



Little Panthers Preschool  
Student Handbook  
2021-2022



## WELCOME!

The staff at Norfolk Public Schools would like to welcome you to our Little Panthers Preschool Program. Children, along with their parents, are the foundation of our program. We endeavor to create a partnership with parents that works on behalf of the child. We will accomplish this through parent-oriented programs as well as child-oriented activities. We know that we are not "home," but we plan on being the next best thing!

## INTRODUCTION

### **Do you want your child to....**

Develop the skills to become an avid reader?

Learn beginning math skills?

Improve speech and language skills?

Be creative?

Make decisions independently?

Develop physical coordination?

Get along well with others?

Be self-confident?

Enjoy learning?

Love school?

If you do, then our program at Little Panthers Preschool is perfect for your child because we share the same goals! For years parents have been asking, "What is my child actually learning in preschool? And what can I do at home to help?" This handbook describes what children are learning from the activities, learning environment, daily schedule, and from our conversations with them at school. Last, it suggests what you can do at home to help your child learn.

## ORIENTATION PROCEDURES

Each family will have an orientation to the program (a home visit and open house) provided by the preschool teachers. During orientation the new family is introduced to the program goals, rules, and guidelines and will be introduced to the staff who will be working with them. The Handbook is explained, discussed, and signed by the parents.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

Norfolk Public Schools utilizes a Creative Curriculum and GOLD assessment in the children's classrooms. The philosophy behind our curriculum and assessment is that young children learn best by doing. Learning isn't just repeating what someone else says; it requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn firsthand about the world we live in.

In their early years, children explore the world around them by using all of their senses (touching, tasting, listening, smelling, and looking). In using real materials such as blocks and trying out their ideas, children learn about sizes, shapes, and colors, and they notice relationships between things.



In time, they learn to use one object to stand for another. This is the beginning of symbolic thinking. For example, they might pretend a stick is an airplane or a block is a hamburger. These early symbols - the stick and the block- are similar in shape to the objects they represent.

Gradually children become more and more able to use abstract symbols like words to describe their thoughts and feelings. They learn to "read" pictures, which are symbols of real people, places, and things. This exciting development in symbolic thinking takes place during the early childhood years as children play.

Play provides the foundation for academic or "school" learning. It is the preparation children need before they learn highly abstract symbols such as letters (which are symbols for sounds) and numbers (which are symbols for number concepts). Play enables us to achieve the key goals of our early childhood curriculum.

**Play is the work of young children.**



**Earlier is NOT Better**

Many parents are concerned when their children aren't practicing letters and numbers. They feel that worksheets and homework will prepare their children for elementary school. We could give your children workbooks. We could make them memorize the alphabet. We could drill them. We could test them. But if we do, your children may lose something very important.

Children who are rushed into reading and writing too soon miss important steps in learning and may suffer later on because they lack the foundation they need for using language. Children who are taught to read before they are ready may be able to sound out and recognize words, but they may also have little understanding of what they are reading. If they haven't been given time to play, they won't have explored objects enough to know what words (like hard, harder, and hardest) mean. If they aren't allowed to string beads, button, dress up, cut, paste, pour, and draw they won't develop the fine motor skills they need for writing.

Because math involves more than memorizing facts (like  $2+2=4$ ), because it involves logical thinking, children shouldn't be pushed into paper and pencil arithmetic too soon. To acquire the foundation for logical thinking, children need many opportunities to count objects, sort them into piles, and add some to a pile and take some away. It is by playing games like these that they will learn to truly understand addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication. Without these concrete experiences, children may give correct answers but probably won't understand what they are doing and why.

Worst of all is children rushed into academic subjects too soon. They may lose their enthusiasm for learning and lose their sense of themselves as learners. If children are **told** what to learn and memorize by the teacher, they may become more passive and dependent learners, and be less excited about learning something new. Children who are given plenty of time to play, however, learn to ask their own questions and figure out their own answers. They are responsible for their own learning. They see themselves as explorers, discoverers, problem solvers, and inventors.

## THE GOAL OF OUR CURRICULUM

The most important goal of our early childhood curriculum is to help children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and to think their own thoughts. Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. We're teaching them how to learn, not just in preschool and kindergarten, but all through their lives. We're allowing them to learn at their own pace and in the ways that are best for them. We're giving them good habits and attitudes, particularly a

positive sense of themselves, which will make a difference throughout their lives.

The activities we plan for children, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the schedule, and talk with children are all designed to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give your child a successful start in school.

## WHAT CHILDREN LEARN AT HOME

Our curriculum works best when teachers and parents work together. Each of us has something valuable to contribute. We are trained in child development and early childhood education. We see how your child acts with other children and adults. We can assess what your child is learning and how he or she is progressing.

But only you have in-depth knowledge of your child. You know your child's interests, fears, joys, patterns, and past best.

You are most familiar with the world your child is trying to understand. You know about the relationships between the members of your family, and you have shared many of your child's experiences, from family events to trips to the doctor's office or the zoo.

This in-depth knowledge makes you central to your child's learning process and a very valuable resource for us as teachers. If you share with us what is happening to your child at home - the arrival of a new baby, the death of a pet, nightmares, temper tantrums, trips, separation or divorce - we can understand your child better. We can deal with both positive and difficult events through reassuring stories, imaginative dramatic play, and extra love and attention.

We also see you as your child's first and most important teacher. Your home is your child's first and continual learning environment. You decide your family's routines - when you get up, eat, play, do chores, visit friends, and go to bed. The way you talk with your children makes a tremendous difference in how they think, how they feel about themselves, and the kind of people they will become.

If we can work together-we can do some of the same things at school and at home-your child will be much better off. The more consistent we adults are, the more secure your child is likely to feel. And when children feel secure, they are more likely to explore, to experiment, and to learn.

# DETAILS ABOUT OUR PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

## **PROGRAM COSTS**

Our Little Panthers Preschool program is provided to the families of Norfolk at no cost to ensure that we are providing a highly effective program to all children regardless of family income.

## **HOURS**

Our Little Panthers Preschool program has one location at 2500 W. Norfolk Avenue.

3 Year Old Half Day Classes (3 by July 31st)

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Morning Class: 8:00-11:30 (doors open for drop-off at 7:50)

Afternoon Class: 12:15-3:45 (doors open for drop-off at 12:15)

4 Year Old Full Day Classes (4 by July 31st)

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

8:00-3:00 (doors open at 7:50)

\*Students who turn 5 years of age on or before July 31st are not eligible for the Little Panthers Preschool program but are encouraged to enroll in your neighborhood elementary school for kindergarten.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Little Panthers Preschool partners with Fits & Giggles Child Care to offer the Wheel After Three aftercare program. This program is held at LPP from 3:00-6:00 each school day and then also offers full day care on Wednesdays and other no-preschool days as well. Enrollment for the program will be held in early August. If interested, please reach out to our office to get additional information.

## **MEAL PROGRAM**

Breakfast and Lunch is offered to the full day classes.

Snack is offered to the half day classes.

At Little Panthers Preschool, we use mealtime as an extension of our learning. Children learn many skills while sitting at the meal table with their friends and teachers. We work on manners, turn-taking while speaking and listening, as well as flexibility in being willing to try new foods. Because of this, we would prefer that our students eat the family style meal that is offered through the school.

### **Breakfast:**

Free Meal Eligibility-- Free

Reduced Meal Eligibility-- \$0.30/meal

Full Pay Eligibility-- \$1.60/meal

If your child will not be eating school breakfast, then he/she will need to eat breakfast at home but will still be expected to sit at the meal table with his/her class. Please do not send breakfast into the school with your child.

### **Lunch:**

Free Meal Eligibility-- Free

Reduced Meal Eligibility-- \$0.40/meal

Full Pay Eligibility-- \$2.95/meal

If your child will not be eating school lunch, then he/she is allowed to bring a sack lunch if it meets the following guidelines:

- Please fill your child's lunch with healthy meal options (fruits, vegetables, sandwiches, water/milk/juice)
- No soda, candy, cookies, etc.

## **PROGRAM OPERATIONS AND CLOSING**

The Preschool Program will follow the official school calendar of the Norfolk Public Schools. In most cases, if Norfolk Public Schools is having school, the Preschool Program will be operating. Likewise, if Norfolk Public Schools is NOT having school then the Preschool Program will be closed as well.

There will be some additional days that the Norfolk Public Schools Preschool will not be in session. Those days will be communicated to you via notes and the Norfolk Public Schools Preschool calendar.

Please listen to the local radio stations if there is inclement weather and the Norfolk Public Schools will not be in session. You also will receive an automated phone call should school be delayed or cancelled. If there is a 10:00 a.m. late start due to inclement weather, the morning half day class will NOT have school.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLASSROOM**

We welcome parents to volunteer in their child's classrooms when possible, this can look many different ways based on what can fit in your schedule. Collecting a few items for an upcoming project, cutting out materials that children will be using for an upcoming project, or reading with a student in the book corner are all great ways to

be a part of your child's education! If you are looking for ways to partner, just ask your child's teacher what you can do!

If you do plan to spend time in the classroom, NPS policy requires a background check to be completed by our Human Resources Office.

## **ILLNESS**

If your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified immediately. It is preferred that there is a 24-hour wait time before the child returns to school if they are sent home with any of the following symptoms:

1. Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
2. Diarrhea or vomiting
3. Sore or discharging eyes or ears
4. Profuse nasal discharge
5. Unexplained skin rash or irritation
6. Evidence of contagious disease
7. Head lice

## **RETURN FROM ILLNESS**

If your child has been ill for (5) consecutive days, a permit from your doctor or examination by the school nurse is required. Please check with the school before bringing your child back.

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICINE**

Medications may be given at school with written authorization of one parent/legal guardian. This is true for both over-the-counter and prescription medicines. The medicine sheet must be signed each day that we are to give the medication. With all medication, over-the-counter and prescription, the doctor's orders for giving the medication must be present. All medications must be contained in the original bottle. **These policies are part of our state regulations and must be followed.**

## **OUTDOOR PLAY**

We believe that any child who is well enough to come to school is also well enough to take part in all of the school activities. This includes outdoor play, except in a few isolated instances, so please dress your child appropriately for the weather. They should have coats, hats, and mittens/gloves during the winter. They will not be allowed to stay indoors if they do not have the appropriate attire as all staff needs to be out on the playground.

## **CLOTHING**

Please send your child in comfortable, washable play clothes as we are very busy! Each child should always have a change of clothing available in their backpack in case of spills and accidents. All belongings should be marked with your child's name. In winter, please dress your child warmly for outside activities.

## **TOYS/ITEMS FROM HOME**

Toys and items from home are not encouraged, as they are often difficult to share and may get lost or broken. The school does not assume responsibility for toys brought from home.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is crucial! We are learning new skills everyday and it is hard for your child to catch up if they miss too much school. If your child will be absent or coming late, please notify the school before 8:00 a.m. This will help us plan accordingly for meals and activities. If your child misses 2 consecutive days without notification a staff member will call to determine the problem. If a parent cannot be reached, a well-child check may be called in to the local police to ensure the safety of your child and your family. If absences continue, your child's slot may be given to the next child on the waiting list.

## **REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE**

Nebraska statutes require that all professionals working with children report concerns they may have about possible child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or the Police Department. This information will be held in the strictest confidence, as is all information regarding children, families and staff at the school.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS**

The behavior policy of Little Panthers Preschool Program is to develop a positive relationship between the caregiver(s) and your child as an individual person. We also believe that by providing a warm and caring atmosphere in which to grow and learn, and an interesting and challenging program, discipline problems will be kept to a minimum.

At the initial home visit and all following Parent Teacher Conferences, our teachers will refer to the Pawsitive Panthers Expectations. These expectations are:

**\*At LPP, we are RESPECTFUL**

We always listen and we use inside voices.

**\*At LPP, we are RESPONSIBLE**

We keep the classroom clean.

**\*At LPP, we are SAFE**

We use walking feet and kind hands.

By using the same positive language at home, your child will be more likely to understand the importance of these skills.

Students who are struggling to comply with program behavior expectations may have to meet with the principal. If there is an ongoing concern, the principal and classroom teacher will have a meeting with the parent(s) to discuss next steps regarding student behavior.

## **PARENTAL/GUARDIAN SUPPORT**

We believe that parental/guardian support in the school system is very important and starts when your child enters preschool. As a parent/guardian, you can do a lot to support your child's efforts and help your child grow to his or her full potential. Please take time to show an interest in what your child is learning in school and in the information they bring home. Your child will enjoy school more thoroughly if they know that you support them.

### **As a Little Panthers Pawsitive Parent, I will:**

- Drive safely through the parking lot by following posted signs and staying alert.
- Staying off my phone to ensure all children are safe and I can give my child and their teacher my full attention at drop off and pick up.
- Communicate with the school about changes in phone number, address, family situation, and resources that would benefit my family.
- Follow the building wide expectation of being nut aware by not providing meals or snacks that contain nuts.
- Model the importance of school by having my child arrive at school on time ready to learn and grow.
- Read and talk with my child everyday.
- **Enjoy the ride of watching my child learn through play and exploration!**

## **SUPPLIES**

There are no required supplies for preschool as all will be provided by our program. If you would like to contribute to the classroom, please talk with your child's teacher. Any donated supplies will be appreciated, but are not required. There will be papers that go home every day so please provide your child with a full size backpack.

## **DROP-OFF & PICK-UP**

Due to the young age of our students and to ensure their safety, children cannot be dropped off outside the building or allowed to walk out and enter a vehicle that is waiting. Parents/Guardians must park their vehicle and walk students to the exterior door.

For drop off and pick up, we use four doors at Little Panthers Preschool. This allows

for better parking and traffic flow and also allows our students to be greeted at the door and walked to their classrooms. Based on your child's classroom placement, they will enter a numbered door as follows:

Door 1 (east side of building) - Ramirez, Clausen, Dasher

Door 2 (south side of building) - Pickinpaugh, Behrens, Drahota

Door 3 (west side of building) - Todd, Luna

Door 4 (northwest side of building) - Marmolejo, Rehan

Your child's safety is our top priority. To ensure that your child is being dismissed with the correct adult, we use a ticket system at LPP. Each family will be provided two pick-up tickets that your family can share with the individuals that are approved to pick your child up from preschool. If you need additional tickets, please reach out to the office. These tickets will need to be shown by the approved transportation (including parents) every day at pick up.

Please keep us informed of any changes in your child's ride to or from school so we can ensure their safety. Even if the person is listed as an emergency contact, we will still require a proof of identification before your child is sent with them.

In the event of a district wide 10:00 late start, there will **NOT** be a morning session of 3 year old preschool. Full day sessions will begin at 10:00 a.m.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver unless the child is currently being served under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

## **BIRTHDAYS**

If your child will be celebrating a birthday during the school year they are welcome to bring treats. If you choose to send treats, please check with your child's teacher about the number of students in the classroom. All snacks brought in must be pre-packaged with ingredients listed and nut-free.

## **HAND WASHING**

It is very important that you are helping your child practice proper hand washing at home. We will be practicing this at school throughout the day. Please help them master this skill by encouraging them to do it correctly at home.

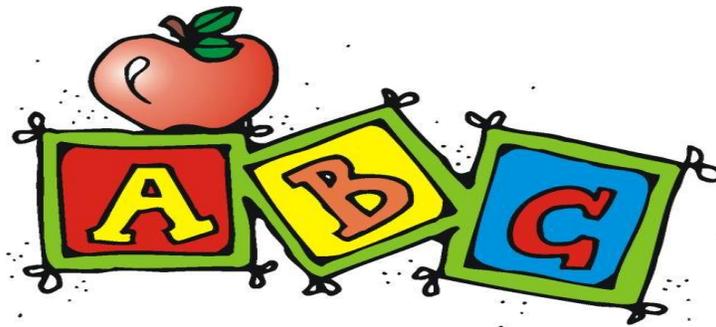
## **CONTACTING US**

Please feel free to contact us at school if you have any questions or concerns. You can reach teachers before and after school or on Wednesdays. We are happy to return phone calls or meet with you after school. Please note that the mornings are

usually a very busy time of the day which makes it difficult to have an extended conversation so if you need the time and attention of the teacher, please feel free to ask for a scheduled meeting time.

Our primary tool for consistent communication between teachers and parents is Seesaw. This is an app that allows you to see pictures of your child learning and having fun at school, message your child's teacher with questions, and also receive information about upcoming events at school, so please be sure to sign up!

Thank you for your support of Norfolk Public Schools Little Panthers Preschool Program. If you ever have questions, or just want to stop in and visit  
**YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**



HARASSMENT POLICY (5401) for STUDENTS AND STAFF

**Anti-discrimination, Anti-harassment, and Anti-retaliation**

**A. Elimination of Discrimination.**

**The Norfolk Public School District hereby gives this statement of compliance and intends to comply with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination. This school district intends to take any necessary measures to assure compliance with such laws against any prohibited form of discrimination.**

**The Norfolk Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:**

**Students: Director of Student Services—512 Philip Avenue, Norfolk, NE 68701 (402) 644- 2500**

**Employees and Others: Resources Director—512 Philip Avenue, Norfolk, NE 68701 (402) 644-2500**

**Complaints or concerns involving discrimination or needs for accommodation or access should be addressed to the appropriate Coordinator. For further information about anti-discrimination laws and regulations, or to file a complaint of discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education (OCR), please contact OCR at One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd**

Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, Missouri 64106, (816) 268-0550 (voice), Fax (816) 268-0599, (800) 877-8339 (telecommunications device for the deaf), or ocr.kansascity@ed.gov.

## B. Prohibited Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation of Employees, Students and Others.

### 1. Purpose:

The Norfolk Public School District is committed to offering employment and educational opportunity to its employees and students in a climate free of discrimination. Accordingly, unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation of any kind by District employees, including, co-workers, non-employees (such as volunteers), third parties, and others is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Harassment is a form of discrimination and includes verbal, non-verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to a person's sex, disability, race, color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other protected status, that is sufficiently serious to deny, interfere with, or limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational or work program or activity, including, but not limited to:

a. Conduct that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create an intimidating, hostile, or abusive educational or work environment, or

b. Requiring an individual to endure the offensive conduct as a condition of continued employment or educational programs or activities, including the receipt of aids, benefits, and services.

Educational programs and activities include all academic, educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs of the school, whether those programs take place in a school's facilities, on a school bus, at a class or training program sponsored by the school at another location, or elsewhere.

Discriminatory harassment because of a person's sex, disability, race, color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other protected status, may include, but is not limited to:

a. Name-calling,

b. Teasing or taunting,

c. Insults, slurs, or derogatory names or remarks,

d. Demeaning jokes,

e. Inappropriate gestures,

f. Graffiti or inappropriate written or electronic material,

g. Visual displays, such as cartoons, posters, or electronic images,

h. Threats or intimidating or hostile conduct,

i. Physical acts of aggression, assault, or violence, or

j. Criminal offenses

The following examples are additional or more specific examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment:

a. Unwelcome sexual advances or propositions,

b. Requests or pressure for sexual favors,

c. Comments about an individual's body, sexual activity, or sexual attractiveness,

d. Physical contact or touching of a sexual nature, including touching intimate body parts and inappropriate patting, pinching, rubbing, or brushing against another's body,

e. Physical sexual acts of aggression, assault, or violence, including criminal offenses (such as rape, sexual assault or battery, and sexually motivated stalking), against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's age, intellectual disability, or use of drugs or alcohol,

f. Requiring sexual favors or contact in exchange for aids, benefits, or services, such as grades, awards, privileges, promotions, etc., or

g. Gender-based harassment; acts of verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct based on sex or sex-stereotyping, but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.

If the District knows or reasonably should know about possible harassment, including violence, the District will conduct a prompt, adequate, reliable, thorough, and impartial investigation to determine whether unlawful harassment occurred (see section entitled "Grievance Procedures," below), and take appropriate interim measures, if necessary. If the District determines that unlawful harassment occurred, the District will take prompt and effective action to eliminate the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects, if appropriate. If harassment or violence that occurs off school property creates a hostile environment at school, the District will follow this policy and grievance procedure, within the scope of its authority.

All District employees are expected to take prompt and appropriate actions to report and prevent discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by others. Employees who witness or become aware of possible discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, must immediately report the conduct to his or her supervisor or the compliance coordinator designated to handle complaints of discrimination (designated compliance coordinator).

## 2. Anti-retaliation:

The District prohibits retaliation, intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any person for opposing discrimination, including harassment, or for participating in the District's discrimination complaint process or making a complaint, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner, in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing. Retaliation is a form of discrimination.

The District will take immediate steps to stop retaliation and prevent its recurrence against the alleged victim and any person associated with the alleged victim. These steps will include, but are not limited to, notifying students, employees, and others, that they are protected from retaliation, ensuring that they know how to report future complaints, and initiating follow-up contact with the complainant to determine if any additional acts of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation have occurred. If retaliation occurs, the District will take prompt and strong responsive action, including possible discipline, including expulsion or termination, if applicable.

## 3. Grievance (or Complaint) Procedures:

Employees or students should initially report all instances of discrimination, harassment or retaliation to their immediate supervisor or teacher or to the compliance coordinator designated to handle complaints of discrimination (designated coordinator). If the employee or student is uncomfortable in

presenting the problem to the supervisor or teacher, or if the supervisor or teacher is the problem, the employee or student may report the alleged discrimination, harassment or retaliation ("discrimination") to the designated coordinator, or in the case of students, to another staff person (such as a counselor or principal).

Other individuals may report alleged discrimination to the designated coordinator. If the designated coordinator is the person alleged to have committed the discriminatory act, then the complaint should be submitted to the Superintendent for assignment. A discrimination complaint form is attached to this grievance procedure and is available in the office of each District building, on the District's website, and from the designated coordinators.

Under no circumstances will a person filing a complaint or grievance involving discrimination be retaliated against for filing the complaint or grievance.

i. Level 1 (Investigation and Findings):

Once the District receives a grievance, complaint or report alleging discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, or becomes aware of possible discriminatory conduct, the District will conduct a prompt, adequate, reliable, thorough, and impartial investigation to determine whether unlawful harassment occurred. If necessary, the District will take immediate, interim action or measures to protect the alleged victim and prevent further potential discrimination, harassment, or retaliation during the pending investigation. The alleged victim will be notified of his or her options to avoid contact with the alleged harasser, such as changing a class or prohibiting the alleged harasser from having any contact with the alleged victim pending the result of the District's investigation. The District will minimize any burden on the alleged victim when taking interim measures to protect the alleged victim.

The District will promptly investigate all complaints of discrimination, even if an outside entity or law enforcement agency is investigating a complaint involving the same facts and allegations. The District will not wait for the conclusion or outcome of a criminal investigation or proceeding to begin an investigation required by this grievance procedure. If the allegation(s) involve possible criminal conduct, the District will notify the complainant of his or her right to file a criminal complaint, and District employees will not dissuade the complainant from filing a criminal complaint either during or after the District's investigation.

The District will aim to complete its investigation within ten (10) working days after receiving a complaint or report, unless extenuating circumstances exist. Extenuating circumstances may include the unavailability of witnesses due to illness or incapacitation, or additional time needed because of the complexity of the investigation, the need for outside experts to evaluate the evidence (such as forensic evidence), or multiple complainants or victims. If extenuating circumstances exist, the extended timeframe to complete the investigation will not exceed ten (10) additional working days without the consent of the complainant, unless the alleged victim agrees to a longer timeline. Periodic status updates will be given to the parties, when appropriate.

The District's investigation will include, but is not limited to:

a. Providing the parties with the opportunity to present witnesses and provide evidence.

b. An evaluation of all relevant information and documentation relating to the alleged discriminatory conduct.

c. For allegations involving harassment, some of the factors the District will consider include: 1) the nature of the conduct and whether the conduct was unwelcome, 2) the surrounding circumstances, expectations, and relationships, 3) the degree to which the conduct affected one or more students' education, 4) the type, frequency, and duration of the conduct, 5) the identity of and relationship

between the alleged harasser and the suspect or suspects of the harassment, 6) the number of individuals involved, 7) the age (and sex, if applicable) of the alleged harasser and the alleged victim(s) of the harassment, 8) the location of the incidents and the context in which they occurred, 9) the totality of the circumstances, and 10) other relevant evidence.

d. A review of the evidence using a "preponderance of the evidence" standard (based on the evidence, is it more likely than not that discrimination, harassment, or retaliation occurred?)

The designated compliance coordinator (or designated investigator) will complete an investigative report, which will include:

a. A summary of the facts,

b. Findings regarding whether discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate conduct occurred, and

c. If a finding is made that discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate conduct occurred, the recommended remedy or remedies necessary to eliminate discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate conduct.

If someone other than the designated compliance coordinator conducted the investigation, the compliance coordinator will review, approve, and sign the investigative report. The District will ensure that prompt, appropriate, and effective remedies are provided if a finding of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation is made. The District will maintain relevant documentation obtained during the investigation and documentation supportive of the findings and any subsequent determinations, including the investigative report, witness statements, interview summaries, and any transcripts or audio recordings, pertaining to the investigative and appeal proceedings.

The District will send concurrently to the parties written notification of the decision (findings and any remedy) regarding the complaint within one (1) working day after the investigation is completed. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 11232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99, permits the District to disclose relevant information to a student who was discriminated against or harassed.

ii. Level 2 (Appeal to the Superintendent):

If a party is not satisfied with the findings or remedies (or both) set forth in the decision, he or she may file an appeal in writing with the Superintendent within five (5) working days after receiving the decision. The Superintendent will review the appeal and the investigative documentation and decision, conduct additional investigation, if necessary, and issue a written determination about the appeal within ten (10) working days after receiving the appeal. The party who filed the appeal will be sent the Superintendent's determination at the time it is issued, and a copy will be sent to the designated compliance coordinator. [If the Superintendent is the subject of the complaint, the party will file the appeal directly with the Board.]

iii. Level 3 (Appeal to the Board):

If the party is not satisfied with the Superintendent's determination, he or she may file an appeal in writing with the Board of Education within five (5) working days after receiving the Superintendent's determination. The Board of Education will review the appeal, the Superintendent's determination, the investigative documentation and decision, and allow the party to address the Board at a Board meeting to present his or her appeal. The party will be allowed to address the Board at the Board's next regularly scheduled Board meeting (unless the Board receives the appeal within one week of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting) or at a time and date agreed to by the Board, designated compliance officer and the party. The Board will issue a written determination about the appeal within thirty (30) days after the party addresses the Board. The party who filed the appeal will be sent the Board's

determination at the time it is issued, and a copy will be sent to the designated compliance coordinator. The Board's determination, and any actions taken, will be final on behalf of the District.

#### 4. Confidentiality:

The identity of the complainant will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by state and federal law. The District will notify the complainant of the anti-retaliation provisions of applicable laws and that the District will take steps to prevent retaliation and will take prompt and strong responsive actions if retaliation occurs.

If a complainant requests confidentiality or asks that the complaint not be pursued, the District will take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the request for confidentiality or the request not to pursue an investigation, as long as doing so does not prevent the District from responding effectively to the harassment and preventing harassment of other students. If a complainant insists that his or her name or other identifiable information not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator, the District will inform the complainant that its ability to respond may be limited. Even if the District cannot take disciplinary action against the alleged harasser, the District will pursue other steps to limit the effects of the alleged harassment and prevent its recurrence, if warranted.

#### 5. Training:

The District will ensure that relevant District employees, including but not limited to officials, administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, counselors, nurses and other health personnel, coaches, assistant coaches, paraprofessionals, aides, bus drivers, and school law enforcement officers, are adequately trained so they understand and know how to identify acts of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and how to report it to appropriate District officials or employees.

#### 6. Designated Compliance Coordinators: Designated compliance coordinators will be responsible for:

a. Coordinating efforts to comply with anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, and anti-retaliation laws and regulations.

b. Coordinating and implementing training for students and employees pertaining to anti-discrimination, anti-harassment and anti-retaliation laws and regulations, including the training areas listed above.

c. Investigating complaints of discrimination (unless the coordinator designates other trained individuals to investigate).

d. Monitoring substantiated complaints or reports of discrimination, as needed (and with the assistance of other District employees, if necessary), to ensure discrimination or harassment does not recur, and that retaliation conduct does not occur or recur.

e. Overseeing discrimination complaints, including identifying and addressing any patterns or systemic problems, and reporting such patterns or systemic problems to the Superintendent and the Board of Education.

f. Communicating regularly with the District's law enforcement unit investigating cases and providing current information to them pertaining to anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, and anti-retaliation standards and compliance requirements.

g. Reviewing all evidence in harassment or violence cases brought before the District's disciplinary

committee or administrator to determine whether the complainants are entitled to a remedy under anti-discrimination laws and regulations that was not available in the disciplinary process.

h. Ensuring that investigations address whether other students or employees may have been subjected to discrimination, including harassment and retaliation.

i. Determining whether District employees with knowledge of allegations of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, failed to carry out their duties in reporting the allegations to the designated compliance coordinator and responding to the allegations.

j. Recommending changes to this policy and grievance procedure.

k. Performing other duties as assigned. The designated compliance coordinators will not have other job responsibilities that may create a conflict of interest with their coordinator responsibilities.

7. Preventive Measures: The District will publish and widely distribute on an ongoing basis a notice of nondiscrimination (notice) in electronic and printed formats, including prominently displaying the notice on the District's website and posting the notice at each building in the District. The District also will designate an employee to coordinate compliance with antidiscrimination laws (see Designated Compliance Coordinator section, above, for further information on compliance coordinator), and widely publish and disseminate this grievance procedure, including prominently posting it on the District's website, at each building in the District, reprinting it in District publications, such as handbooks, and sending it electronically to members of the school community. The District will provide training to employees and students at the beginning of each academic year in the areas (B.6.a-g) identified in the Training section, above.

The District also may distribute specific harassment and violence materials (such as sexual violence), including a summary of the District's anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, and anti-retaliation policy and grievance procedure, and a list of victim resources, during events such as school assemblies and back to school nights, if recent incidents or allegations warrant additional education to the school community.

Date of Adoption: September 14, 2015

Date of Reaffirmation: March 12, 2018

Date of Revision: July 9, 2018

# Little Panthers Preschool Parent Signature Page



I acknowledge receiving the Little Panthers Preschool handbook and the information has been explained to me.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_