

Athens City Schools

Eagle's Nest

Preschool Program Information 2025-2026

The goal of the Athens City Schools Preschool Program is to provide quality services to young children between the ages of 3 to 5 years of age with diverse abilities. Children will be given opportunities to gain developmental skills in a structured preschool environment. Developmental skill areas will be addressed through instruction, art, physical activities, music, self-help, the use of technology, and interaction with others. A preschool curriculum is used and will include those skills that will prepare each student for Kindergarten. The preschool classes are staffed with certified teachers and instructional assistants who meet the requirements for the State of Alabama and the Athens City Schools.

I. Structure of the Program

A. The preschool program consists of two classes housed at iAcademy @ Athens Elementary School.

B. Each class will contain students with and without disabilities. The placements of students with disabilities will be made by IEP teams as appropriate to meet the needs of the student. The AES Principal and Exceptional Services Director will oversee the placements of students with disabilities into the program.

II. Schedule: The preschool program will adhere to the Athens City Schools academic calendar. Preschool instruction will begin at 7:45 AM and will end at 2:00 PM. Students may arrive no earlier than 7:15AM and must be picked no later than 2:15 PM.

III. Enrollment criteria: Program enrollment will be available to children ages 3 and 4. Students must be 3 by September 1, 2025 and no older than 4 before September 1, 2025 to be eligible. Students without disabilities must be toilet-trained (see toilet training policy).

IV. Registration: A registration period (for students without disabilities) will occur to fill class seats available. With parental consent, students without disabilities will be screened using formal assessments for the preschool program to ensure developmental appropriateness. Screenings will be completed to determine any possible concerns with hearing, vision, speech/language, and overall developmental delays. Students will be invited to participate in the screenings based on the following criteria: 1) Children of employees of iAcademy @ Athens Elementary School will be given 1st priority, 2) Children of employees of the Athens City School System will be given 2nd priority, 3) and children who live in the Athens City Schools jurisdiction will be given 3rd priority. Once screenings are completed, Preschool staff and school administrators will determine the appropriateness for the NEST, and notify parents of placement. If notified that NEST is appropriate, registration will be completed by the

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parent/guardian. Registration will include an informational form, a copy of the child's birth certificate, a copy of the child's social security card (optional), proof of residence, and immunization card. A nonrefundable registration fee of \$35 will be collected at the time of registration which will hold the enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year. Once slots are filled for each classroom, a waiting list will be maintained in order to fill vacancies as they occur throughout the school year. Parent/guardian can contact Athens City Schools Special Education office (256-233-6600) to inquire about the availability of the program.

V. Tuition: Tuition for the preschool program participation is \$90 per school week. Tuition is due on the first business day of each week. A late charge of \$25 will apply if tuition is not received after 14 days. Parents may choose and will be encouraged to pay on a monthly basis. Tuition will be collected and receipted by the Preschool Program staff or through the online portal. Accounting policies and practices set by the Athens City Schools will be implemented and followed. Your child will be dismissed from the program if weekly tuition is not received for two consecutive weeks.

VI. Children will have the opportunity to participate in the Child Nutrition Program as other students in Grades K-3 at Athens Elementary. All children attending Athens Elementary School will receive breakfast at no cost, and lunch is available through the Child Nutrition Program. CNP applications for free and reduced can be found online.

VII. The curriculum will be challenging and engage each student at their own level at various times during the school day. The program will address the prerequisites for Kindergarten and will be aligned with the skills included in Alabama's Standards for Early Learning and Development. Language skills will also be a primary focus of the program. Activities will be offered to make this program a language-enriched environment.

VIII. Transportation to and from the preschool program and for extra-curricular activities will be considered for students with disabilities at no cost to the parents. Decisions regarding transportation will be addressed on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Transportation is not provided for students without disabilities (including to and from preschool, as well as extra-curricular activities).

IX. Community-based activities will be a part of the program throughout the school year. We strongly encourage participation of our parents in these activities. To ensure that our preschoolers fully benefit from events outside of the school setting and to limit possible distractions, siblings of the Pre-K children do not attend these community-based activities. Violation of this may lead to possible dismissal from the preschool program.

X. Personnel will be provided appropriate professional development training opportunities as deemed appropriate to meet the needs of the students who participate in the program.

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XI. All personnel will be evaluated regarding their job performance annually. The Certified Teacher will participate in the Teacher evaluation program as set forth by the Alabama Department of Education and support staff will be evaluated as required by the Athens City Schools.

XII. Online payment of the registration fee and Tuition is available on our district website: <https://www.acs-k12.org/> . You will click on the "Pay Fees" button in the middle of the page which will take you to our online payment portal. After entering your child's information, you may select "Preschool Registration Fee \$35" or "Preschool Tuition- (teacher's name)". Please inform Eagles Nest staff if you plan to pay fees/ tuition online to ensure receipt of payment. Please note the "Preschool Registration Fee" of \$35 should not be paid until the child is **accepted** into the Eagles Nest program.

Student Name: _____

I, _____, have read and fully understand the policies and

(Parents name)

procedures of the Athens City Preschool Program.

Parent Signature

Date