

Hand-in-Hand Preschool Parent Handbook 2026-2027



School Readiness Program Caledonia Area Community Education

Caledonia Area Elementary
511 West Main Street
Caledonia, MN 55921
(507) 725-5205

Preschool Teachers:

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Community Education Director/Early Childhood Coordinator:

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Hand in Hand Preschool Handbook

Philosophy and Goals of Hand in Hand Preschool:

- Foster creativity and socialization skills
- Develop a positive self-image.
- Develop foundations for later reading and writing
- Stimulate mental growth
- Develop the whole child; taking them from where they are to as far as their ability and interests will carry them.

Curriculum Areas: Creative Curriculum, the curriculum we use in our classroom is organized into nine areas of development and learning:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| -Social-Emotional | -Mathematics |
| -Physical | -Science and Technology |
| -Language | -Social Studies |
| -Cognitive | -The Arts |
| -Literacy | |

Skills:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Name recognition | Cutting | Rhyming |
| Writing/Pencil Grasp | Coloring | Sharing |
| Patterning | Sorting | Problem Solving |
| Number recognition | Shape Recognition | Communication |
| Letter Recognition | Matching | Self-help |
| Taking turns | Pretend Play | Gross Motor |

What the Children Do At Preschool:

Our daily schedule is flexible and subject to change. The following is a list of activities in which all children will participate in daily:

- Center time: investigative play, socializing, small groups, manipulative toys, and games
- Art activities: small muscle activities
- Large muscle activities: climbing apparatus, throwing games
- Visual perceptual activities: puzzles, manipulatives
- Sharing time
- Snack time
- Circle time: singing, stories, calendar, weather, special topics
- Lunch, recess, and rest time
- The teachers will be sending daily class schedules home in the Communication folder

Enrollment:

Students are eligible to register for Hand in Hand Preschool at the age of 3 years old. Applicants will be served on a first come first served basis regardless of race, color, creed, gender, or national origin.

- Prior to the child's enrollment the following forms must be completed and returned:
 1. Enrollment
 2. Emergency Contact/Health Information
 3. Immunization
 4. A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$30.00
 5. A supply fee of \$35.00
- Children **must** be potty trained to attend preschool.
- **All previous balances must be paid before new registration will be accepted.**

Program	Ages	Hours	Tuition
3K- Full Day	Must be 3 by September 1st, 2026 *Must be potty trained	PreK Class Time: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri 8:00am-3:00pm Wednesdays Dismiss at 2:20pm	PreK Class Only: \$170/week
4K- Full Day	Must be 4 by September 1st, 2026 *Must be potty trained	PreK Class Time: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri 8:00am-3:00pm Wednesdays Dismiss at 2:20pm	PreK Class Only: \$170/week

Tuition: Tuition is due the first day of each week. You are welcome to pay more than one week at a time.

No Tuition Due the Following Weeks:

- First Week of School (Aug 26)
- Thanksgiving Week (Nov 23)
- Christmas Week (Dec 21)
- Spring Break (March 22)
- Last Week of School (May 24)

Tuition Late Fees:

Tuition is due the first day of each week. You are welcome to pay more than one week at a time.

- 2 Days Late- Email Reminder
- 3 Days Late- \$10 Late Fee Applied
- 1 Week Late- Phone Call Reminder
- 2 Weeks Late- Amount overdue needs to be paid before child can continue to attend or a payment plan needs to be set up

Past Due Accounts: Balances cannot go over \$300. If your account reaches this amount, your child may not attend until a payment is made. Accounts over 60 days past due may be sent to collections, which could affect your credit and result in removal from the program. Your child can return once the full balance is paid.

Returned checks: There will be a \$20 fee for each check that is returned from the bank. If we receive an NSF check from a family, we will ask for future payment in the form of a money order or cash.

Tuition Assistance: Tuition assistance is available for qualifying families. Requests for tuition assistance must be submitted by August 30th. Please contact Grtechen Juan for information.

Pre-K Pathways Scholarships: Parents may apply for Pathways Scholarships awarded through the State of Minnesota. There are specific eligibility requirements. Please contact Gretchen Juan for more information.

Withdrawal: If you wish to discontinue preschool, please provide a one-month notice.

Tuition is tax deductible: Please call for the tax ID number. Tuition is subject to change each school year.

Hand in Hand School Year: August 26th, 2026 - May 26th, 2027. Please note closed days below:

No Preschool Dates: Hand-in-Hand Preschool is **CLOSED** on the following days:

- Monday, September 7th (Labor Day)
- Monday, September 28th (Teacher In-Service Day)
- Thursday, October 8th - **Dismissal at 12:30pm**
- Thursday & Friday, October 15th and 16th (Teacher In-Service Day and Education Minnesota)
- Wednesday, November 25th - **Dismissal at 12:30pm**
- Thursday - Friday, November 26th-27th (Thanksgiving Break)
- Wednesday, December 23rd - **Dismissal at 12:30pm**
- Thursday, December 24th - Friday, January 1st (Winter Break)
- Monday, January 18th (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
- Thursday, February 4th - **Dismissal at 12:30pm**
- Friday, February 12th
- Monday, February 15th (President's Day)
- Monday, March 22nd - Friday, March 26th (Spring Break)
- Monday, March 29th (Easter Monday)
- Wednesday, May 26th - **Dismissal at 12:30pm** - Last Day of School

School Closings & Schedule Changes

- If **Caledonia Area Public Schools (CAPS)** are canceled → **Preschool is canceled**
- CAPS **early dismissal** → **All preschools dismiss early**
- CAPS **late start** → **All preschools have a late start**
- Childcare needed on non-school days, late starts, or early releases requires enrollment in **School Age Care (SAC)**
- Weather updates via local radio, **School Reach**, or CAPS website

Drop-Off & Pick-Up

- Morning drop-off: **Door E, 7:45–7:55am**
- Breakfast drop-off: **Front doors at 7:35am**
- Pick-up: **Door E after school**
- Please be prompt

Attendance & Absences

- Call or email the teacher for absences
- Doctor's note required for extended medical absences

Accident Policy: In the event of an accident, first aid will be administered as necessary by staff. If there is a medical emergency, staff will call 911. Parents will be called immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed on the emergency form will be called. A staff person will remain with the child until the contacted person arrives.

Clothing & Outdoor Play

- Play clothes and tennis shoes encouraged
- No flip-flops or cowboy boots
- Outdoor play daily unless **below 0°F (wind chill)**
- Send proper seasonal gear + **extra clothes** in backpack - including extra socks, underwear, pants, and shirt.

Birthdays: Birthdays are special for all of us. Children may choose to bring a treat on or near their birthday. All treats must be “store bought”.

Communication

- Open parent–teacher communication encouraged
- **Daily communication folder** sent home
- Parent/teacher conferences held **October & February**

Health Policies & Procedures

- Parents/guardians are notified promptly if a child becomes ill, injured, or needs medical attention.
- Staff notify the preschool director of any illness, injury, or emergency.
- Ill children are removed from class and supervised to reduce exposure.
- In medical emergencies, **911 (Caledonia EMS)** is called and parents are contacted immediately.
- A staff member will accompany the child to the **nearest or family-preferred medical facility**, including off-site emergencies.
- Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills practiced yearly

Illness Exclusion Guidelines

- Fever: 100.4°F or higher → stay home until 24 hours fever-free without medication
 - Ear infections: may return with physician approval if comfortable and fever-free.
- Pink Eye: Must be treated for 24 hours or cleared by a physician.
- Strep Throat: Must wait for culture results; if positive, 24 hours on antibiotics before return.
- Impetigo: Stay home 3–5 days or until physician approves return.
- Chicken Pox: Stay home until all blisters are crusted and dry.
- Head Lice: Must be treated and free of nits before returning.
- Vomiting: Excluded until 24 hours symptom-free.
- Diarrhea: Sent home after one episode; return after 24 hours symptom-free.
- Rashes: Contagious rashes excluded; unclear rashes require a doctor’s note confirming non-contagious

Meals & Snacks

- **Free breakfast & lunch** provided daily
- Breakfast served if child arrives by **7:35am**
- Snack provided; children take turns being “snack helper”
- Snacks must be **store/bakery bought** and ready to eat

Transportation

- Parents provide transportation

- Children may ride district bus **with a bus buddy**
- Bus buddies must escort preschoolers to/from **Door E**

Discipline: Hand-in-Hand's philosophy of discipline is to provide all children with a safe environment, positive guidance, redirection, and the setting of clear-cut limits. The goal of these procedures is to help your child develop self-control, self-esteem and the respect for the property and rights of others.

Preventative methods used:

1. Modeling expected behavior
2. Redirection
3. Natural and logical consequences
4. Removal from the group.

If negative behaviors continue parents will be notified and a meeting with parents will be scheduled to come up with an action plan.

Respect, Work and Belong: The students and staff at Caledonia Area Elementary live out Respect, Work, Belong, on a daily basis. The following are general school wide rules:

- **RESPECT:** Treat all people the way you want to be treated.
- **WORK:** Do what you are supposed to be doing and bring the materials (tools) that you need to do it.
- **BELONG:** Be where you are supposed to be and be there on time. Support the goals and actions of the group.

Dismissal Policy: The Hand in Hand preschool program, through Community Education, is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for all children. Our goal is to support every child's success and partner with families to meet individual needs. Dismissal from the program is considered a last resort. Community Education believes children learn best through positive relationships, clear expectations, and developmentally appropriate guidance. When concerns arise, staff will work collaboratively with families to support the child's continued participation in the program.

Steps Taken Prior to Dismissal

When a child experiences ongoing challenges, the following steps will typically be taken:

1. Observation and Documentation
Staff observe and document concerns related to behavior, safety, or participation.
2. Family Communication
Parents/guardians are informed of concerns and invited to share insights, strategies, and relevant information.
3. Support Strategies Implemented
Staff implement developmentally appropriate strategies, accommodations, and positive guidance techniques.
4. Collaborative Support Plan
If concerns continue, a written plan is developed with the family outlining goals, strategies, and timelines.

5. Additional Resources (When Appropriate)

Families may be encouraged to connect with community resources, early childhood specialists, or school-based supports.

These steps may be adjusted or shortened if a situation presents an immediate safety concern.

Reasons Dismissal May Be Considered

Dismissal may occur if:

- A child's behavior poses a safety risk to themselves, other children, or staff.
- The program is unable to meet the child's needs despite reasonable supports.
- Persistent concerns continue after collaborative interventions.
- Parents/guardians do not follow school district policies related to health, safety, attendance, or communication.
- Required forms, records, or fees (if applicable) are not maintained.

Notification

Families will be notified in writing if dismissal becomes necessary. When possible, reasonable notice will be provided to allow time for alternative arrangements.

Non-Discrimination

The Hand in Hand Preschool programs follow all applicable Minnesota and federal laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, or family status.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS

Step 1. Discuss the concerns with your child's teacher.

Step 2. If you feel the concern is not resolved, bring the concern to the Community Education Director.

Step 3: - Complete a complaint form with the Community Education Director.

Step 4: - The Community Education Director will complete an investigation and may question all parties involved and witnesses.

Step 5: - The Community Education Director will schedule a meeting with parents/guardians to discuss possible solutions.

Step 6: The Community Education Director will follow up with the parent/guardian to discuss whether the solution was effective.

Step 7: If a grievance cannot be resolved by following Steps 1-6, the Community Education Director shall consult the Superintendent.

We are always available to talk about your concerns. In rare instances, an issue may arise that cannot be resolved to mutual satisfaction. We reserve the right to ask you to seek other arrangements.

Hand in Hand Preschool
Parent Permission and Signature Form
2026-2027

(Child's Printed Name Please)

I, _____ have read and understand the parent handbook. I will follow the guidelines listed in the handbook.

___ I hereby give permission for my child to go on field trips, tours and excursions of an educational value, under the guidance of a teacher, teachers or administrator.

___ I give permission to use pictures of my child for publication as needed through communication tools such as the district website, newsletter, promotional materials, the Hand in Hand Preschool Facebook page, etc.

I understand that this is to be in effect from August 2026 through May 2027.

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

(Parent or Guardian's Signed Name Please)

Date: _____