



North Mac
Pre-Kindergarten
Early Childhood
Handbook
2024-2025

What is North Mac Pre-Kindergarten/Early Childhood?

The North Mac Pre-Kindergarten/Early Childhood classroom is a unique education program for qualified three, four, and five year old children living in the North Mac Community Unit School District #34. Each classroom is a balanced mix of abilities, genders, and ages. The teaching team consists of Pre-Kindergarten teachers, early childhood teachers, paraeducators, and support staff. Since the Pre-Kindergarten portion of the program is funded by a special grant from the Illinois State Board of Education as an at-risk program, it is offered without charge. The grant is awarded on a yearly basis. **Before entering the program, children must be screened, have a current physical, lead screening, and have all shots up to date. The school also needs a copy of the child's certified birth certificate and income verification.**

North Mac Pre-Kindergarten/Early Childhood's activities are designed to foster growth that is developmentally appropriate for the preschool child. Learning activities address the development of language, small and large motor skills, and social/emotional maturity. Our primary goals are to prepare children with lifelong learning skills for success in school. This is established through a child generated and adult facilitated developmentally appropriate program with "hands on" experiences.

How is this Preschool Different from Other Preschools?

North Mac Pre-Kindergarten/Early Childhood uses Creative Curriculum. Our weekly lesson plans center around our children's needs and interests, based on the Illinois State Board of Education Early Learning Standards. We use a combination of Work Sampling and Creative Curriculum to assess the children in our classrooms. While visiting the classroom, you may see us jotting down notes or taking pictures of children and their work to help us document their progress throughout the year. Through observation, we are able to assess the needs of all children. We will conduct home visits and parent-teacher conferences throughout the year. The purpose of home visits/conferences is to share our observations and discuss their development with you.

We do not expect your children to fit into our program, but rather, our program to fit around your children and their needs. This is why we consider our program to be a developmentally appropriate program.

Our program highly encourages parental involvement. Teachers may keep in touch with parents through monthly newsletters, phone calls, notes, and conferences. We welcome your comments, questions, and concerns. Parents are required to make four face to face contacts during the school year. This can be done many ways, including: conferences, classroom visits, and field trips.

The class will be taking some field trips, and your assistance is needed. Pre-Kindergarten/Early Childhood family events will be offered, and your participation is encouraged and appreciated.

What is the Daily Schedule?

The morning and afternoon classes have their own schedules. Our basic schedule includes the following: (not necessarily in this order)

Welcome Time
Circle Time
Center Activities
Story Time
Song and Dance Activities
Outside/Gross Motor Time
Snack Time

Class Times

AM Class 8:00-10:30 M-F
PM Class 12:10-2:50 M, T, Th, F
11:30-1:20 W
All Day Class 8:00-1:20 M-F

Arrival/Dismissal

- A responsible adult should drop off and pick up the child(ren). Drop off and pick up will be at the Covered Play Area on the side of the school. Enter from Union Street, and exit onto Fortune Street. Please do not exit through the bus lane. For safety reasons, we ask that you do not pass other cars after your child has been loaded.
- Please be prompt when picking up children from school. Many times, teachers have meetings/appointments or other duties immediately after class.

CLASSROOMS ARE NOT OPEN BEFORE THE START OF CLASS

Snack

Snack with milk is provided each day. Allergies should be discussed with your child's teacher, and an action plan will need to be provided by your child's doctor for our school nurse.

Bus Service

Pre-K children whose homes are on the regular AM bus route may ride the bus TO PRE-K. Pre-K children whose homes are on the regular PM bus route may ride the bus HOME FROM PRE-K.

Due to the lack of time between classes, we are unable to transport all children after the AM class and before the PM class. Certain criteria must be met in order to qualify for bussing at these times.

If you are unsure whether your home is on the regular bus route, please contact Mrs. Earley in the Pre-K office at 965-5424 ext. 2602.

What if My Child is Sick?

During the cold/flu season it is important that the illness in the Pre-Kindergarten classrooms is kept to a minimum. Children who are coughing, running fevers, and have discharges from their nose and/or eyes should not be attending school. To stop the spread of illness among our children, we are asking you to keep your child at home if he/she is experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Vomiting within 24 hours prior to attending school
- Yellow or green discharge from the nose or eyes
- Running a temperature
(children should be fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to class)
- Persistent cough
- Red or draining eyes
- Lethargic
- Unknown rash

Do not bring your child to school if you think he/she might be ill. If they become sick here at school, we will call you. They will be cared for in a separate area from the other children. We will try to make your child as comfortable as possible until you arrive. At all times remember to leave us a dependable alternate number to phone, in case we cannot reach you. Also, remember to phone the office at 965-5424 when your child will not be attending.

Children cannot begin Pre-Kindergarten/Early Childhood without the following:

- Current physical with lead screening (parents fill out/sign the top portion on form)
- Up-to-date immunization record
- A copy of your child's certified birth certificate
- Income verification

Supplies

The program provides all needed supplies for the classroom. Your child will need to bring a regular sized backpack with a change of clothes daily.

Regular attendance is EXPECTED. Any missed days over 25% of total days in attendance could result in your child being dropped from the program if there is a current wait list.

Classroom Teachers

217-965-5424

Mrs. Tausha Hart – thart@northmacschools.org

Mrs. Hallie Campbell – hcampbell@northmacschools.org

Mrs. Carrie Buchanan – cbuchanan@northmacschools.org

Mrs. Lacy Strader – lstrader@northmacschools.org

Pre-K Director

217-965-5424 ext. 2602

Mrs. Brooke Earley – bearley@northmacschools.org

Principal

Mrs. Debbie Poffinbarger – dpoffinbarger@northmacschools.org