

Russellville Independent Schools

**Preschool
Programming
2026-2027**



STRATEGIC PILLARS

In alignment with the voices of our students, parents, staff, and community members, the pillars to our success:

R Rooted in Community

Strengthen and celebrate the connection to our heritage

I Innovative Mindset

Create a culture that encourages authentic learning in a safe environment

S Student Centered Experiences

Prioritized in all aspects of education

D District of Choice

Distinguish our district as the preferred destination for students, staff, and families

KEY INITIATIVES 2024 - 2028

Foster vibrant relationships among students, families, and partners

Tell our story of honoring our past while building our future

Enhance pride and safety among our campuses

Equip all staff with the necessary tools to be successful through training and support

Create diverse and enriching opportunities for all students to overcome barriers

Prepare all students to become resilient learners by meeting academic standards

Provide opportunities for students to take an active role in their education

Tailor teaching methods to meet individual needs

Support a culture of belonging and connection

Create a culture of shared responsibility that values high expectations for learning and achievement

Cultivate a consistently positive working and learning environment that strengthens community relations

Communicate in a targeted and specific manner

Vision

Prioritizing all Panthers in an inclusive learning environment that is overflowing with pride and possibilities.

Mission

At Russellville Independent Schools, we are United in Trust, Guided by Compassion, Committed to Respect, Driven by Opportunity, and have Pride in Who We 'R'.



Preschool Regulations

- No more than 20 students in a class
- Must have a certified early childhood education teacher and an assistant if there are more than 10 students
- Preschool teachers provide general and special education programming in an inclusive setting
- Preschool teachers do not get a planning period during the day (only a lunch break)
- Planning occurs on Fridays as well as required cleaning of equipment and home visits
- General components: social-emotional, evidence-based developmental curriculum, centers, large group, small group; focus on whole child

Our Current Structure:

- 3 full-time classes that can accommodate up to 60 students total
- We have had between 55 and 58 students all year
- We serve students Monday through Thursday from 8:00-2:15
- We transport students to and from school
- We provide breakfast and lunch and snack (required)
- We prioritize students in our district but allow students out of district with siblings in district if space is available
- Preschool receives funding from two sources:
 - State Preschool: \$293,619
 - IDEA Preschool: \$37,126



Why Might We Consider a Different Programming Structure for Preschool?

- Hovered right below 60 students all year
- Potential to increase numbers when/if the legislature passes Universal PK
- Some 3-year-olds struggle to maintain self-regulation with the all day structure
- Actual instructional minutes is only about 30 minutes more in full day

Other Programs in the GRREC Region:

- Full day (4 day or 5 day): 19 districts
- Full day (M/W or T/Th option): 3
- Half day: 8
- Full day and half day: 6

Option 1: Remain Full Day Program

Benefits:

- Families may not have to have day care outside of preschool hours
- Offers approximately 2 hours 15 minutes of instruction
- Teachers teach content one time per day
- Need only morning and afternoon bus route

Considerations:

- We would start with three teachers based on current projected enrollment
- If we had to hire a fourth teacher after school starts, could we find a qualified teacher (shortage area)
- We have to provide IEP services to students from HeadStart
- Two hours of the instructional day are spent with eating meals, having snack, and napping
- Some 3-year-olds struggle with self-regulation after lunch





Option 2: Hybrid Program (Full and Half) Recommended Option

Benefits:

- Also start with three teachers to accommodate:
 - One full day and two half days (60) with the ability to add another half day if enrollment exceeded 60 at any time
- Ability to enroll more students (80 vs 60)
 - Potential for increased funding
- One teacher would be able to serve HeadStart students without having to leave her existing class
- Increased ability to tailor instruction in small groups
- Increased ability to provide more individualized instruction to students with IEPs using an evidence-based curriculum
- Ability to provide more kindergarten readiness for the full day classroom
- Half day preschool students only eat one meal at school

Considerations:

- Extra bus route in the middle of the day
- Scheduling bus for morning and afternoon routes
- Half day students receive 30 minutes less of instruction than full day students