be on file no later than the day the child begins 3K.

### *Family Income Eligibility*

Family income eligibility must be shown for enrollment: an annual family income of 185 percent or less of the federal poverty guidelines as promulgated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; or Medicaid eligibility. Acceptable forms of verification include the

following: notification letter to parent/guardian confirming household eligibility for free or reduced meal benefits (not applicable for Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools) or a copy of current Medicaid card. Verification of family income may include pay stubs, tax returns, or W-2 forms.

#### *Immunization*

Documentation of the child's immunization must be provided at enrollment.

#### **Application Process**

The parent enrolling a child must complete and submit a 3K application. The application must be accompanied by a copy of the child's proof of age eligibility, documentation of the family income eligibility, and immunization documentation.

#### **Screening**

All children will be screened during the first 45 days using the Developmental Indicators of Assessment of Learning (DIAL-4).

#### **Anti-Discrimination Statement**

Approved schools must comply with constitutional provisions and all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, or disability in admission to, treatment in its programs and activities or need for special education services. For further information on federal non-discrimination regulations, including Title IX, contact the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at [ocr@ed.gov](mailto:ocr@ed.gov) or call 1-800-421-3481.

#### **Operating Policies & Procedures**

##### *Attendance*

Regular attendance is crucial to your child's success. Each parent/family must agree to send their child to 3K for 6.5 hours of instructional time, five days per week, 180 days a year. Exclusions from the 180 days of attendance would include school district closures due to dangerous weather situations. A child who is chronically tardy or absent may be released from the program.

##### *3K Hours*

3K shall operate educational programs for children five days a week, for at least 180 instructional days. The educational program shall operate for a minimum of six and one-half (6.5) hours daily, which includes instructional hours, center time, outdoor play, mealtime, and quiet/rest time. The Cherokee County School District's 3K Programs operates during normal elementary school hours 7:50 – 2:25 each day.

##### *District/School Calendar*

The 3K classrooms follow the traditional 180-day school year.

##### *Tuition*

No parent is required to pay tuition or fees solely for the purpose of enrolling in or attending 3K.

### *Transportation*

3K students must be dropped off and picked up as car riders. Please notify the school immediately of any changes in transportation arrangements. **Only authorized people with proper identification will be allowed to pick up your child.**

### *3K Daily Schedule*

Opportunity for a brief rest time will be incorporated into each instructional day. Rest time may not exceed one hour per day, except as necessary to address the specific individual needs of children. Children unable to sleep during the rest period shall be allowed to read or participate in another quiet activity.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality of information about the child and family will be maintained at all times. Enrollment forms and all other information concerning the child and family will be accessible to the parent/guardian, principal, teaching staff, and licensing agency. Information concerning the child will not be made available to anyone else by any means without the expressed written consent of the parent/guardian.

### **Discipline and Guidance Policy**

Providers will make use of developmentally appropriate guidance techniques and may not allow the use of corporal punishment or severe discipline. In accordance with [nonregulatory federal guidance](#), exclusionary practices should not be used to reduce unwanted behavior. Resources on appropriate strategies to reduce unwanted and teach desired behavior can be found here: <http://www.pyramidmodel.org/>.

Early childhood experts believe that good discipline is a learning process that involves compassion, caring, sensitivity, and guidance. The goal of good discipline is to help the child develop self-control, responsibility, and problem-solving skills, characteristics that are foundational to a student's meeting the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*.<sup>1</sup> There are many ways that the teachers will encourage good discipline practices:

- A well-planned physical environment and curriculum;
- Acting as role models for the children;
- Setting reasonable and positive expectations;
- Respecting feelings;
- Trusting each child to succeed;
- Offering good, reasonable choices;
- Calmly talking about problems; and
- Always reinforcing good behavior.

Punishment or harsh treatment does not encourage the goals of good discipline. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking; belittling; shaming; shaking; depriving food, water, naps, outside time, or bathroom facilities; unsupervised isolation, or improperly restricting the movement of the child.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://ed.sc.gov/about/profile-of-sc-graduate/>

With groups of children interacting, there will be conflicts. The teachers will implement proven healthy strategies that are appropriate to the situation. Some guidance techniques that staff may use include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Conflict Resolution – Teachers help children learn skills and language to work out disagreement with their peers;
- Redirecting the Child – Quite often, children need to be given concrete alternative suggestions for behavior to focus their energy in a positive way;
- Positive Encouragement – Teachers praise the appropriate behavior, being careful not to give much attention to the negative behavior;
- Natural Consequences – For example, by helping a child realize that arriving late for group time activities will result in missing their turn; or
- Removing the Child from the Group – This is handled in a calm manner without unnecessary stress to allow the child regain self-control.

Each child has different needs and requirements to develop self-control, judgment, and problem-solving skills. Teachers and administrators will work individually with each child and his/her parents to establish a positive interaction.

## **Educational Policies**

### *Curriculum*

All aspects of the learning environment, including equipment and materials, classroom environment, outdoor environment, staff child interactions, teaching strategies, learning center provisions, etc. must be founded on current early childhood research and focus on the developmental and academic needs of four-year-old children. The curriculum that will be implemented is Creative Curriculum.

Creative Curriculum is a practical approach on how to organize the environment to support children's social development and active learning. It is based on child development theory. By continually changing and enriching the environment, teachers can support learning and creativity in children. It emphasizes establishing a partnership with parents and offers practical ideas for explaining the curriculum to parents. For more information, visit [www.teachingstrategies.com](http://www.teachingstrategies.com).

### *Assessing Student Learning*

Your child's teacher will administer a readiness assessment, as required by state law. The assessment will provide information for the teacher on your child's literacy skills and will be used only to meet your child's individual learning needs. The teacher will additionally conduct ongoing student assessments to gather information about each child's growth and skill development, as well as to inform instruction. Your child's progress will be assessed using a developmental child assessment instrument approved by the South Carolina Department of Education. The assessment will replace traditional report cards and standardized tests with a system that helps teachers observe your child, assess your child's work, and document your child's achievement with the following:

- Portfolios: Collections of your child’s work that show progress and demonstrates special interests and talents as well as areas in need of development; and
- Developmental Guidelines and Checklists: Lists of age or grade level expectations that are used for guiding teacher’s observations about your child’s achievements in school.

The benefits of developmental child assessments are the following:

- Your child’s strengths and needs are clearly identified for you, your child, and the teacher.
- Teachers focus on your child as an individual and set specific goals for him or her.
- Your child is observed and evaluated using a developmental checklist that is based on the most current knowledge about how children develop and learn.
- The process of evaluating your child is connected to what happens in the classroom.

Documentation from the assessment will be sent home 4 times per year, after approximately the 45<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup> and 120<sup>th</sup> day of school and at the end of the year.

## **Assessments**

A readiness assessment must be administered by the forty-fifth day of the school year to gather information about each child’s growth and skill development in early language and literacy competencies. Assessment approved by the SCDE that CCSD uses is Teaching Strategies GOLD.

## **Health, Wellness & Safety**

### *Health Records*

A health record for each child shall be maintained in the school. Each health record shall include all of the following information:

- A current copy of the child’s immunization record signed by a physician or other health official. This record should indicate that all required immunizations are complete as recommended by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), or that the appropriate official has provided written proof that the child meets either medical or religious exemption requirements; and

### *Reporting of Abuse or Neglect*

All schools are mandated by law to report suspicion of child abuse or neglect; the law requires reporting the following:

- Any physical injury, sexual or emotional abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means by those responsible for his/her care, custody and control (with the exception of discipline including spanking administered in a reasonable manner) shall be construed to be abuse.
- Failure to provide by those responsible for the care, custody and control of the child, the proper or necessary support, education as required by law, medical, surgical or any other care necessary for his/her well-being shall be classified as neglect.

### **Parent/Family Involvement**

The district's early childhood program recognizes that parents and families are their child's first teachers. We want parents and families to be actively involved in their child's education this school year and for many school years to come.

### **Parent/Family Workshops**

A series of Parent/Family workshops and/or Parenting Programs on various topics will be offered throughout the school year. Families are strongly encouraged to attend these. The school district's Family and Literacy Parent contact person is Karen W. Henderson at 864-206-2209 or you may email me at [karen.henderson@cherokee1.org](mailto:karen.henderson@cherokee1.org)

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Schools will report at least quarterly to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on his/her child's progress. This reporting will include the following:

- An orientation to 3K (ex: Back to School Night, home visits, etc.) will be conducted as the first of these quarterly contacts to complete the Parent Orientation Checklist.
- Two of the quarterly contacts will include parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Conferences will be a time for parents to learn about their child's experiences and developmental progress. Documentation of your child's progress, curriculum developmental checklists, and portfolios will be shared with you during the conference and at regular reporting times during the school year.
- The final review of your child's progress will be provided at the end of the school year as the concluding parent contact.

Other conferences may be scheduled at the request of either the teaching staff or parents.

### **Communication**

3K believes in building a partnership with all families of the children enrolled. Open communication is the most important characteristic of this partnership and is considered the most beneficial to the children's learning and development. Parents are encouraged to share information that would be helpful in the staff's care of their children. The teaching staff will also share information with parents about their children and about the program using various modes of communication:

- regular newsletters;
- face-to-face conversations;
- phone calls;
- e-mails; and
- written notes.

### **Classroom Visits**

All parents are encouraged to visit their child's class to observe or participate in class activities. Visits must be approved by the principal and scheduled with the teacher. There is always room for parents and grandparents alike to spend some time with the children or to share talents, hobbies, and interests with all children.



## Parent/Guardian-Teacher Agreement

The schools that are participating in 3K truly believe that parents are their child's first and most important teachers. The selected schools see their role as that of a partner. The Parent/Guardian-Teacher agreement outlines how parents and teachers can share the responsibility for the success of each child. Please sign the copy of this agreement, which is at the end of this handbook, and return it to your child's teacher.



## Appendix A: Parent/Guardian and Teacher Agreement

### Parent/Guardian and Teacher Agreement

The schools that are participating in 3K truly believe that parents are their child's first and most important teachers. The selected schools see their role as that of a partner. The Parent/Guardian and Teacher agreement symbolizes this partnership. It is a document that outlines how parents and teachers can share the responsibility for the success of each child.

As a parent/guardian, I, \_\_\_\_\_ will strive to:

- Believe my child can learn;
- Demonstrate that I value education and that school is important;
- Ensure my child attends school regularly and is on time;
- Set aside time each day to talk with my child about his or her learning;
- Read to my child daily and allow my child to see me read daily;
- Provide a home environment that encourages my child to do his/her best;
- Provide structured sleeping and eating habits; and
- Attending parent/guardian and teacher conferences.

As a teacher, I, \_\_\_\_\_, will strive to:

- Believe that each child can learn and demonstrate a "growth mindset";
- Respect and value the uniqueness of each child and his or her family;
- Provide a safe environment that promotes active hands-on learning;
- Provide frequent communication with newsletters, reports, and telephone calls;
- Seek ways to involve parents in the school program;
- Schedule parent-teacher conferences to accommodate parents' schedules; and
- Welcome the participation of parents and guardians in the classroom and their support in helping their children succeed.

Parent/guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



**By signing and dating this form, I acknowledge that I have been provided information via this handbook about 3K in the Cherokee County School District.**

*If you have any questions regarding Cherokee County School District's participation in 3K, or any aspects of this program, please feel free to contact Lisa Blanton by email [lisa.blanton@cherokee1.org](mailto:lisa.blanton@cherokee1.org) or phone 864-206-2203 (office).*

---

*Parent Signature*

---

*Teacher Signature*

---

*Date*