

**Ironton  
City Schools  
Preschool Program**

**WELCOME LITTLE TIGERS!**



**Preschool Handbook  
2023-2024**

**Ironton City Schools  
Preschool Handbook**

## I. Statement of Purpose

Our Preschool Program serves children, residing in the Ironton City School District, by providing a safe, comfortable, developmentally appropriate preschool opportunity where children learn and grow emotionally, academically, and socially. Our preschool classrooms promote individual self-esteem and provide opportunities for educational, recreational, nutritional, and creative learning experiences. Well trained, highly qualified staff will interact positively with the children and accommodate the needs of all students. The Program offers age-specific and mixed-group programming, cultural sensitivity, and mutual respect between the children and staff. Parental involvement is welcomed and encouraged.

The Ironton Preschool Program operates under the auspices of the Ironton City School system and follows school committee policies. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, cultural heritage, political beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or marital status.

## II. Philosophy

We emphasize meeting the individual needs of each child in our care and respond to these needs as children grow. We hire teachers and aides who are warm and caring, understand child development, and are committed to serving children and families. Our teachers and aides have appropriate degrees and are continually furthering their education. We are dedicated to providing the best educational opportunities for our students, so that they have the appropriate developmental skills for Kindergarten.

We want all of the children in our program to gain confidence in themselves, and to be happy, competent children while growing educationally and personally. Above all, we strive to provide an environment where children can have fun while learning the skills necessary for social interaction and Kindergarten readiness. Visitors to our program will find classrooms full of warmth, excitement, joy and educational enrichment where children can grow and be successful together!

## III. Enrollment

**Registration:** We will serve children of the Ironton City School District, who turn three (3) by August 1<sup>st</sup> and meet the eligibility requirements. We will consider 4 year olds for enrollment first; however, 3 year olds will be considered if additional openings become available. We will serve students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) ages 3-6

years. If you have a child who has a suspected disability in this age group, please contact the Ironton City Preschool Program.

**Program Hours:**

Monday-Thursday -8:00am - 2:00pm

**School Vacations/Early-Release Days:** The Ironton City Preschool Program will follow the board adopted school calendar.

**Scheduling Changes**

**Records Transfer Policy and Withdrawal from the Program:** To withdraw your child from the program, please notify the Preschool Director in writing 30 days in advance, if possible, and complete withdrawal and records transfer form. You may also contact the school office for more information or to receive a copy of this form.

**Snow Day-Policy:**

The preschool program is closed whenever Ironton City Schools is closed. If the district is operating on a two-hour delay, the preschool will be on a two-hour delay as well.

**Pick-up and Drop off Policy:**

Drop off and Pick up will be at a clearly marked area near the main entrance of the elementary school. Parents are required to park and walk their child to the door for sign in and need to sign their child out for pick up.

**Transportation:**

The district offers transportation to all students within the preschool program. Please complete the Transportation Form included in the enrollment packet. The transportation office will contact you directly regarding bus times.

You will receive a copy of the transportation rules, so that you can go over these with your child to help ensure bus safety. Please sign the transportation form in your preschool packet to inform our transportation department of details regarding your child. Your child will participate in a bus training while at school to review bus rules and safety procedures.

**Field Trips:**

There will be times that the preschool classrooms may go on field trips. You will be notified ahead of time and given a permission slip. All students are expected to have a permission slip on file by the designated due date listed on the form. Parents are encouraged to attend the field trip. Due to district policies, parents are not permitted to ride the bus unless they have board approval as a volunteer or chaperone.

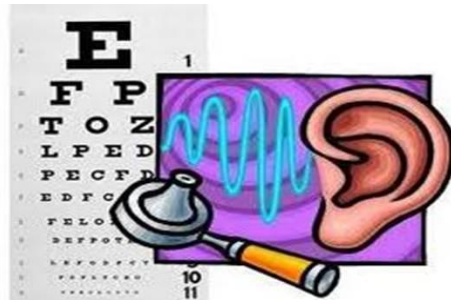
<b>IV. Health, Safety and Developmental Screenings</b>
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**Health and Development Screenings:**

Please see the attached Physical Examination paper, which needs to be completed and submitted within 60 days of enrollment. Our staff will also complete developmental screenings with your child within 60 days of program entrance.

If your child has not received their medical and dental examination, we will give your family information about why health screenings are important. We will also notify you every 30 days regarding the documents still needed for your child's file. *Please let us know if we can help you in any way, as we are here to help our students and families with Nutrition and Wellness.*

Vision and hearing assessments are also administered within 60 days of enrollment. You will receive a written notice if your child does not pass the hearing and/or vision screening. We ask that you follow up with your family physician, so that your child can receive the appropriate medical treatment. Hearing and vision are crucial senses that allow your child to access the preschool environment and instructional activities each day. Poor hearing or vision can affect your child's performance and development in all pre-academic areas.



#### **Program Screening and Assessment Tools:**

Our preschool teachers use multiple methods for data collection and assessment. Formal assessments are used during the Early Learning Assessment (ELA). Informal assessments such as running records, observations, checklists, progress monitoring and work samples are used to collect data on all students throughout the year.

Progress Monitoring Report: Quarterly progress reports and data are collected and written on forms and kept in each student's file.

The Early Learning Assessment (ELA): This assessment is a state mandated assessment that focuses on seven areas of a child's growth and development:

- Social Foundations (social/emotional development and approaches toward learning)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Language and Literacy
- Physical Well-being and Motor Development

- Fine Arts

Teachers observe students in the preschool setting, complete forms, and submit assessment results to the EMIS Coordinator.

### **Developmental Screening Referral Process:**

Results from informal and formal assessments are recorded on appropriate forms and compiled on a data sheet for each classroom. The assessment data is analyzed at Teacher Based Team Meeting (TBT) and interventions are discussed to help students who scored low in each area. Preschool staff and other related service personnel (Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and Speech Therapist) implement interventions and report progress at the next TBT meeting.

Referrals for further educational evaluations are made when a student is not responding to interventions and continues to have significant deficits in specific areas. Immediate referrals for evaluations are made when a child has significant speech delay and is not able to be understood by peers and adults. ***If you have concerns for your child, please let a preschool staff member know immediately, and we will schedule a team meeting.***

Quarterly progress reports are completed and kept in each student's file. These reports include all formal assessment results and are given to parents four times per year. Teachers also keep student work samples that are used to create a portfolio that is shared with parents during parent teacher conferences. Teachers communicate assessment results and student progress information with parents using a variety of methods: written reports, conferences, social media apps, email, and telephone conversations.

### **Health Policy:**

Your child's health is a matter of importance to all of us. A current health form signed by a physician, within the last year, must be kept on file in the school for each child in the program. ***Please notify us if your child has special medical needs that we should be aware of.***

While the preschools are not equipped to look after sick children, we understand that parents rely on the program to provide care on a regular basis and cannot stay home with their child for each and every sniffle. We will always try to balance these conflicting needs and ask you to do so as well. If a child is not well, please make every effort to keep him or her at home, as illness spreads rapidly in spite of everyone's best efforts to prevent it. We ask that you keep your child at home if he or she has:

- A fever over 100 degrees within 24 hours.
- Vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours.
- Early stages of a cold.
- Sore throat or swollen glands
- Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
- Earache or drainage from the eyes.
- Head lice or scabies, until properly treated and all nits removed.

A student must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school.

After evaluation by a school nurse it may be deemed necessary for a student to be cleared by a medical professional in writing to be permitted to return to school.

Section (5) (c), page 33 of the Preschool Rules states that we must provide a cot and comfort when isolating a child with suspected disease symptoms. In the event that your child falls ill during school hours, he/she will be removed from the classroom and cared for, on a cot, until you arrive to pick up your child. You will be notified directly should your child need to be picked up from school.

## **V. Emergency Procedures**

When children become ill at preschool: In the case of mild illness, the child's parent or guardian will be contacted. The child will be made comfortable, isolated as much as possible from the other children, and closely watched until a parent or guardian arrives to pick him or her up.

If a child becomes seriously ill while at preschool, a parent or guardian will be asked to pick up the child immediately; the child's pediatrician may also be contacted if the situation warrants. If a parent or guardian is not directly reachable, attempts will be made to contact them through the emergency contacts listed on the emergency medical form; if a parent or guardian cannot be reached, one of the emergency contacts may be asked to pick up the child. In extreme circumstances, an ambulance may be called, and a child may be taken to an emergency center or hospital in the care of a staff member.

### **Communicable Disease:**

We will notify you, the parent, immediately of your child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness. A child with the following signs or symptoms will be isolated and discharged to their parent or guardian:

- Diarrhea
- Severe coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Temperature of 100 degrees
- Untreated infected skin patches
- Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool
- Stiff neck

- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infection.
- Vomiting

Children with any of these signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from the other students. You will be contacted to pick up your child as soon as possible. Your child will be observed carefully for a worsening condition and will only be discharged to a parent or guardian.



### **Accidents:**

Accident procedures followed by the school staff will depend on the severity of the injury. In the case of a minor injury (cuts, bruises, etc.) simple first-aid will be applied immediately and the parent or guardian notified. For more severe injuries, parent(s) or guardian and/or the child's pediatrician will be called right away. If a parent(s) or guardian(s) cannot be reached right away, an emergency contact person will be called and asked to arrange for the child to be taken to the doctor if this seems advisable. If the accident is very serious, the local EMT will be contacted and asked to provide emergency care for the child; simultaneously, the school staff will call both the parent/guardian and the child's pediatrician to arrange for the child to be met and treated at the hospital.

In all cases of accident, an accident report will be completed and a copy given to the parent or guardian; a copy will also be kept on file at the school office.

**Medication:** In accordance with state regulations and the Ohio Department of Education licensing guidelines, prescription drugs, food supplements, modified diets and fluoride treatments can only be administered to children by the staff if:

- the medication or supplement is a current prescription and we have written instructions from appropriate personnel;
- the medication is in an original container with the child's name, date, name of the medicine, dosage, and special instructions clearly marked.

In special cases, such as bronchial inhalers for asthmatic children or a diabetic pump, the child may be permitted to administer his/her own medication with staff supervision; written instructions from the physician and written consent from the parent or guardian are required.

Non-prescription topical creams, ointments, and sprays, such as sunscreen can be administered by the staff with written permission and instructions from the parent or guardian. Each item must be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Further details of the programs health and emergency policies, including staff responsibilities for emergency and preventive health measures, are available for your review upon request.

Each time a medication is administered, the appropriate staff member will record the administration in a written log in the health clinic, including dosage, time, and date.

## **VI. Discipline Policy**

At school, we expect children to respect each other, staff, parents and our physical environment. We believe that children should receive positive reinforcement for good behavior. Preschool staff members in charge of the child are also responsible for their discipline. However children, as all people, are not perfect and will at times, act inappropriately. The teacher will talk to the child to be certain that the child understands what is expected of him or her and to allow the child to verbalize feelings.

The Ironton City School District believes that a child who is active, happy, and interested in a safe and caring environment will not have an issue with discipline. Our goal is to provide that type of atmosphere while your child is participating in our preschool program.

Ironton Preschool currently uses the positive behavior supports model which celebrates the successes of children and their behavior. In addition, as an Ohio Department of Education licensed preschool, we also follow these management principles:

- Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques will be used at all times and shall include redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation, and praise for appropriate behavior.
- There will be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- No discipline will be delegated to any other child.
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child other than holding for a short period of time so the child may regain control.
- No child shall be locked in a room or confined area.
- No child shall be exposed or subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks or other verbal abuse.

- Children will not be disciplined for refusing to eat or for toileting accidents.
- No technique shall humiliate, shame or frighten the child.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
- Separation, when used, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child will stay within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well ventilated place.

## VII. Parents Engagement Model and Communication

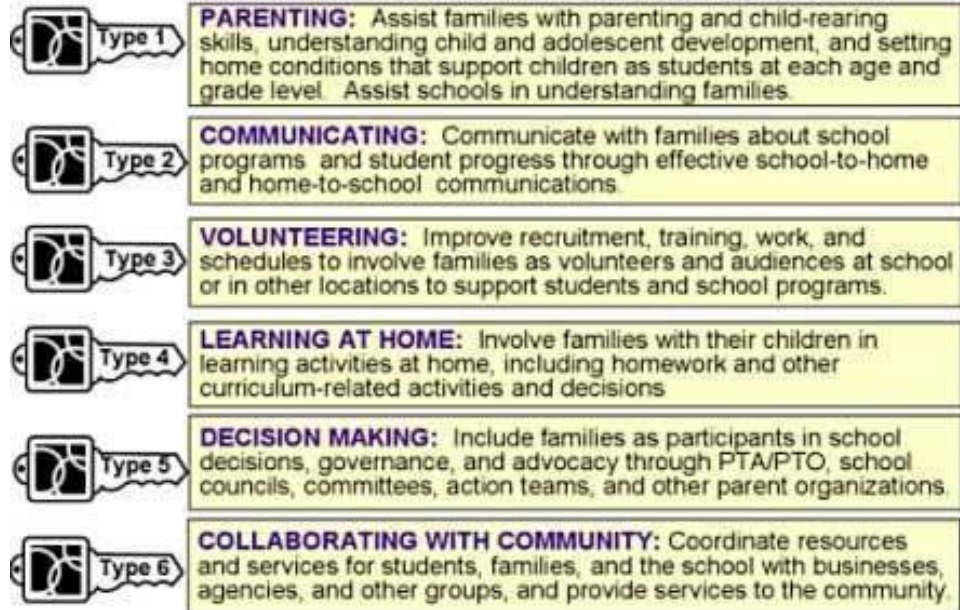
**Parent Engagement Model:** We want you to know, to understand, and to discuss our goals with us. We want you to look often into our busy, happy, noisy, creative program and see what your child experiences. We want you to realize the validity of those experiences, and the importance of the enrichment and socialization that they provide.

Parents are always welcome to come in and observe our program. Volunteers are welcome at our preschools. If you are interested in volunteering, please complete the Parent Volunteer form and contact the teacher about scheduling a time to come in and help in our preschool classrooms.

Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University has developed a framework for defining six different types of parent involvement. This framework assists educators in developing school and family partnership programs. "There are many reasons for developing school, family, and community partnerships," she writes. "The main reason to create such partnerships is to help all youngsters succeed in school and in later life" (<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Family-and-Community-Engagement/Getting-Parents-Involved/Ohio-Schools-and-Epstein-s-Six-Types-of-Parent-Inv>). Our preschool program supports this model of parent engagement and believes:

***Together, we can foster a love for learning and achieve success for all students.***

## THE KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL-FAMILY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS EPSTEIN'S SIX TYPES OF INVOLVEMENT



Reprinted with permission: Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. R., Brann, S. R., Janson, B. C., Janson, B. R., & Van Voorhis, P. L. (2002). School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action (Second Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

### Parent Communication:

Prospective families will receive a packet, which includes several forms including but not limited to: an enrollment form, medical forms, a preschool handbook, an activity schedule and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) information. We also send home a variety of flyers, handouts and articles about early childhood development throughout the school year. We encourage you to participate in these activities and to communicate training needs to your child's teacher. We will work to accommodate your needs and concerns, so that your child can continue to grow and become ready for Kindergarten.



Staff members are available for individual conferences. Since interacting and supervising your children is our primary concern, we ask that you schedule conferences with the teacher ahead of time. The teacher will be available for Parent Teacher Conferences twice per year in addition to outside times scheduled at your request. Your child's developmental progress will be reviewed and reported informally to you throughout the year. Formal progress reports will be reviewed four times per year. However, we do encourage more frequent interactions between parent(s) and the teacher.

The Ironton City School District would like to share with you any information concerning your child or the program that may affect your child. Staff will verbally check in with parents at pick-up concerning any incidents or unusual happenings. We also provide a weekly newsletter including any information that may affect the program and what learning goals and themes will be covered over the course of the next few weeks. If you notice anything that concerns you or your child, please feel free to talk to the Director of Student Services, Mr. LaFon, or your child's teacher.

If you have any concerns or complaints about our program, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher, or the Director of Student Services about your concerns. If you feel these concerns cannot be resolved with school personnel, you can contact the Superintendent at (740) 532-4133. They can help you address any concerns, complaints and/or violations.

## **VIII. Activities and Transition**

### **Preschool Activities Within the Classroom:**

At preschool, we provide a balance of recreational and educational experiences. Students will participate in a variety of activities that include: hopping, skipping, playing, singing, dancing, coloring, painting, exploring, socializing, etc. We believe that students are able to learn more through hands-on and interactive instructional practices.

We feel it is important for parents to know what types of activities their children are participating in. We post a weekly or monthly, themed activity program in the entrance to the classroom and include it in our letters sent home.

### **Transition Policy:**

Our preschool program understands the importance of transitioning students into new environments, including classrooms and other settings. We provide a variety of activities to transition students into our program by scheduling visits, parent training, observations, communication and other opportunities.

We also place focus on preparing students for their transition to Kindergarten. Your child's teacher will discuss the different activities that will be completed throughout the

school year and develop a plan with you for your child's transition. Below is a list of potential transition activities:

**Transition Activities to Preschool:**

- Help Me Grow Transition Planning Conference: Agencies collaborate to plan appropriate assessment and transition to Preschool (of applicable)
- Visit to Preschool Classroom (prior to starting school)
- Interview with Parent(s) regarding student's present level of functioning. ( Parent Information Survey)
- Back to School Night and Orientation
- Preschool Packet and School Forms
- Discussion and Planning regarding Transportation (if applicable)
- Letter to Parents regarding Student's School Supplies
- Observation and Assessment
- Newsletters/Flyers to assist parents with Preschool activities and curriculum

**Activities Within the Program to Help Students Transition to Kindergarten:**

- Ongoing Academic and Social Skill Development and Assessment using Preschool Standards
- Language rich and interactive activities in the preschool environment (focusing on all areas of development)
- Progress Reports given to Parents (Quarterly)
- Visits to Kindergarten Classrooms (Tours and meeting teachers)
- Field Trip with Kindergarten
- Parent Teacher Conferences (Fall and Spring, or as requested by parent)
- First Day of Kindergarten Book (activities related to transition to Kindergarten at the end of school year)
- Transition ETR or Review of IEP (if applicable)
- Kindergarten Readiness Packet and/or Bootcamp for Summer
- Parent Trainings (Flyers, Newsletters, and Pamphlets of training opportunities)
- Special school events to become part of the school community

## **IX. Staffing**

**Personnel Policies:** The Ironton Preschool Program follows the written personnel policies and procedures used by the Ironton City School District. These policies include descriptions of the procedures for hiring, promotion, probation, discipline, suspension and dismissal. The policies also cover procedures for handling complaints and provisions for vacation, holidays, personal leave and sick days. Job descriptions are available for all positions.

**Personnel Records:** The Ironton City School District maintains a personnel record for each staff member. This record is maintained by the Administration Office.

**New Staff:** New staff members are oriented about the philosophy and goals of our preschool programs, emergency, health and safety procedures, special needs of individual children, planned daily activities of the program and expectations of ethical conduct by the Director of Student Services. New staff members are evaluated within 30 days of entering the program, again in the spring, and annually thereafter.

**Staff Meetings:** Staff meetings are held monthly to plan activities, discuss the needs of individual children, review progress toward program goals and coordinate with teachers and activities from the school day.

**Staff Professional Development:** The Ironton Preschool Program provides staff development opportunities to allow staff to improve their skills in working with children and their families. Staff members will have access to workshops and conferences on school-age childcare, preschool standards, best practices in the classroom, etc. All staff members are trained in Communicable Diseases, First Aid, CPR, CPI, and Child Abuse Prevention. In addition, staff participate in individual professional development planning opportunities through observation, evaluation and self-reflection to ensure professional growth and continuous program improvement. Staff members are formally evaluated each year and develop professional goals accordingly.

**Program Assessment:** The Preschool Planning committee meets regularly to coordinate services, select curriculum, review data, reflect on current practices and plan for future events and operations. We complete a self-assessment and continuous improvement plan each year, so that we are constantly working on ways to improve opportunities for our students and families. Your feedback is important to us, and we would like to ensure that we are meeting your needs. Please return the survey to your child's teacher.

## **X. Interactions between Staff and Children**

At preschool, we believe that positive child-staff interaction is tremendously important. We encourage staff to converse frequently with children. Staff will treat all children, regardless of gender, race, religion, family background, culture, and ability, with respect and care.

### **Classroom Ratios:**

The safety of your child is a priority to the staff at our preschools. **Children will always be under direct adult supervision.** We maintain a staff ratio in accordance with the Ohio Department of Education guidelines.

### ***A. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT***

The Ironton City School District protects children from abuse and neglect while in the program's care and custody and follows state law and Ironton City Schools'

Board policy and procedures for reporting of any suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect. All school staff are mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect including physical, sexual, and psychological. Specific, formal procedures are followed in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. All staff are given copies and trained in these procedures.

The staff is familiar with the physical and behavioral indications of child abuse. The staff, through the Preschool Director, communicates and supports parents both informally and through conferences initiated by either parent(s) or the staff. A comfortable and safe environment will be established, so that children will be able to speak about their concerns.

If child abuse/neglect is suspected of a staff member, it will be addressed immediately.

#### ***B. REFERRAL PROCEDURE FOR CHILDREN OR FAMILIES IN NEED***

The Ironton City School District has procedures for referring family members to appropriate social, mental health, medical, dental and vision services.

If a staff member has a concern about a child, she/he will bring it to the attention of the Lead Teacher, who will observe the child. The Lead Teacher will contact the parent(s) for a meeting to discuss the matter. The parent(s) will be given written notes of incidents of concern. The Lead Teacher can assist with the specifics of these referrals if desired. No referrals will be made without parental consent. A copy of all referrals will be kept on file. The Ironton City School District will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate every child's needs.

Our school district maintains a list of local resources available to children and families in the Tri-State area. The referral list is available upon request.

#### ***C. CHILDREN'S RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY***

A legible, current, and confidential record is maintained on each child enrolled in the program. The record is available to the child's parent(s) upon written request. We will not release information in the record to any unauthorized person without the prior written authorization of the parent(s). All information contained in a child's records is available only to those individuals directly involved in the implementation of the preschool program, to other individuals as otherwise required by state law, or to persons authorized in writing by the child's parent(s). The school district will notify the parents immediately if a child's record is subpoenaed by a Court of Law.

Parents are required to provide written authorizations, consents, and information, prior to enrollment, which will be made part of the child's record. Written consent and authorization is valid for 1 year unless withdrawn prior to that time in writing.

Records are maintained for a period of 1 year following a child's termination from care or for a period determined by the Ironton City School District.

Parents have the right to request access to or copies from their child's file and we will provide such access or copies within a reasonable amount of time. If copies are requested we will charge a reasonable fee. We require written parental consent to release any information from a child's file.

Parents always have the right to add information, comments, data, or other relevant information to a child's record. A child's parent(s) shall have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in the child's records. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedures described below: if such parent(s) is/are of the opinion that adding information is sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in the child's record, the parent(s) shall have a conference with the Preschool Director to make the objections known. Within one week of the conference, the Preschool Director will inform the parent(s) of our decision regarding the information in question. If the decision is in favor of the parent(s), the information in the child's record will be deleted or amended immediately.

## **XI. Organization**

Preschool classrooms operate under the auspices of the Ironton City School District and School Board. The overall management of both programs is the responsibility of the Director of Student Services, who reports to the Superintendent. Day-to-day management of the program is by the Lead Teacher, with support from staff members within the preschool program.

## **XII. Complaints**

We, at The Ironton City School District, feel your concerns about your child, and their education, are important. Any complaint or concern you may have about our preschool program can be directed to Mark LaFon, Director of Student Services (740) 532-4133. Complaints should be put in writing and submitted at the district's central office. ) Additionally, all complaints and reports concerning the operation of programs regulated by the Administrative Code and sections 3301.52 to 3301.59 of the Ohio Revised Code, can be reported to the office of early learning and school readiness. The name and phone numbers of both parties shall be posted in a conspicuous place near the posted program license. The Ohio Department of Education telephone number is 877-644-6338.

**If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact:**

**Mark LaFon**  
**Director of Student Services**  
**740-532-4133**  
[mark.lafon@tigertown.com](mailto:mark.lafon@tigertown.com)

**Cory McKnight**  
**Principal**  
**740-532-2209**  
[cory.mcknight@tigertown.com](mailto:cory.mcknight@tigertown.com)

**Amanda Burcham ECIS**  
**Preschool teacher**  
**740-532-2209**  
[amanda.burcham@tigertown.com](mailto:amanda.burcham@tigertown.com)

**Sarah Wheeler**  
**Preschool Teacher**  
**740-532-2209**  
[sarah.wheeler@tigertown.com](mailto:sarah.wheeler@tigertown.com)

**Leann Spradlin**  
**Preschool Teacher**  
**740-532-2209**  
[leann.spradlin@tigertown.com](mailto:leann.spradlin@tigertown.com)

## **Preschool Handbook Acknowledgment Form**

The Ironton Preschool Program staff review this handbook at the beginning of each school year, and we ask that you review this handbook as well. Any questions regarding any information included in this handbook can be directed to:

Mark LaFon  
Director of Student Services  
Ironton City School District  
740-532-4133  
mark.lafon@tigertown.com

*Please sign that you have read this handbook.*

I have read and understand the information discussed in this handbook.

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Parent's Signature

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Date

Name of child in the program:

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*\*\*Please return this page with the preschool packet.*