

## **The Linwood School District Preschool Inclusion Program**

The Linwood School District is again offering a half-day Preschool Inclusion Program at the Seaview Elementary School for the 2020-2021 school year. Our Preschool Inclusion class enrolls preschoolers with disabilities along with typically developing children. The program uses a developmental curriculum appropriate for all children. Class size is limited with instruction provided by a certified teacher and two instructional aides. The program will prepare children for Kindergarten.

The program runs four days per week (Monday through Thursday). Friday is reserved for parent workshops, staff meetings, community activities, and parent conferences. Tuition for the 2020-2021 school year is \$2,750, subject to final approval of the 2020-2021 budget. The program will follow the Linwood School District calendar. Parents will be responsible for transportation.

Entrance into our preschool program will be made through a lottery system. **The lottery is open to three year old children only.** Children must be three on or before October 1, 2020 and toilet trained to be considered. Students who enter the program as three year olds will continue as four year olds. Applications for children turning four on or before October 1st will not be accepted.

If you are interested in giving your child the opportunity to participate in this positive preschool experience, please complete the Google form on our website: [www.linwoodschools.org](http://www.linwoodschools.org), or download an application and return it to the Child Study Team Office at Belhaven Middle School. The lottery will take place Wednesday, April 29th at 2:30 PM at Seaview Elementary School. Parents are invited to attend.

Preschool students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch will qualify for participation in the preschool inclusion program at no cost. If you have any questions, please call Ms. Susann Tahsin at 926-6709.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Linwood Public School District, located in Atlantic County, New Jersey has met educational needs of children in grades Preschool through 8 for over a century. The community, founded over 200 years ago, is presently a blend of long established families and new arrivals who often select the community because Linwood Public Schools is a school district noted for excellence. Community leaders and parents are supportive and involved in educational programming. Therefore, a close alliance exists between the home and the school.

## **DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

The Linwood Schools, in a unique partnership with parents and community, celebrate the journey of life-long learning, empowering children to emerge as educated, responsible, compassionate citizens of the world.

## **DISTRICT BELIEFS**

WE BELIEVE OUR CHILDREN LEARN BEST WHEN...

✓ Placed in a secure, positive environment in which they are respected and challenged as individuals. ✓ Actively engaged as co-creators of their continuous learning experience. ✓ Viewed as the people they can become. ✓ Given the appropriate tools.

WE BELIEVE THE ROLE OF THE PARENT IS...

✓ To work in partnership with the school through a valid and active partnership in the development of the whole child. ✓ To be a positive role model and resource. ✓ To be a continuous thread in their child's development.

WE BELIEVE THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IS...

✓ To be an active partner in the development of our children. ✓ To foster and celebrate individual and collective successes of our children and our schools through their ownership and support. ✓ To provide support through funding, expertise and direct involvement in an environment based on mutual respect and responsibility.

WE BELIEVE THE ROLE OF THE STAFF IS...

✓ To advocate for the development of the whole child by recognizing and nurturing their potential and individuality. ✓ To grow as educators, to communicate with parents, and to maintain the highest level of professionalism. ✓ To work together in support of District beliefs.

## **Program Description**

The Linwood Public School District's Preschool Program provides a developmentally appropriate program for students ages 3-5, including children with disabilities. This program approaches the students' needs through active learning. Content areas will include: Health/Safety/Physical Education, Self-Help, Social Emotional Development, Mathematics, Social Studies, Creative Arts, Language Arts and Literacy, and Science. Each area will be focused on through a variety of child-centered activities based on integrated thematic units that enhance learning and support the NJ Preschool Expectations. The students may also receive additional related services as specified in the Individual Education Plan.

### **Preschool Philosophy**

The Preschool Curriculum is based on the belief that young children, regardless of background and abilities, can be nurtured and challenged in an atmosphere that provides structure and routine, offers enriching, creative and developmental activities, fosters a warm, social, and accepting environment, and promotes parent involvement. The curriculum is designed to focus on the child first and the disabilities second. All children will engage in "typical" childhood routines, activities, and behaviors while addressing individual variations and making accommodations and adaptations when necessary.

### **Program Goals**

- Create a healthy, positive, and safe preschool program
- Have a variety of play activities from which the children choose
- Respect each child as a special and unique person
- Have each child participate in developmentally appropriate activities
- Change or adapt activities so that each child can experience success
- Meet each child's needs in all areas of development

### **Benefits of Preschool Inclusion**

### Children with Disabilities

1. They are spared the effects of separate, segregated education including the negative effects of labeling and negative attitudes fostered by lack of contact with typically developing children.
2. They are provided with competent models that allow them to learn new adaptive skills and/or learn when and how to use their existing skills through imitation.
3. They are provided with competent peers with whom to interact and thereby learn new social and/or communicative skills.
4. They are provided with realistic life experiences that prepare them to live in the community.
5. They are provided with opportunities to develop friendships with typically developing peers and to develop friendships with neighbors.
6. They may evolve feelings of being a member of a diverse community and self-respect is enhanced.

### Children without Disabilities

1. They are provided with opportunities to learn more realistic and accurate views about individuals with disabilities.
2. They are provided with opportunities to develop positive attitudes toward others that are different from themselves and to develop sensitivity towards others' limitations.
3. They are provided with opportunities to learn altruistic behaviors and when and how to use such behaviors.
4. They are provided with models of individuals who successfully achieve despite challenges.
5. They are provided with opportunities to develop feelings of empowerment and the ability to make a difference.

## **Preschool Routine**

**Arrival** – The children greet the teachers and fellow classmates. During this time they are expected to locate their personal cubby, remove coat/backpack, and hang them on the hook. They then sit at circle and wait until everyone arrives. These brief few minutes allow the children to utilize communication and self-help skills. We encourage them to be independent within the classroom environment.

**Circle Time** – During circle we work on proper sitting and listening skills. The children are greeted and encouraged to share. We allow children to bring items from home to share during circle time as long as they relate to the current theme. Sharing promotes better listening and speaking skills. The children are then invited to sing and act out finger plays to our circle time songs. The songs are repetitive until the children begin to participate, then new songs will be added. During this time we develop verbal skills, along with fine and gross motor activities. We also introduce weather, calendar, and new concepts during this time. After circle the children are given a choice of play areas, however, they verbalize to the best of their ability, where they would like to play.

**Work Time** – We call this work time because this is where the children develop appropriate play skills. During this time some of our centers are open and the children are free to move about the room. The teacher and classroom support staff circulate and play with the children. This is a wonderful time for the children to work on verbal, social and cognitive skills. It allows them to play, create, imagine and discover their environment through play. On most days, during work time, there is a structured activity planned that correlates with the thematic unit and new concepts being taught.

**Clean Up** – This is a very important part of our routine! The children are allowed to play freely from area to area without cleaning up completely. They then receive a warning that it will soon be time to clean up. The children then are responsible for a designated area to clean up. This does take time and requires reinforcement from teachers. However, the children are learning responsibility and self- help skills. Everyone cleans up!

**Snack Time** – We return to circle after clean up for a quick transition activity. The children are then called to go to snack. Each child has a job on various days. We develop social skills, motor coordination, language skills, attending skills, and responsible behavior during this time.

**Book Time/Large Motor and Dismissal** – After snack the children may excuse themselves and read a book in the book corner until everyone is finished. Then we may divide into groups or read aloud. This time may also be exchanged for large motor activities, such as the outdoor equipment, scooters, balls, etc. We then transition into our goodbye song, retrieve belongings, and check our mail.

## **Community Trips and Parent Workshops**

Community trips and parent workshops are an essential component toward the success of the Preschool Inclusion program. Fridays are reserved for parent/child trips which introduce or culminate a thematic unit. The children are given the opportunity to interact socially beyond the classroom environment. Fridays are also reserved for Parent Workshops. The workshops are presented according to parental requests and offer a wealth of information and strategies parents may utilize within the home environment.

### **Community Trips**

Pumpkin Patch  
Hayride Bowling  
Post Office  
Fire Station  
Beach Trip  
Local Farms  
Local Parks  
Friends' Houses  
Etc.

### **Parent Workshops**

Behavior Management  
Play Therapy  
Language and Literacy  
Occupational Therapy  
Hands on Math  
Speech/Social Skills  
The Importance of Music  
Parent/Child Make and Takes Etc.