

Plainville Public Schools

Let's Talk Preschool



**A Public Preschool Discussion
Facilitated by Plainville's Public**

Preschool Team

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What is a public preschool and who does it serve?

Preschool is a Special Education Service, it is required by law.



Federal Statutes

*Federal Law requires **ALL** children who require special education to receive the services they need from their public school district beginning on their 3rd birthday.

*Federal Law states that a public school district **MUST** provide Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to all school aged children, ages **3** to 21, regardless of disability.

Massachusetts Statutes

*Massachusetts Law requires public schools **shall ensure** programs are available for eligible children 3 and 4 years of age

*For Public School Programs:
The number of students with disabilities must not exceed the number of students who are typically developing. ****The integrated ratio is 7 students on IEPs to 8 students with typically developing needs**

What Does the Preschool Program Look Like?

There has been a significant increase in population in Plainville over the last 10 years, therefore, the number of students requiring preschool services has also increased. We currently have 34 students with IEPs that require a preschool placement. Within that number, there are a variety of needs and diagnoses where intensive training in communication, safety and independence are significant priorities.

There are currently 4 programs:

- 2 half day integrated sessions, morning and afternoon
- 1 extended day program, where peer models leave at 1pm and the rest of the day is used for low ratio, intensive intervention/instruction for students on IEPs
- 1 full day integrated preschool classroom where all students stay for the entire school day,
- 1 substantially separate classroom, known as the Prek/K TLC, where students receive intensive instruction with a low student to teacher ratio.





So...What Makes Us Unique?

Staff

- *Highly Qualified, Master's Level Special Education Teachers
- *Therapists- Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech & Language, and Applied Behavioral Analysis integrate into all programs providing direct service to students on IEPs and monitoring students not yet identified
- *Highly trained support staff
- *Access to other School Personnel including Behavior Support, School Psychologist, Nurse, Unified Arts and English Language Learners

Curriculum

- *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks: ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Social Emotional Learning and Approaches to Learning and Play
- *Social Language, Functional Communication and Motor Skills
- *Language-Based, Multi-sensory, Developmental Approach
- *differentiated instruction to provide all students the necessary strategies to be successful learners

Additional Roles and Responsibilities of Preschool Staff

- Preschool staff participate in the Child Find Process by screening preschool age students upon parent request
- Responsible for the transition process from Early Intervention to the Public School System
- All preschool staff are active participants in the implementation and generalization of IEP goals and objectives
- In order to ensure a safe and productive classroom environment, staff to student ratios must match the individualized needs of the students in the program.
- All staff assist with Activities of Daily Living (ADL)



Previous Community Questions

Why two paraprofessionals?

-SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY

-To provide a **safe** learning environment that includes supervision of students at **all** times. Students enter at various developmental levels and are not always aware of safe situations.

Why not just itinerant services like OT, PT, Speech and parents put them in private preschool settings?

-When students qualify for special education services, there are many domains in which they can qualify. Areas of need include but are not limited to cognitive, social, self-control, safety and language. These domains must be overseen by a Special Educator. Private preschool teachers are not required to have the same level of education and training as public preschool teachers who **MUST** be Master's Level, DESE licensed in Moderate Special Needs, prek-8.

-FAPE, Free and Appropriate Public Education regardless of Disability. If students need a preschool placement, then the district is **MANDATED** to provide it. In essence, if there was no public preschool, districts would have to pay for each student requiring a preschool placement's private tuition- that is not cost effective.

-The Achievement Gap. Evidence-Based Research Clearly states that having access to early intervention and preschool is **NOT** a luxury and should be available to all students from all socioeconomic levels. Having a public preschool allows districts to begin educating earlier.

Questions

