

**Geneva Area City Schools**

**Parent Handbook for Kindergarten**



## **To Our Parents:**

Kindergarten is the first step in your child's education. As a partner with parents in this responsibility, the Geneva Schools believes that kindergarten, school, and learning should be an enjoyable experience for children. The Geneva Schools and its professional staff stress the importance of a well organized kindergarten program.

We believe that all children come to school ready to learn.

We believe that a kindergarten that incorporates academic goals with social preparation is essential for helping children to become well-adjusted, happy, and secure with their school life.

We believe that kindergarten allows the school professionals the opportunity to determine the individual needs of each child – social, emotional, physical, and intellectual, so that the child can be helped to make the most of all educational opportunities available in his/her school.

We believe that a well-run kindergarten program is essential for providing children with the fundamental skills and essential knowledge they need to become successful students in first grade.

We believe that parents are the primary advocates for their children and as such, should be an integral and essential part of the educational planning for their children.

We believe that the role of the parent in the day-to-day education of their children cannot be underestimated. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their children are well-rested, properly equipped for school, on-time, prepared and ready to learn.

We believe that good schools need good teachers and interested parents if the goal is to produce happy, alert, and healthy children who are eager to learn and achieve.

We believe that it is our responsibility to serve our students, our parents and our community in a courteous, safe, effective and efficient manner.

The Geneva Area City Schools

### **How to Contact the Staff**

Austinburg Elementary School  
Kaye Haskins, Principal  
Judy Pearson, Kindergarten Teacher  
3030 Route 307  
Austinburg Ohio 44010  
440-275-5392

Geneva Elementary School  
John Spiesman, Principal  
Carol Prill, Kindergarten Teacher  
119 South Eagle Street  
Geneva, OH 44041  
440-466- 4831 (x156)

Cork Elementary School  
Melissa Doherty, Principal  
Beth Read, Kindergarten Teacher  
341 Route 534  
Geneva, OH 44041  
440-466- 4831 (x141)

Spencer Elementary School  
Michael Penzenik, Principal  
Danielle Knapp, Kindergarten Teacher  
Natalie Switalski, Kindergarten Teacher  
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Geneva, OH 44041  
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### **Geneva Kindergarten Program Mission Statement**

Recognizing that “all children are ready to learn” and that kindergarten is the child’s introduction to school, the mission of the Geneva Kindergarten Program is to provide our students a developmentally appropriate learning experience that will provide the knowledge, skills, and social adjustments each child needs to enter and be successful in first grade learning activities. Recognizing that parents are the primary teachers of their children, we believe we must educate, support, and encourage parents to become actively involved with their child’s education.

### **Position Statement:**

The Geneva Kindergarten Program will:

- help the child be happy, well-adjusted and secure in their school life
- provide a safe, enriching and nurturing learning environment
- foster interest and curiosity about school activities
- promote the physical, social, emotional, language and cognitive development of children
- provide an age appropriate curriculum aligned to the challenging Ohio Academic Content Standards
- provide a more informal atmosphere where children learn to adjust to participation in group activities with peers
- respond to the needs of parents and families
- meet the specialized needs of each child we serve (individually appropriate)
- involve the child in self-initiated and directed play
- embrace an understanding and acceptance of diversity among individuals.

### **Parent Involvement:**

Parents are the primary teachers of their children. Parents are the most influential part of any child's life and the most influential in their development. All parents have the right and the responsibility to become involved with their child's education and to be an integral part of that experience. The Geneva Area City Schools and its kindergarten staff fully supports parental involvement in the program and provides various opportunities for parents to become involved.

1. Parents are encouraged to visit the program at any time. Any parent wishing to do so must follow board adopted visitation policies. For the safety and security of all school personnel and students, all visitors are asked to report to the school office before going to the kindergarten room.
2. Parents should plan on being involved in the preliminary screening and orientation during the initial identification and enrollment process that occurs before your child begins our kindergarten program.
3. Parents of disabled children are encouraged to participate as active members of the Multi-factored Evaluation/Evaluation Team Report (MFE/ETR) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) team members.
4. Two times per year, a written report of each kindergarten child's progress will be sent to parents.
5. Two parent-teacher conferences will be held per year. (One in the fall and one in the winter.)
6. Parents may initiate additional conferences with teachers by calling the kindergarten teacher or the principal to set up an appointment.
7. Parents are encouraged to join the parent-teacher association.
8. Parents are encouraged to attend all kindergarten and other school activities open to the public.

### **The Kindergarten Program**

The Geneva Kindergarten Program is designed to meet the individual and unique needs of the children it serves of school-age. School professional staff will select age and individual developmentally appropriate materials for classroom use, design classroom space, and develop learning activities appropriate for all participants. The academic curriculum is aligned to the challenging Ohio Academic Content Standards specifically developed for kindergarten children. Teachers will organize classroom and learning schedules to best meet the needs of each and all participants. Our goal is to become a *"high performance district by developing high achieving learners."*

Assessment of each child's present levels of performance and progress will be achieved through data and information gathered by parents, teachers and related professionals through observation, interaction and appropriate diagnostic instruments. The district personnel will utilize diagnostic instruments and assessment tools accepted as appropriate for kindergarten children.

Parents will be advised of all processes and assessments and will receive a written documentation or summaries of the results (may be in the form of an MFE/ETR) of any assessment used for the identification of disabled children in accordance with all applicable state and federal rules and laws for this process.

### **Orientation/Schedule:**

The Geneva Area City Schools will operate alternating day kindergarten classes to serve the kindergarten population of each school. The schedules for Monday-Wednesday-Alternating Friday Class and for Tuesday-Thursday-Alternating Fridays Class have been established for each elementary school. The appropriateness of both options will be considered and discussed with parents during the screening and/or enrollment process.

- The district will conduct two all-day/alternating day classes. The Monday/Wednesday Class and Tuesday/Thursday Class will have Fridays scheduled appropriately to ensure that each class gets an equitable number of days. *Please make sure to check your kindergarten calendar each week to make sure that your child has Friday class that week.*
- PARENTS MUST CHECK YOUR CHILD'S KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE. Friday schedule has been adjusted so that all children M-W-F and T-TH-F have similar number of total school days per year (approximately 92) scheduled.
- Individual class schedules including days and times will be available to parents when their child is enrolled.
- The days of service will follow the district's annual school calendar.
- In case of inclement weather, parents are asked to listen to TV and radio announcements for school cancellation. If the district cancels school or school is closed, NO kindergarten classes will be held that day.
- If a parent or designated adult brings their child to school, the parent or designated adult must remain with the child until school or class begins. *No child may be left alone or unattended on school property. Parents should ensure that their child is delivered to a staff member on duty.*
- Parents transporting their own children should plan to arrive no earlier than 5 minutes before the kindergarten class begins. Arrival times are published by each individual elementary school.
- The school will provide appropriate transportation for children in the program. Parents should look for the bus schedules in the newspaper, or on the School website ( <http://www.genevaschools.org/> ) for their child's bus schedule one week before classes begin for the school year.

### **Elementary School Daily Schedule:**

Classes begin at 8:45 am.

Classes end at 3:15 pm

### **Enrolling Your Child:**

- **What Do Parents Need To Bring?**

Parents will be asked to complete the following forms for any child enrolling in Geneva Schools and must bring the following information or documents to the school at the time of enrollment:

1. Birth Certificate
2. Immunization Records (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio, rubella, rubeola (German measles), hepatitis B, chicken pox and mumps)
3. Social Security Card
4. Child's physical form (strongly recommended but not required by Ohio Law)
5. Custody or Guardianship records
6. Evidence of residency in the Geneva District  
(Parents may contact their child's school office for an explanation of each item)

- **Age of Children Attending Kindergarten:**

Ohio Law and Board Policy states that a child *may* start kindergarten if he is five years old on or before September 30 of the school year in question. The professional staff is available to discuss with parents the advantages and disadvantages of starting kindergarten when children have "late" birthdays (July, August, or September.)

- **Suspicion of a Disability:**

Parents of kindergarten children residing in Geneva School district who suspect that their child may have a qualifying disability defined by the *Operating Standards for Ohio's Schools Serving Children with Disabilities* and *Model Procedures For The Education Of Children With Disabilities* and wish to initiate a referral to the program, may contact their child's Principal. Parents will be instructed how to proceed. The school may initiate such a referral and the parents will be immediately notified of any such action.

### **Attendance:**

A daily report of each child's attendance will be kept by the classroom teacher and reported to the office. Children are expected to attend all scheduled daily classes. Exceptions (excused absences) to this include:

1. personal illness
2. illness in the family

3. quarantine of the home
4. death of a relative - three day limit except in unusual cases
5. religious holiday
6. working at home due to absence of parents or guardians
7. emergency situations approved by the Superintendent

Children may be excused from school because of family vacations and other reasons deemed appropriate by the school and in accordance with Ohio law. Children must complete make-up work for such occasions.

*If a child is absent, parents are asked to contact their child's school office.*

### **Nurse:**

A nurse is provided by the school district for specific services. Nurses are not in buildings at all times of the school day. Through out the year, the school nursing staff will conduct vision and hearing screenings in the elementary schools. If a problem is suspected as a result of one of these screenings, the nurse will notify parents by sending home a referral slip. That slip will recommend a visit to the child's physician. Parents are strongly advised to follow through with any referral by seeing their family doctor.

### **Illness and Communicable Diseases:**

#### **If a parent suspects their child is ill, they are asked to please keep the child at home.**

State regulations require that the following precautions and/or procedures be followed for any children suspected of having a communicable disease.

1. A staff member shall immediately notify the parent /guardian/or other approved contact of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of an illness.
2. A child with any sign of illness or disease shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his parent /guardian/or other approved contact.
  - a. Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within 24 hour period)
  - b. Severe coughing which causes the child to become blue or red in the face or makes a "whooping" sound.
  - c. Difficult, labored, or rapid breathing
  - d. Yellowish skin or eyes
  - e. Conjunctivitis ("pink eye")
  - f. A temperature of 100 degrees F taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other symptoms of illness
  - g. Untreated infected skin patches
  - h. Unusually dark urine or a gray or white stool

- i. Stiff neck
  - j. Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
  - k. Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
3. Any child with these symptoms or signs of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some time during the day shall be determined by the principal and/or nurse and the parent/guardian will be informed of this decision. The child while isolated at the school shall be carefully monitored for symptoms described in number 2 above.
  - a. Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
  - b. Unusual spots or rashes
  - c. Elevated temperature
  - d. Vomiting

Any isolated child suspected of any communicable disease will be cared for in a room or portion of the room not being used by the kindergarten program. They will never be without adult supervision. Any such child will be made comfortable until discharge to his/her parent /guardian/or other approved contact. Any bedding used by the child will be cleaned before it comes into contact with another individual. Any furniture used by the child will be disinfected. The nurse and staff will follow all procedures for dealing with communicable diseases.

### **Annual Physical Examinations**

Ohio Law does not provide for in-school services of this kind. All parents should have their child have a complete physical, dental and eye examination before entering school and routine examinations thereafter. Such examinations are the responsibility of parents. In the best interest of children and to better ensure the most appropriate education, all children should have an annual physical and parents should provide the school with documentation of the physical.

### **Administration of Medication:**

**If possible, all medication should be given by the parents to their child at home.**

When in such cases as this is not possible, the Geneva Board of Education has adopted a written policy for dispensing and administering prescribed and over-the counter medication to students in school. This policy and the aligned procedures will be followed. This policy and procedures are available through the school nurses office. Parents may contact the school nurse at your child's school office.

**Procedures for the administration of medicines** are as follows:

- The school nurse or a person designated by the principal can only administer medication to students at school.
- Any medication or drug, whether over the counter or prescription only will be administered with the written orders of a physician/dentist. The nurse may contact the physician/dentist if necessary.
- All medication must be in the pharmacy package (with dosage/administration information). Any medicine not properly labeled will not be administered.
- The appropriate school *medication authorization form* must be completed and signed by 1.) the parents/guardian and 2.) physician/dentist requesting that the Geneva Schools comply with the physician's request to administer said dosage of *each* medication and this form must accompany every/all medication for students.
- All medications must be kept in the secure/locked medicine area of the school clinic or office.
- Should any changes occur regarding the administration of this medication to the child change, the parents must immediately submit a revised statement regarding dosage/administration to the school nurse.
- No person authorized by the Geneva Schools Board of Education to administer a prescribed drug and who has a copy of the most recent physical/pharmacy statement, and written parental permission to administer said drug would be liable for civil damages for administering or failing to administer the drug, unless he/she acted in a manner that would constitute "gross negligence or wanton or reckless misconduct."

**Emergency Treatment:**

Parents are required to complete an emergency medical form for each child in the preschool program.

In case of an accident or emergency the parents will be immediately notified using this form. In case the parents cannot be reached immediately the school will contact an alternate responsible adult as listed by the parents on that form. *Please be advised that those listed as alternative contacts must be available for the call during school hours.* The parents are strongly advised to provide the number of a person who resides in the district and who can respond more immediately to an emergency situation involving their child.

In case no one listed on the form can be reached, the school will abide by the directions in the form or call emergency medical services should they be needed.

**Accident/Unusual Incident Reporting**

In case of any accident (emergency and non-emergency) or other incident deemed "unusual" by the preschool staff involving a child, an incident report will be completed by the teacher or other preschool staff member describing the incident. Parents will be

notified of the incident either in person, by phone, or receive a copy of any such report. Any completed incident report will be placed in the preschool child's school file.

### **Transportation:**

The Geneva Schools will provide transportation for kindergarten children who are beyond the limits defined for "walkers." Transportation will be provided in accordance with the Ohio Pupil Transportation and Safety Rules and Regulations of the Ohio Department of Education and School policy and procedures for the transportation of students. The nature and extent of the transportation services provided disabled students will be determined by the IEP process for each eligible disabled child.

Any parent wishing to transport their child or have another responsible adult transport their child to the preschool and home must complete out an **Authorized Pick-up Form** available through the principal.

Again, parents should look for the bus schedules in the newspaper, or on the School website (<http://www.genevaschools.org/>) for their child's bus schedule one week before classes begin for the school year.

### **Snacks:**

The Geneva Schools will not provide a regular snack to kindergarten students.

Because kindergarten children may eat lunch at a time of the day that makes a "long stretch" between meals, parents *may* be asked by the teacher to provide a nutritious afternoon snack for their child to bring each day of kindergarten. The school suggests a nutritious non-perishable drink (juice box or other drink box) and possibly a fresh fruit or granola bar.

**ATTENTION PARENTS:** Often there are snacks provided by other parents for their child's birthday or served during school scheduled holiday parties or events. **Any parent of a child with nutrition or dietary issues/concerns should contact the school and make such concerns known.**

### **Children's Dress/Clothing:**

The kindergarten curriculum and experiences involve lots of play and activities involving pasting, painting, coloring, etc. Parents should dress their child appropriately for participation in the day's activities and for the weather of the day. The children will go out and play year round. In the winter, children must have appropriate outdoor clothing including boots, winter outerwear, and hats, gloves. Parents should label clothing to avoid any mix-ups or to identify lost items.

All Kindergarten children will have a physical education class one day per week. Girls *should not* wear dresses and *no child will be allowed to participate* if they are wearing jewelry. Please do not send your kindergartener to school on “gym day” with jewelry of any kind (necklaces, watches, earrings, bracelets, etc.).

Parents should send a set of emergency clothes to place on their child should he/she soil themselves. Each parent must send a plastic bag with their child’s name on it with these emergency clothes in it.

*Children should be toilet-trained by the time they enter kindergarten.* If a disabling condition has prevented the child from becoming toilet-trained, parents will supply enough diapers for the week, each week.

### **Supplies:**

The school furnishes some instructional supplies for kindergarten children. These items are kept in the classroom. Each kindergarten teacher will provide a list of any school supplies and materials your child should bring to the classroom.

We do ask that each child bring a box of Kleenex, a school/book bag to carry materials to and from school.

You will be notified of any other needed items or fees if they arise.

When sending money to school with your child, please put it in an envelope with your child’s name, the amount, and what it is to be used for written on the envelope.

### **School Lunch Program:**

The Geneva Area City Schools Food Service Department offers healthy meals each school day. The current meal prices are set by the Board of Education. Currently, elementary children may buy lunch for \$2.00 and breakfast for \$1.25. Children who qualify may get meals free or at a reduced price. The reduced price is \$.40 for lunch and \$.30 for breakfast. **TO GET FREE OR REDUCED PRICE MEALS FOR YOUR CHILD, YOU MUST COMPLETE AN APPLICATION AND RETURN IT TO THE SCHOOL.** Applications are sent home on the first day of school and also available in the school office. Menus are sent home every month.

Geneva Schools Food Service Department uses a computerized cashier system. All students are entered into the computerized accounting system. If a child has qualified for free or reduced price lunches or breakfasts, this information is in the system, and the meal payment will be processed just as it is for all other students for optimum confidentiality.

Students can pay in cash. However, we strongly recommend parents/guardians deposit checks or money into the student’s account. **Deposits must be placed in an envelope labeled: “LUNCH” with the student’s name, grade & teacher.** If there is more than one student in a family, one student may make deposits to their sibling’s accounts as long as you tell us the amounts to deposit to each account. If for any reason parents would like a copy of the transactions of their child’s account, the school will be able to give a print out of all computer account transactions.

If parents are concerned about their child's **food allergy**, please notify the **cafeteria, the school nurse, and the teacher**. A warning will appear on the cashiers' screen for a review of the items on the student's tray.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the FS Director, Laura Jones at 466-4831, ext. 189 or email at [laura.jones@neomin.org](mailto:laura.jones@neomin.org).

### **Behavior Management:**

Learning acceptable behavior in the classroom and other social settings is vital to the success of every child. Behavior management techniques used by the kindergarten staff should encourage a child to gain self-control, self-reliance, and to respond positively to others. Positive reinforcement of proper and acceptable behaviors should be used as not to destroy a child's self-esteem and to promote acceptable social interaction with peers as well as adults children have contact with. A positive proactive approach including prevention, redirection and praise is the preferred intervention model.

Positive Model for Behavior Management includes:

- Rewarding desired behavior with praise.
- Consistent and persistent responses to a child's appropriate and inappropriate behaviors
- Redirection to appropriate behaviors.
- Modeling appropriate behaviors
- Easing transitions with precautionary statements of transition activities
- Keeping the number of rules for children's behavior to the minimum and making them simplified and meaningful to children.

When positive behavior management strategies are not applicable in a severe or crisis situation, other steps will be employed. These occasions should be rare and used only when absolutely necessary for the well-being of the child, other children, or to maintain the educational integrity of the classroom. These more restrictive methods should not be used as punishment, but rather to allow the child a short time-out to gain self-control or to protect the child by removing him/her from a potentially dangerous situation.

A crisis situation should be defined as those situations when a child has 1) lost self-control, 2) will not respond to positive redirections or prompts, and/or 3) is potentially endangering him/herself or others. Responses to the crisis may include a short time-out in the classroom, removal of the child from the classroom setting for a short time, and suspension from the program should also be considered an option.

Other responses may be developed via a meeting with the parents and teacher or an IEP team review.

If dangerous behaviors continue occur and persist, the kindergarten staff and principal teacher may meet with parents to develop a written behavior intervention plan (BIP) and crisis plan focusing on eliminating the negative behavior and replacing it with positive behaviors. In the case of a student identified as having a disability, the plan may include a review of the IEP in certain situations or if the parent requests such a review.

The School Board Adopted Code of Conduct found in the *Geneva Schools K-6 Student Handbook* contains the rules for discipline and acceptable behaviors for all K-6 students. This is available at your child's school office and on the school website.

### **Other Resources For Parents Of A Child With A Disability**

1. Geneva Area City Schools K-6 Student Handbook
2. Geneva Area City Schools Website: <http://www.genevaschools.org/>
3. A Standard Guide for Families: What Is Expected in Grade K (published by Ohio Department of Education and available in your school)
4. Ohio Department of Education home page/website: <http://www.ode.state.oh.us>
5. Ohio Department of Education Home and Family page/website: [http://www.ode.state.oh.us/families/Learning\\_and\\_Growing\\_Together/](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/families/Learning_and_Growing_Together/)
6. ODE [http://www.ode.state.oh.us/families/Learning\\_and\\_Growing\\_Together/](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/families/Learning_and_Growing_Together/)
7. Whose Idea Is This? – A resource Guide for Parents Of Children With Disabilities Parent ; Notice of Procedural Safeguards developed by the Ohio Department of Education
8. Operating Standards for Ohio's Schools Serving Children with Disabilities and Model Procedures For The Education Of Children With Disabilities